STATUS AS A FACTOR AFFECTING DECISIONS OF MEMBERS OF A YOUTH BASKETBALL TEAM

by

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A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Greensboro
1974

Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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August 12, 1975
Date of Acceptance by Committee

RUNDIO, III, STEPHEN J. Status as a Factor Affecting Decisions of Members of a Youth Basketball Team. (1974) Directed by: Dr. Celeste Ulrich. Pp. 108.

It was the purpose this study to examine the influence of teammates of high and low status upon the decisions of fellow members of a basketball team. Status was defined in terms of athletic ability as determined by all of the members of a team. The influence was examined under two conditions, relevant and irrelevant. The relevant condition was defined as being related to basketball. The irrelevant was defined as a non-basketball related condition.

It was hypothesized that there would be no difference between the responses made by the subjects to relevant and irrelevant questions after having been made aware of the responses made by high and low status members. It was also hypothesized that there would be no difference between the responses made by the starters and the substitutes.

The subjects were 75 boys aged eight to ten years. They were drawn from a basketball league sponsored by the Central YMCA of Greensboro, North Carolina. A league rule required that the five poorest players play together in the entire second quarter. Therefore the responses of the starters and the substitutes were examined to determine if an intra-group influence existed. This was the rationale for the second hypothesis.

Each boy was interviewed and instructed to rate the members of his team according to playing ability. The

composite of these ratings was used to determine the players of high and low status.

The influence data were collected by recording the responses made by the players to a questionnaire prepared for the study. A relevant and irrelevant questionnaire was used. They were designed so as to offer three choices to each item: one of which was considered as acceptable, another unacceptable, and a neutral position based on conventional ethical standards. The high and low status members were not tested but were used as confederates. The respondants were told to assume that the confederates had been tested previously. The responses attributed to the confederates were shown on each of the subject's answer sheets. These responses were actually preselected by the experimenter. The foreknowledge of the choices presumed to be made by the high and low status members was presumed to be the influencing factor.

The results were totalled and placed in tabular form. Situation 1 was defined as one in which the high status member was to have chosen the positive response and the low status member the negative response. In Situation 2 these roles were reversed.

To test the hypotheses a technique for non-parametric data devised by Freeman and Halton was utilized. Comparisons were made on a question by question basis. The .05 level of confidence was selected for a statistically significant difference.

Significant differences resulted in eight of the forty comparisons made between the responses in the relevant and irrelevant conditions. Two significant differences resulted in each of the four comparisons of the conditions. Starters were compared under Situation 1 and Situation 2 as were the substitutes' responses compared under each Situation.

No significant differences were found when the responses of the starters were compared with those of the substitutes. No differences were found when the questions were compared in Situations 1 with those in Situation 2.

The hypotheses were found tenable with one reservation. In eight of forty cases a significant difference was found when comparisons were made between the relevant and the irrelevant conditions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer is grateful to those persons who were generous with their time and talents and in some measure shared in the preparation of this research. Practical limitations make it impossible to list each individual.

Without the cooperation of the staff and the members of the physical committee of the Central YMCA of Greensboro, North Carolina, the project would not have been possible. It was with their approval that the subjects and the facilities were made available.

The subjects themselves deserve to be recognized. It would be difficult to find another group as pleasant and cooperative. In addition, the coaches need to be recognized for their cooperation and helpful suggestions.

The members of the writer's committee provided more than technical assistance. They helped to develop an idea into a research proposal. Their professional discipline was a major factor in the preparation of this study. The writer was fortunate to have had such a talented and dedicated group as a resource.

The patience and guidance of Dr. Celeste Ulrich should be recognized. Her advice and prodding insured the completion of this endeavor.

In conclusion, one other person deserves to be mentioned. The writer was ably assisted in gathering the data.

The responsibility of providing subjects with questionnaires and answer sheets, sharpened pencils, and the preparation of the testing area fell upon the shoulders of one young man. This same young man also did a remarkable job of keeping up with the brief case the writer all too often misplaced. It is therefore incumbent upon the writer that he especially thank his most able assistant and oldest son, Steve.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the first experiments in social psychology has roots in physical education. Wheeler (1970) maintained that Norman Triplett's experiment conducted in 1895 was indeed the first experiment in social psychology. In addition to being a psychologist Norman Triplett was a cyclist. He combined his vocation and avocation with interesting results. Triplett discovered that a rider produced a faster time when riding in the company of other riders. Consequently, the concept of social facilitation was born.

Triplett hypothesized that when an actor sensed others were observing him he would, in some manner, be motivated with a competitive drive. Others would later expand on this theme explaining the phenomonon of social facilitation in different terms. In general, the majority of the research generated has focused attention on the effects of a group on some aspect of an individual's behavior such as attitude or conformity. A great many variables have been identified in this context.

Less is known about the effect of an individual on the group. Some interesting data has been collected, however. Steiner and Fishbein (1965) included in their text a

reference to the Milgram experiment which demonstrated the effect of authority in eliciting obedience from a subject. This study suggested that a great many persons can be induced to administer a severe shock to another person even after having been advised that the shock victim had a history of a heart ailment. The inducement used was an "order" to administer shock from a person in authority which was given to the experimental subject. The Milgram experiment is cited, not for reasons of broad generalization, but to demonstrate that authoritative persons have been shown to have an influence on the behavior of an experimental subject.

Individuals can also have an influence on a group. Brown (1965, p. 680) stated "In group interaction, participation is very often unequal, a few people may do most of the talking, and the participation level of a member is generally related to his influentiality." Herein lies the focus of this investigation.

It has long been suggested that participation in athletics has beneficial results on the players. It remains to be demonstrated what influences, if any, actually occur in the athletic setting. If influences occur, the mechanism of their occurrence might also be worthy of investigation. It seems feasible that the techniques of group research and the results of that research be applied to athletic groups (teams). The possible influence of the best athlete upon

certain facets of his teammates' decision making process was the subject matter investigated in this study.

CHAPTER II

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It was the purpose of this study to examine the possible influence of persons of high and low status on the decision making of teammates of a youth basketball team. For the purpose of the experiment status was defined and identified in terms of athletic ability with the best player being the member of high status and the poorest player the member of low status. An attempt was made to define and delimit certain parameters of influence. Consequently, the study was limited to the identification of an independent variable, status of selected team members. The dependent variable examined was the response made by the group members to a questionnaire. These responses were made after the subjects were aware of response selections made by the team members previously identified by the experimenter as high or low status persons.

The dependent variable was examined in situations which were both relevant and irrelevant with regard to basketball. In addition to identifying influence, should it exist, the relevant and irrelevant breakdown permitted an investigation into the possible carry-over value of the influence.

Another measure of the range and scope of influence was gained through the identification of the responses by position on the team. Responses of starters and substitutes were identified so as to permit analysis of the influence of the high and low status members on starters and substitutes.

The following hypothesis were tested:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the responses made in the relevant and the irrelevant conditions.
2. There is no statistically significant difference between the responses made by the starters and the responses made by the substitutes.

The relevant and irrelevant conditions were formulated so as to determine whether an influence of identified persons of high and low status in basketball would extend into both a basketball and non-basketball environment. The responses of the starting players and the substitutes permit comparisons with each other. Such a contrast would give insight into intra-group cohesion should it exist.

Limits

Asch (1965), Gerard (1961) and others have studied the effects of the number of group members on the potential for influence on an individual. Other variables such as physical, intellectual, and personality traits have also been researched in relation to leadership and are summarized

in Cartwright and Zander (1968, p. 302-3). It remains to be determined what effects, if any, the variable of physical ability might play on a team member's ability to influence the decisions of his team mates.

The type of research methodology employed has been described as field action research involving a critical incident. The questionnaire was conducted in a room made available to the researcher and was adjacent to the gymnasium. The subjects had just completed a game or practice session prior to questioning. This testing environment was considered to be significant inasmuch as an in vivo atmosphere was retained to a greater degree than if the testing site were far removed.

It was not purported that any attempt was made to measure attitudes, morals, or ethical tenets. The position taken was that a stated dichotomous position can be elicited from a subject through a series of questions. This is not without precedence. Schacter (1951) followed a similar course in his study entitled Deviation, Rejection, and Communication. He created a fictitious character, Johnny Rocco, who supposedly committed a crime and was brought before the bar of justice. Schacter measured the positions taken by his subjects as to how Johnny Rocco should be judged ranging from mercy to severe punishment. In a sense, Schacter created a measure of the direction of opinion on a dichotomous scale and did not argue as to the validity of

the measuring device. That which was measured, the opinion, was not the focal point. It was the shift in opinion in which Schacter was interested and ultimately demonstrated. The Schacter model was used for the rationalization of the research design and the testing tool in the research being conducted in this study.

Definition of Terms

Status. Status was defined as the relative athletic ability with respect to basketball as perceived by team mates. This was determined by having the players rate one another in rank order according to playing ability. High status persons (Hi) are defined as those persons receiving the highest ratings with regard to playing ability from their peers. The low status persons (Lo) were defined as those receiving the lowest ratings.

Relevant Condition. The relevant condition was defined as that condition in which the questions asked pertained to the game of basketball. The subjects were together on teams to play basketball. Basketball was considered to be the reason for the existence of the group. Therefore basketball questions were defined as being relevant.

Irrelevant Condition. The irrelevant condition was defined as that condition in which the questions asked did not pertain to the game of basketball.

Group. The group was defined as a team of boys ages nine and ten. No group (team) exceeded twelve boys and the majority of teams had twelve members. Some teams had fewer than twelve members as a result of normal group mortality caused by members dropping out of the league, moving out of the area, illness, and injuries.

Cohesion. Cohesion was defined as the condition which was the result of all forces acting upon the group which influence the group to maintain itself. In these groups a particular force operating was the awareness of team membership. A secondary force was the position a member held on the team; i.e., starter or substitute. This secondary influence is defined as intragroup cohesion. The mechanics of cohesion shall be described in the review of the literature.

League rules required that every boy must play for an entire quarter of each game. To insure that the poorer players gained the fullest measure of participation, a rule required that the five weakest players enter a game for the entire second quarter. This was designed to eliminate the possibility of making a substitution of one or two weak players through the entire game and not allowing them to handle the ball by having the stronger players control the ball.

Inasmuch as the five weakest players played as a unit, this was presumed to be a factor in creating intragroup

cohesion. As a result two subgroups were presumed to exist on each team. These consisted of the five starters and the five substitutes. The two remaining members were labeled as sliders. Sliders played with the first or second units as required by absenteeism. Sliders might be starters one week and substitutes the next week. They were also in a position of becoming starters or substitutes more easily than the better or poorer players.

Confederate. In the classic sense, confederate is suggestive of an individual in league with an experimenter. The term "Stooge" goes further and such individuals are in league with an experimenter and provide false or misleading information to subjects during an experiment.

In this study the confederate-stooges existed in name only. They did participate in the ratings of the player ability and helped to determine status but they did not respond to the subsequent questionnaire. Responses selected by the experimenter were attributed to the confederates but these Hi and Lo status persons were neither questioned nor present during the administration of the questionnaire to the other members of the team.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For the most part the majority of the literature dealing with the concept of influence falls under the heading of conformity. Kiesler and Kiesler (1969, p. 2) define conformity as ". . . change in behavior or belief toward a group as a result of real or imagined pressure." The dynamics of these changes have been principally researched by sociologists and social psychologists and it is these disciplines to which one must turn in reviewing the literature. Consequently the definitions and variables associated with conformity in groups were taken from disciplines that do not center their attention on athletic teams. That is not to say that these findings do not have application in physical education and sport and the latter part of this chapter attempts to make these applications, as well as present the more specific writings in physical education and athletics.

It had been stated in the Introduction that Norman Triplett conducted what many considered to have been the first experiment in social psychology in 1895 and he discovered a tendency to conform (Wheeler, 1970). Triplett was a cyclist and this activity was in vogue at that time. This

interest carried over into his professional endeavors when he noted that a cyclist was more likely to produce a faster time when riding with another cyclist. This "social facilitation" arose when a subject saw another person and sensed an aura of competition, or even when the subject was being observed by others. That the presence of others could facilitate performance was noted by other researchers. Zonjac (1966) attributes social facilitation to the increase of the arousal level but noted that social facilitation was not a universal finding in all of the subsequent experiments.

In his discussion of collective behavior Roger Brown (1965) referred to Gustave Le Bon. Le Bon, in 1895, argued that irrational crowd behavior could be explained in terms of a "group mind." Others disagreed and the "Group Mind Controversy" was born. Brown identified McDougall and Allport as principal figures contesting Le Bon's position. Allport (1924, p. 8) stated that in a crowd there existed "a set of common ideas and feelings rendered more uniform by the conscious effects of one individual upon another." Groups, as such, could not possess a collective consciousness as only individuals could possess consciousness. Other people in a group could act as stimuli which would impinge upon the consciousness of individual members. Allport suggested three general effects of the presence of others on an individual. They are (1) a greater rate of response, i.e. more work

accomplished, (2) subjects were less accurate, and (3) subjects became less egocentric and showed concerns about what others thought.

The concept of social facilitation does not adequately explain the apparent trend toward conformity which certain subjects exhibit. Sherif wrote (1956, p. 47) "All judgements . . . have a basic principle in common . . . there has to be something else to compare it with." In this context Sherif suggested that norms may be established. Norm may be defined as ". . . expected modes of behavior and beliefs established by a group (Wheeler, 1970, p. 9)." Sherif (1956) utilized the autokinetic effect to demonstrate that subjects tend to agree with a group when faced with an ambiguous stimulus. A light presented in a dark room, although stationary, will appear to move and a three-stage process occurs. First the individual will set an estimate as to his own judgement of movement. Secondly, in the group situation, subjects in a group set and adhere to a group norm as an estimate of movement. Thirdly, when a stooge (confederate of the experimenter) states an estimate of the amount of movement, a naive subject can be influenced by the estimate of the stooge and show a tendency to establish a new estimate for himself. This is the basis for Sheriff's statement to the effect that all judgements need a basis of comparison.

Wheeler, commenting on this phenomonon, stated that "New norms arise when people interact in fluid and ambiguous situations." The Kieslers (1969) maintained that what occurred is not a change in the perception but a change in the scale upon which the perception is judged. The distance of the movement perceived is still the same but the nominal appraisal (naming) changes. In effect what is being argued is that when an ambiguous stimulus is utilized any judgement is as good as any other, recalling that in the Sherif experiment the light never actually moved in the first place.

Solomon Asch (1956) conducted a similar experiment but used an unambiguous stimulus. Subjects were asked to match a single vertical line to one of three lines of different lengths just to the right of the line to be compared. The task is relatively simple and the subject agrees with the other subjects taking part in the experiment. The other "subjects" are confederates however, and in fact there is only one subject. It had been prearranged that the true subject reports his judgement last and all judgements are made aloud.

After a brief period during which the subject and confederates agree, the experiment is designed so that confederates begin to select aloud incorrect responses. When faced with a unanimous majority, a minority of one is faced with a situation wherein he must disagree with the majority. Asch described some of the subjects as looking bewildered or

perplexed. Some became active and began to fidget while others became quiet and immobile. Approximately one-third of the subjects gave incorrect responses to the judgement task but were in accord with the judgements of the confederates.

Asch concluded that one confederate brought about little conformity, adding a second increased the amount of conformity, and adding a third increased conformity markedly. Further additions up to nine seemingly had no effect in increasing conformity. He also concluded that the more similar the stimulus the greater the degree of conformity that would result. Here again the variable of ambiguity of the stimulus results in conformity more often than if the choices were more clear cut.

Gerard et al. (1961) postulated that common sense would suggest that more confederates should produce greater conformity. To test this they designed an experiment utilizing the line comparison task similar to the Asch task. The Crutchfield technique was used wherein the "others" were merely known to the subject as lighted positions on a console. The subject had been told that he had been randomly chosen as an observer-recorder and that his function was to observe and record the choices of the "others." In addition he was instructed to make choices of his own.

There were two conditions tested. The first condition was called the "sheep" condition because the subject

was told the "others" knew what his choice was and it was believed this would result in a greater degree of conformity. In the second condition only the observer-recorder knew the choices of the others and they did not know his choices.

In both conditions the leveling off suggested by Asch did not occur. Instead a linear increase in the amount of conformity resulted up to a maximum of eight confederates. Gerard's study suggested that an increase in confederates will result in an increase in conformity.

It should be noted that Asch utilized a face to face setting as opposed to the Crutchfield technique which Gerard employed. The problem related to the relationship of conformity and the number of confederates remains unresolved. Brown (1965), in summarizing the research on this type of experiment, focused on only one definite conclusion. When conformity began to form he cited the number three as a "clotting point" (Brown, 1965, p. 673).

A word of caution needs to be inserted when conformity is being discussed. Private and public positions can, and often are seen to be, at odds. Persons aware of the dangers of smoking continue to smoke. Former segregationists send their children to integrated schools while at the same time wealthy liberals send their children to segregated or tokenly integrated private schools. Obviously there are many forces which result in these behaviors but the overt

behavior is at odds with internal and private positions. These examples are presented to suggest that the research cited can only account for a publicly stated position by the subjects and cannot infer that the subjects privately accepted the positions of the confederates. Internal acceptance may have occurred but only the overt stated position has been demonstrated.

Gerard (1969) contended that in many of the researched conditions conformity seemed to be as a result of a reflected appraisal. The conforming behavior was brought about by the information the subject received and the effect the information had on the subject. This would suggest that the environment is defined, not in absolute terms, but in terms of the norms and the standards held by a society. Indeed the research into linguistics suggests this to be the case (Brown, 1965). The Eskimo has seven words for snow, the Zuni has no word for the color orange, and the Hanunoo have ninety-two words for rice. It would appear that a culture has words to describe the things of importance to it and, as in the case of the Zuni, can function without the existence of the color orange just as if it did not exist. Of course orange does exist for any culture which has taken the steps to name and identify it. Consequently, reality is to some degree, relative to definitional terms and these terms are, to some degree, societal or culture bound.

Nonconformity

Nonconformity can occur in two dimensions, anti-conformity and independence. Anticonformity is as norm directed as is conformity, requiring of an actor an awareness of and a disregard for a norm (Hollander, 1967). Independence, on the other hand, is not norm directed suggesting a choice of behavior on the part of the subject and the choice is motivated by something other than the norm.

What are the causes of norm violations? Perhaps the most simple solution but the one often overlooked is a misunderstanding of the norm. A traveler in a foreign country might violate a norm unknowingly and would comply with a norm based behavior if he was aware of the customs. In such cases clarification may lead to conformity.

On the other hand, an individual may be in disagreement with a norm. He can either go along with the group or he may violate the norm. Should he choose the second alternative it may be because the norm of the group violated his personal norm or that of another reference group. The Jewish boy whose dietary standards are in opposition to those of his friends at summer camp still remainsin agreement with the members of his family and his religous community. An additional source of support would be the perceived support from sub-groups when a person is in a position prompting violation of the norm of a larger group.

As in the example cited of the camper, the family members and other members of his faith would provide support.

In contrast to the circumstance cited above, there are many instances in which an individual will behave in a manner contrary to the dictates of his personal norms or those of an important sub-group so as to conform with a larger group. "Public conformity is presumed to result from group pressures communicated in the form of tacit threats of punishments for non-conformity" (Tedeschi, 1972, p. 366). Group pressure may be defined as

> . . . a psychological force operating upon a person to fulfill others' expectations of him, including especially those expectations of others relating to the personal "roles" or to behaviors specified or implied by the "norms" of the group to which he belongs (Kiesler & Kiesler, 1969, p. 31).

In the context cited, norms can be described as standards of behavior and roles as expected behaviors of a more specific nature. Group pressure is the force behind uniformity, but the reasons for the pressure and its effectiveness may vary.

Variables of Conformity

Obedience is a special type of conformity. It differs in one important respect in that the subject may be influenced or pressured by an individual rather than by the group. In the Milgram experiment cited earlier, subjects were influenced to give their "victims" a painful punishment of electric shock even after it had been implied that a danger existed because the victim had a weak heart. The

scenario was such that the subjects were told that they were participating in a learning experiment in which they were to play the role of the teacher. The learner was to memorize a list of words and the teacher would administer a shock for an incorrect response when the learner was tested on the memorized list. The shock would increase on each subsequent incorrect response. The subject (teacher) did not see the victim (the learner) and was not aware that the learner was a confederate and did not really receive a shock. The experimenter was an impressive individual in a lab coat and he instructed the subject to continue to administer shocks while a scene was being played so as to imply that the victim was in grave danger. The victim would scream when shocked and plead for the experiment to end. Under the authoritative instructions from the experimenter the majority of the subjects continued to administer shock.

Presumably the subjects did not know that their "victims" were stooges who did not actually receive shocks. The continuance of the shocks was therefore attributed to an obedience to authority. Under this special type of compliance, that is obedience, approximately sixty-two percent of the subjects carried out their instructions and administered shock to their victims despite the victim's pleas to discontinue or his silence. The silence was generally interpreted to suggest a state of unconsciousness brought about by physical distress.

Under a second condition wherein the victim was physically nearer to the subject, the subject showed a reluctance to administer shock. It was concluded that a victim far removed was more likely to be given the maximum shock and when a victim was physically nearer and could be seen, the subjects were less likely to obey authority and inflict pain.

The implied status of the experimenter was cited as a significant factor in bringing about conformity in the Milgram experiment. There has been a tendency on the part of some observers to generalize this data to the general population. War criminals have been explained in terms of the Milgram experiment. Less sweeping but perhaps more defensible is a comparison found in the player-coach relationship, especially with young players. Players are often coerced into altering their life styles in matters such as hair style, diet, sleep habits, and other behavioral patterns by the coach-authority figure.

Other mechanisms or explanations of conformity include the conditions of guilt and/or ingratiation (Kiesler & Kiesler, 1969). A condition of guilt may result in conformity as a person attempts to restore self-image. The ingratiation condition would depend on the status of the individual to whom the conforming behavior is directed.

Modeling may account for some measure of conforming behavior, although some observers reject the concept that

imitation and conformity are synonomous. A very practical example is the existence of such phenomona as fads, crazes, rages, and other temporary behaviors. The expression "you know" which has enjoyed a great amount of usage adds little or nothing to conversation. The use of the expression may well be attributed to modeling behavior.

A more germane example is taken from the Central YMCA of Greensboro, North Carolina. A program for young basketball players was started in the mid-fifties. During the same era the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill basketball team enjoyed an undefeated season and won a national championship. Many of the YMCA boys had attended one or more of the games and/or saw their "Tar Heels" on television. As the basketball season progressed several of the boys began to make the sign of the cross prior to taking a foul shot. When questioned they admitted that they were not Catholic but that they had seen Tommy Kearns cross himself before he attempted a free throw. Kearns was one of the important members of that popular Tar Heel team. This example fits more easily into the modeling definition than with any of the other conformity mechanisms thus far presented.

The principle of consistency has been also used to explain conformity. Brown (1965, p. 551) stated that "it seems to be a general law of human thought that we expect people we like and respect to associate themselves with ideas

we like and respect . . . ." Consequently, if a person had to disagree with himself in order to agree with the group which he held in esteen, he would experience dissonance.

Using George McGovern's candidacy for the presidency of the United States as an example, the following figures are presented to represent a model of the principle of consistency. The three elements in the model are the candidate McGovern, the Democratic party, and the individual who happens to be a member of the Democratic party.

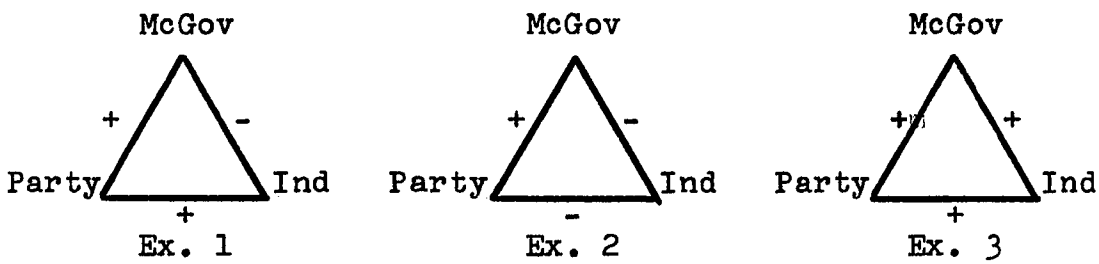

Figure 1

Consistency Model

In the first example (Ex. 1) the individual is a Democrat and likes his party as signified by the plus sign (+) between him and his party as shown in the model. The party nominated McGovern whom he did not support and this is depicted with a minus sign (-) between the individual and McGovern. The individual had available to him options as the model might suggest. In Example 2 he rejects the party

which endorsed a candidate not to his liking and in effect he says, "If the party chooses McGovern I do not like the party." This is in agreement with the quote taken from Brown regarding association and dissociation.

Another alternative is represented in Example 3. In this case the individual reappraised his judgement of the candidate McGovern. Based on the judgement of significant others the individual rated the candidate in more favorable terms. This too is in agreement with the Brown position.

Actual events reveal neither alternative occurred in accordance with the models as depicted. The McGovern candidacy was a disaster at the polls but other Democrats fared rather well as a group. Possibly the individual redefined the party as a whole and attributed the McGovern candidacy to a subgroup which somehow managed to get their candidate on the ballot. This assumption meshes with the dissonance theorists explanation allowing for an "out" so that consonance might be achieved by the individual in light of what actually did occur. It should be stressed that what has been presented regarding dissonance theory has been hypothetical, pointing up the shortcoming of dissonance theory. A theory which does not allow one to predict outcomes is of little practical value. The models did not predict or even allow for the actual outcome of the election. The theory merely served as a mechanism for explaining events that had already occurred.

Any list of variables associated with conformity will vary according to the author who composed the list. Theoretical differences can account for much of the disagreement and semantics can account for others. The following list has been compiled merely to demonstrate the current thinking as to what variables one might expect to find. It is largely a product of Hollander (1967) and the Kieslers (1969) but liberties have been taken in the organization and the wording.

Variables Associated with Conformity

1. The Individual
    - A. Public and private acceptance
    - B. Commitment
    - C. Characteristics as exemplified by personality, needs, and similiar individual conditions.
2. Person-Group Relationship
    - A. Attractivess of the group
    - B. Status in the group
    - C. Interdependence (common fate)
    - D. Past and present interchanges
    - E. Commitment to future action
    - F. Sanctions and surveillance
3. Characteristics and Qualities of the Group
    - A. Composition characteristics including items such as race, age, sex, and religion.
    - B. Size
    - C. Unanimity
    - D. Extremity of the norm
    - E. Nature of the norm
    - F. Setting
    - G. Group goals
    - H. Appraisal outside of the group (what others think)
    - I. Function and autonomy of the group

4. Nature of the task

   A. Competence
   B. Confidence
   C. Difficulty
   D. Importance

Most, if not all, of the variables associated with conformity appear under one or more of the headings suggested in the preceding list. Not all authors would agree to the inclusion of all of the items listed and there are those who might be prompted to word certain of the variables differently.

Communication

If a group is to influence an individual there should be some form of communication. Tedeschi (1972, pp. 347-8) recognized this when he stated, ". . . coersive and reward power, persuasion, modeling, social conformity and social reinforcement are based on explicit or tacit forms of four kinds of communications." He identified the four forms as threats, promises, warnings, and "mendations." He defined mendation in terms of intensity. A mendation would have the same relationship to a promise as a warning would have to a threat. The difference lies in the amount of persuasiveness and the strength and ability to follow through.

That Tedeschi mentioned reinforcement is significant. Reinforcer has been defined as an object or condition that ". . . is given after the completion of a response or sequence of responses (Whaley & Malott, 1971, p. 15)." In

addition the object or condition must increase the probability of the response in question.

It might be instructive to reinterpret Asch's findings in terms of social reinforcement. Asch maintained that when a stooge shifted to the dissenting position certain of his subjects showed a tendency to shift in the same direction. It could be postulated that such a position shift results in a mini-coalition and, as such, provides the subject with reinforcement. Conversely, such a coalition could have the effect of devaluing that which had previously been reinforcing. It could be argued that if a feeling of acceptance followed a behavior, in this case a shift in position, and the behavior subsequently continued, then the feeling of acceptance was indeed a reinforcer.

Endler and Hoy (1967) demonstrated the role of reinforcement in conformity. Subjects who were provided with reinforcement one hundred percent of the time demonstrated a greater degree of conformity than other subjects reinforced fifty percent of the time. Both subjects receiving positive reinforcement conformed to a greater degree than those subjects who were merely subjected to a majority opinion in a Crutchfield-type situation. The reinforcement used in this experiment was positive feedback. The task was answering true-false questions.

The value of any particular reinforcer would largely depend on the individual being reinforced. Properties of a

group or an individual would tend to make the reinforcement wax and wane in the eyes of the subject and therefore increase or decrease in reinforcement value.

Schacter's experiment entitled Deviation, Rejection, and Communication (1951) has given definitions and clarification to the interactions which arise in group situations. Prior to organizing the experimental groups Schacter questioned his subjects as to certain interests they held using the ruse that clubs would be formed so that these interests could be pursued. The types of clubs included case-study, radio, movie, and editorial groups. By assigning his subjects to these clubs he purported to control cohesiveness, maintaining that subjects assigned to a club of their choice resulted in a club of high cohesiveness. In a similar manner he could create groups of low cohesiveness. He defined cohesiveness in terms of the ". . . total field of forces acting on members to remain in a group (p. 312)." The specific force here was the valence of the group, that is to say the interest it held for its membership.

A life history of "Johnny Rocco" was read to each group and presented so as to suggest that the fictional "Rocco" was a real person. The story ended with Johnny awaiting sentencing for a minor crime he had committed. Each of the groups were to decide the fate of Johnny. They were to rate, on a seven point scale, a disposition of the case ranging from a maximum punishment to extreme leniency.

The very nature of this task introduced the variable of relevance. The disposition of the Rocco case was foreign inasmuch as the interests of a radio or movie club were concerned but relevant to a case-study or editorial group. This rationale was reflected in the definition of relevance given by Schacter when he suggested that relevance be defined as ". . . the ordering, in terms of importance to the group, of activities over which the internal power of the group extends (p. 312)."

Using paid participants as stooges (one extreme deviant, one slider, and one modal position) Schacter produced a setting which resulted in group interaction. The deviant chose a position on the scale as far from the group opinion as he could. The slider did the same but then moved (slid) in the direction of the group opinion. The modal position assumed the position of the majority of the group members.

The stooges presented a variable which was assumed to have an effect on the direction and volume of the group discussion as it attempted to resolve the question before it. Schacter observations and conclusions are as follows:

1. The frequency of communication with a deviant forms a curvilinear relationship with respect to time in the high cohesive and high relevant conditions.

2. The amount of deviance increases the volume of communication toward the deviant.

3. Communication levels are a function of dependency and pressure to change.
   Comm. = Dep. x Pres. to Change

4. Pressure to change and dependency are functions of relevance and dependence.

5. Relevance depends on the importance of the activity, the value of the activity, and the needs of the group membership.

6. Cohesiveness is interdependent with the importance of the group in defining norms for its membership and in the extent to which the norm is defined.

It is difficult to sum up an undertaking of the magnitude of the Schacter study in one sentence but in this case not entirely impossible. The volume and strength of the pressure that a group can exert upon its membership will vary with the relevance and cohesiveness of the group. This generalization highlights the major findings of the Schacter experiment. In laymen's terms it would suggest that in an important endeavor, the person causing the greatest amount of difficulty will get the greatest amount of verbal attention from the group.

A great deal of research has been generated from the Schacter study. Simply stated, Schacter's position is that highly cohesive and relevant groups have a tendency to maintain themselves and one of the mechanisms for maintenance is to pressure deviants into agreement. One of the more interesting extrapolations from Schacter has been offered by Pratto and Knox (undated). Using the Schacter data, they assigned mathmatical values for degrees of deviance,

cohesiveness, and relevance. They fed the data into a computer consequently developing a program which developed and depicted curves showing the amount of communication directed at a deviant. The greater the deviance, the greater is the amount of communication. Moderate deviation receives less communication and a modal position receives little or none. In addition increases in relevance or cohesiveness increases communications directed at a deviant and decreases in cohesiveness and/or relevance will decrease the communication. The model enables the observer to predict the amount of communication when the other variables have been manipulated after a few trial situations have been produced. While the model is a far cry from reality, it does much to increase one's understanding of a very complex issue.

Freedman and Fraser (1966) added a new dimension to Schacter's ideas regarding conformity. It was their hypothesis that if they could induce a person to comply with a small request he would then be more inclined to comply with a larger request at a later time. This is called the foot-in-the-door technique. Under the guise of being researchers compiling a public service manual, the experimenters telephoned subjects and asked them if they would answer questions about the household products they used. If they were agreeable they were then asked eight questions of a general nature such as the brand of the products they preferred. This was the small request.

Three days later the subjects were contacted again by the same experimenter. The experimenter asked if he could come into the subject's home and take a survey during which five or six men would enter the subject's home and count all of the products found. If the subject agreed to this request he was thanked and told a list was being compiled of people willing to cooperate and that he would be contacted at a later date. If the subject refused he would be thanked for his time.

In addition to the experimental condition described above a control group was arranged. The control group was contacted only with the second request. It was concluded that those subjects who initially answered the questions were more likely to agree to comply with a second and larger request.

There were some problems in the design of this study. The persons gathering the data were aware of the purpose of the research and this fact may have introduced a bias. Consequently another similar study was devised with a tighter design. Following their basic design Freedman and Fraser arranged for the experimental group to be given a small initial request which was to display a small sign in their window advocating that California be kept beautiful. This group and a control group were given a second request which was to display a large sign on their lawn in the front of

their homes advocating safe driving. The signs were large and poorly lettered and tended to obscure the houses.

There was a similarity of request in the second experiment inasmuch subjects were asked to display a sign. The difference was one of magnitude. In addition the experimenters were blind which was accomplished by having different people make the second request rather than have the same people make both requests. With the initial request being similar in issue to the second and but more demanding request a compliance figure of 76% was achieved. The control group which was only approached with a second request complied only 16% of the time.

Status

Another variable often mentioned in the literature but one that is difficult to manipulate is status. Status is a commodity which is often capitalized upon. Famous actors, athletes, and other public figures are sought to endorse products, causes, political candidates, and other activities or movements in an effort to sway the opinions of the public. Kiesler and Kiesler (1969) maintained that people of high status produce a greater degree of private acceptance in subjects than do persons of low status. The Kieslers also stated that people tend to distort the behavior of a person so that it might fit with their preconceptions of that person. An example can be drawn from the

political arena. In politics the "in" party rewards able persons with political appointments. To the party not in power such appointments are often viewed as "cronyism."

Hollander (1967) explained the tendency to allow certain people to deviate from the norm in terms of what he called "idiosyncratic credit." This credit can be earned through a rise in status by demonstrating competence in a field and by previously conforming to the behavioral norms as expected. These credits will eventually allow the high status individual a measure of leeway not permitted those of lesser status. It would suggest that football's famous playboy, Joe Namath, is allowed to deviate from the customary standard in proportion to his playing ability. The Hollander position would predict that had Mr. Namath not been able to throw the football as quickly and accurately as he does he would face the choice of being either conservative or unemployed. Namath was one of the first to defy openly the norms of athletic conduct. Subsequent changes in the life styles of today's athletes suggest that persons of high status have an apparent influence in establishing norms.

Lorge (1936) described an experiment regarding the effect of status in which he took an inflamatory statement and ascribed it to two different people. An example of the type of statement is, "I hold it that a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing, and necessary in the political

world as storms are in the physical." When such a statement was ascribed to Thomas Jefferson subjects showed a tendency to agree with it. When the statement was said to be a quote from Lenin the subjects tended to disagree. In this instance, at least, what is said was not as important as who had said it.

Any discussion of status should distinguish between ascribed and achieved status. Ascribed status is generally a matter of luck involving such factors as age, sex, lineage, and other demographic data. Such traits represent social values and the individual has little or no control over them. Achieved status is usually defined in terms of a job or task performance (Brown, 1965). Effort plays a major role in achieved status with the values of society being critical. Expertise in those endeavors deemed important by a society bring about a measure of status. In the United States outstanding athletes receive a greater degree of fame and the corresponding status than do outstanding scholars. Both put forth great amounts of energy and effort.

The Kieslers (1969) summarized the status question when they suggested three bases of status. First they suggested that one who can provide rewards and whose contributions are critical will enjoy high status. Joe Namath was instrumental in the Jets attaining success and success brought about financial rewards for Namath and his teammates.

The second basis of status is the price a member must pay so that the group might attain a particular goal. Again Joe Namath can serve as an example. His celebrated knees have received a great deal of attention because of the injuries they have sustained. It is noteworthy that less gifted performers receive much less attention for similar injuries inasmuch as their contributions are not as crucial to the success of their respective teams.

The third consideration as a basis for status is the investment made by the other members of the group. Namath and his teammates have their livelihoods at stake and their investment cost, in terms of time, pain, and effort is considerable.

Recurrent Findings

It is difficult, if not impossible, to summarize what has been written in the field of conformity except to suggest that conformity is <u>not</u> the result of one isolated factor. Instead it represents a syndrome affected by internal and external influences on a person. That so much research is still going on regarding conformity is suggestive of the fact that there is still much to be learned. Nevertheless there is a core of knowledge about the recurrent findings (Kiesler and Kiesler, 1969). The findings which contribute to that core are:

1. When an individual accepts his groups goals, he will be motivated to seek conformity to attain these goals.
2. Clear goals enhance conformity.
3. Relevant standards enhance pressure to conform.
4. Attainable goals enhance conformity.
5. Contributors are highly valued.
6. When cooperation or interdependence is needed to attain a goal, conformity increases.

These findings are generally supported by the research as presently constituted and summarize the prevailing literature.

Conformity and Athletics

Thus far the literature selected for review has dealt with many kinds of groups. Inasmuch as a team has been defined as the group for the purposes of this study it remains to define, more carefully, the term "group" in the team situation and in sociological and psychological terms.

Sport teams can be defined as natural groups in the sense that, unlike laboratory groups, they exist for a purpose other than the intentions of an experimenter.

Lüschen (1969) noted some of the characteristics of a sport team as a small group. At times he sees the group as a restricting influence on the individuals' personal freedom. In an athletic team a minimum of personal freedom occurs and rewards are often extrinsic. This phenomonon is a submission to the "we" at the expense of the "me."

According to Lüschen the individual himself may find reward possibilities as being intrinsic and his personal relationships are what keeps the group alive.

Segar (1972) is more precise when he described what he termed "specialized small groups." Much of the description of these groups can be applied to sport teams. Segar's five characteristics of a specialized small group are:

1. The group survives its members.
2. Membership is part-time.
3. Roles are played according to group rules and rules are needed to satisfy the group needs and maintain interrelationships.
4. Members share a conception of how the interrelationships should be.
5. Members know in advance what is expected of them.

It is worth the effort to explore each of the characteristics listed above as to their application to a sport team.

The first characteristic, that a group survives its membership, requires little elucidation. It does suggest an obligation to the group by the members. This occurs because the group has been preceded by a past membership and will be survived by a future membership. A tradition greater than the simple sum of the current membership exists.

Part-time membership is the second characteristic listed. The percentage of time an individual will spend as a team member is generally a factor which will vary with the

nature of the team. In terms of longevity, most team members will terminate their membership over a period of time because of age, conflicts, and lack of interest. A member of a team is rarely a member of the team for a twenty-four hour period. A faculty basketball team member might play the role of team member once a week at game time. Some of the more successful teams might have members who show a tendency to recreate their membership roles during daily coffee breaks. Some might even extend these roles to more than the weekly game by scheduling practice sessions. The extension of this continuance of membership is seen in "big-time" college athletics. Coaches often prefer to have the team live in the same dormitories and eat at the same tables in the dining hall. In this regard the coaches attach importance to the establishment of a full-time membership feeling.

Role playing within a group provides ample material for a host of research endeavors. Benne and Sheats (1948) defined the functional roles of group members and classified them into three broad groupings. Task roles relate to the function of the group. Individual roles are directed toward the satisfaction of the members themselves. Building and maintenance roles relate to the preservation and continuance of the group. Each of these can be further reduced into more definitive subcategories.

It can be argued that at least one important variable in task roles and maintenance roles is the contribution made by an individual member. In addition it can be argued that the skill of a team member has an important relationship with these roles. Consequently, with the roles being important to the group, the status of the individual member would be a function of his playing ability.

The three final points of Segar can be handled as one issue. Rules normally exist in a team setting. The members are aware of the rules and they are also aware of what is expected of them as members. It has already been noted that role deviance can be tolerated using Joe Namath as an example. Jackie Robinson (1972) reported an opposite reaction. He was forced to suppress his individuality upon becoming a member of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Being the first black man to play in the major leagues, he was expected to be extremely careful in his relationships with the players, the press, and the public. It was an accepted rule of society at that time that Robinson keep within certain bounds (his "place"). This social rule defined the role Robinson would play and was endorsed by many of his team mates, the institution of baseball, and, of course, the fans.

Interestingly enough the deviance allowed Robinson in his assigned role came first from within the group (team). Small group (team) rules were first amended before these of

the larger group (society) were amended. This is unlike situations in which the macrocosm (society) amends rules and brings about changes at the smaller levels such as was seen in the racial integration of the schools. Robinson's skill as a player was well established before he was able to gain a full measure of membership in the Dodger club.

That interrelationships are to be shared by the team members might not be universally applicable. It is suggested that for a satisfactory relationship to exist this should be the case. Obviously a team evidencing dissension and cliques might show a tendency to misdirect what energies it might possess into destructive ends. There are imperatives that are generally accepted by team members and they can range from goal directed ends (winning) to socially motivated ends (fellowship). Ulrich (1968, p. 15) stated that "Cultural imperatives push society toward conformity." It does not seem unreasonable to apply the same logic to the microcosm (team).

Segar (1972) defined many small groups as sub-groups. Such a group can fulfill needs for its membership which can not be otherwise fulfilled by larger groups such as the community or the family. She describes the sub-group as being "unifunctional" inasmuch as they seek one goal. Larger groups with many goals are said to be multifunctional.

Certain characteristics often manifest themselves in a team setting. As a group egoism emerges it is often

accompanied by a mistrust or contempt of other groups. Richard Woodley (1973) spent an entire season with a high school football team and described this phenonomon. Although Woodley is not a sociologist in the sense of a William Foote Whyte, he did enter into the group and report his observations in a manner similar to what Whyte had done. Woodley successfully identified the factors involved in the emergence of the group egoism which Segar (1972) identified. These factors include pride, solidarity, a "we-feeling," and group slogans. Throughout the season the coaches and players in Woodley's book, Team, worked to establish these factors. Pep rallies, cheer leaders, team meetings, and other devices to bring about unity were all a part of the development of the group egoism. When the team cried, "LAKETOWN NEVER QUITS," they did it as a group in unison and became as one voice and one body.

Group integration occurs in Woodley's analysis through a selection and socialization of members and, as Segar (1972) noted, it was constantly reaffirmed. Reaffirmation occurs through isolation, group egoism, fear and hostility towards outsiders, sanctions imposed on the membership, and rites and ceremonies.

It is more than a coincidence that Woodley, the novelist, would so closely agree with Segar, the sociologist. It suggests that the novelist was an astute observer and the sociologist a sensitive scientist.

Influence in a Team Setting

The mechanics of group influence have already been described. It remains to examine these mechanics in a team setting. It was to group stability and cohesion to which Ulrich (1969, p. 59) was referring when she wrote, "An athletic team has the ready-made structure to supply such a social phenomonon." Inasmuch as athletic teams are relatively small and stable and do share a common goal this observation appears to be valid. Ulrich went a step farther when she suggested that prediction and analysis are possible because in the United States the Judeo-Christian ethic provides norms of behavior. Given the variables described earlier in the review of the literature and the ability to predict, the athletic team is a viable entity for research.

For whatever the reason an athletic team must hold some attraction if it is to enlist members. The factors might range from money for the professional athlete to fellowship for the player in a church league. Behaviorists would suggest that membership must provide reinforcement. The language of the social psychologist utilizes the concept of relevance. It is apparent that a team must have something to offer the players.

Most athletic teams share a similarity of opinion on certain relevant issues. A high degree of credibility of the team results in a high degree of attraction for the members. The members are afforded an opportunity for

self-definition. This self-definition is in terms of others and a comparison occurs. If the group is attractive, an instrumentality of response will take place, which insists that the team members undergo a type of conditioning. As the attractiveness of the group becomes greater, private acceptance by the membership increases and the individual becomes more suceptible to group norms. Commenting on this point the Kieslers (1969, p. 11) wrote, "With some exceptions . . . this appears to be as solid an empirical generalization as one can arrive at in social psychology." This is an important point when the athletic team is being considered. An athletic team holds a high degree of attraction. The greater the attraction, the greater is the probability that the individual will succumb to the pressure of the team.

The interaction of an individual can have a positive impact on himself as well as on his team. He can gain acceptance into the group while contributing toward the group goal and at the same time contributing to the continuance of the existence of the group. During this time the individual is gaining information about reality. He is in the process of validating his opinions and checking their consistency with others. In this sense he is measuring the correctness of his beliefs, defining that correctness in agreement with members of an attractive group. Equally important to an athlete, he finds himself in an environment

in which he is in a position to evaluate his physical skills with others.

Status of Team Members

Within any group it becomes apparent that some members are held in greater esteem than others. Some members exert a greater influence than others. Within any issue there is a limited range of opinions. The opinion of another has the effect of narrowing down the choice.

A part of the reason for influence stems from information restriction. Few persons have the full range of information available to them. Furthermore there exists in many persons a need to be correct and a significant other person can reinforce the individual by verification or through acting as a model. A significant other person is enhanced by credibility and trustworthiness. His relative ability is also important as manifested by his confidence and talent, as well as his self esteem (Kiesler & Kiesler, 1969). Television commercials attempt to establish credibility and trust by suggesting their hucksters are physicians or belong to other learned professions. In considering relative ability, the television ad-men use persons accomplished in various fields to sell their wares. In the athletic milieu the Kieslers' statement that relative ability is important needs little explanation.

Status has been defined by Segar (1973, p. 104) as ". . . a position within a group . . ." or ". . . a delimited place in the structure of this group." Ulrich (1969) pointed out that the nature of games is such that skills become apparent to others during play and the skillful may assume roles of leadership. By accepting this position, status might be further defined as authority associated with a role position.

Lawther (1972) wrote, ". . . the social prestige and status granted the successful athlete tend to make his entree into social groups easier and more successful, hence they lead to self-confidence, and perhaps leadership and dominance (p. 102)." It would appear that this position can be attacked from the standpoint that an anti-athletic group would shun the athlete and consequently the nature of the group dictates the ease of entree for the athlete. Lawther's statement is of merit but cannot be used as a blanket statement for all groups. It does lend credence to the position that the level of expertise of the individual athlete would tend to have an influential effect within the community of athletes, that is, within the team. Relevance is the important variable.

Berger and Fisek (1970) demonstrated how a relevant skill will affect group members. Using junior college subjects, they administered a bogus test and arbitrarily assigned an attribute as a result of the results of the

test. Students were told of their scores and then given another test to determine what influence, if any, the first attribute would have on a second task. The second task was to judge the whiteness of a card which was shown. The results revealed that the subjects who believed that they possessed the first attribute were more successful than those who did not believe they possessed the attribute. The authors concluded that the status of the members is a function of relative ability as defined within a group setting. The power and prestige of the successful members of the experiment was determined by their expectations of themselves and what others had expected of them.

William Foote Whyte (1965) observed the relationship between expertise and status almost forty years ago. He stated, "The leader may not be the best basketball player, bowler, or fighter, but he must have some skill in whatever pursuits are of particular interest to the group (p. 108)." Whyte suggested a correlation between skill and leadership and status when he wrote,

> The records of the season 1937-38 show a very close correspondence between social position and bowling performance. This developed because bowling became the primary social activity of the group. It became the main vehicle whereby the individual could maintain, gain, or lose prestige (p. 580).

Whyte also noted that if when choosing team mates a man selected a friend rather than a better bowler he was likely to please no one, least of all the members of his own team.

This suggests a factor of relevancy, that is to say, the factors which brought the friend status in one situation were not as important in the other (bowling) situation.

"All social systems differentiate the individual members of the system along several dimensions," according to Edward Sampson (1960, p. 225). These dimensions, or criteria, are based on ascribed and/or achieved characteristics. To a team a relevant characteristic is athletic ability. A game situation is one of the best conditions under which one might clearly demonstrate superiority. The effectiveness of a performance is relatively easy to judge.

In his dissertation David Anspaugh (1972) sought to examine the sources of leadership in the basketball setting. It was his conclusion that the leader was one of the better players and a member of the starting five players. The leader was likely to be task oriented and would be held in high esteem by his team mates.

The Kieslers (1969) reported that high status persons communicate less with low status persons. Communications on athletic teams do not necessarily follow this pattern. In game situations the communications originate and are directed according to the location and role of the individual. For example, in a baseball game more communication is directed to the pitcher than to the outfielders. The catcher, by virtue of his location, would tend to initiate more communication than would the outfielders. Similar patterns become evident

in other team sports and games. A central position in a network will enhance ascendency to leadership and status (Brown, 1965).

A low status member (poorer performer), when thrust into a game situation, would be likely to receive a considerable amount of communication from his teammates of both high and low status. Practice sessions may result in teammates talking to one another despite their relative status. Semmingly this is in contradiction of the contention that persons of high status communicate less with those of low status. At present there is little known as to the amount and direction of communications because this aspect has not been researched in athletics as thoroughly as in other fields.

Poor performers might be classified as deviants inasnuch as the goal of a team is to attain playing excellence. Consequently it might be postulated that such performances would result in a greater degree of communication being directed at the poor performer. This position would be in agreement with the Schacter contention that deviants receive greater amounts of communication and would be an exception to the position that members of high status communicate less with members of low status.

It has been suggested that a person of high status has more to gain from an association with a high status person than a high status person has to gain from a low status

person. Inasmuch as talent is an unevently distributed attribute among team members the emergent status patterns do evolve. The paucity of research makes it untenable to state that the low status persons stand to gain from association with their high status teammates. Perhaps as a team evolves from a part-time situation to a full time situation more of the findings of group researchers might apply. In this regard researchers might be obliged to define "team" in terms specific to their research. It is possible that one might find more differences than similarities when comparing the Boston Celtics with a church league basketball team. Both are teams in a definitional sense but beyond that comparisons are difficult to make. Of course the term "athlete" is also loosely applied in research and often needs to be more clearly defined.

According to Shepherd (1964) high status and conformity are highly correlated. It is conceivable that persons of high status are actually the deciders and establishers of norms. This would at least, partially account for their conformity. Shepherd went further and suggested that conformity may be a means of status mobility. This idea has merit but is not as important in athletics where skill is a key factor in assessing value. Initially one might expect most team members to conform but once their value to the team has been established the better player would be more likely to be permitted to deviate.

Idiosyncratic credit, it has been pointed out, is granted to the high status members, and they are allowed more leeway in their adherence to norms.

Low status persons very often adhere more closely to the norms than do the high status persons. Shepherd explained this seemingly contradictory position in terms of an implied threat to the non-conforming person of low status. In athletics the marginal player might be more careful regarding matters of behavior and star players would get away with a greater amount of deviation.

An overriding factor one must consider when considering deviance is relevancy. Pratto and Knox (undated) presented a rationale for their computer model which depicted the communication with deviants within a group. They made three assertions which appear to apply equally well to athletic teams and the relevancy for players. First they contended that relevancy in a group depends on the importance of the activity. They then suggested relevancy depended on the value of the activity. Finally, relevance depended on the needs of the group members in their roles as group members.

Because of their nature, groups are often difficult subjects for researching and many observers criticize the data collected. While the data may at first appear inconclusive, the recurring patterns in the findings of different researchers is a significant factor, making these recurrent findings nore credible.

CHAPTER IV

DESIGN AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

It was the purpose of this study to examine the possible influence of persons of high and low status on the decision making of teammates of a youth basketball team. The study was limited to the examination of an independent variable, status. Status was defined in terms of relative athletic ability as perceived by teammates. The dependent variable(s) were selections made on a questionnaire by the members of the group after having been informed of a position previously taken by the persons of high and low status. The variables were examined in both relevant and irrelevant situations with regard to the basketball environment.

The following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the responses made in the relevant and the irrelevant conditions.
2. There is no statistically significant difference between the responses made by the starters and the responses made by the substitutes.

The Sample

The sample of the study was drawn from the teams in a basketball league for boys nine and ten years of age, and any

findings cannot be generalized to a larger and broader population. Age and sex were controlled within the sample.

The league is conducted as a part of the overall program of the Central YMCA of Greensboro, North Carolina. Membership in the YMCA is required of all participants, and anyone playing in another program is ineligible to participate in the YMCA league. The program is intended to serve boys who have not had an opportunity to play in any other program. Each team plays one game each week on Saturday morning. In addition, each team is limited to a one hour practice session each week. Practice sessions are conducted in the YMCA gymnasium, which is also the site of the games.

For the most part team members come from middle and upper middle class families. In addition, many of the parents are professional people. Consequently the sample of boys is not representative of the community as a whole.

The Design

The design of the research can be explained through the use of a model. Although the model cannot be used in its entirety, selected portions can be utilized in statistical calculations. (See Table 1.)

The two conditions labeled relevant and irrelevant refer to the nature of the questions asked. The questions which pertain to basketball are the relevant questions and

TABLE 1

Research Design Model

	Condition Relevant				Condition Irrelevant			
	Situation #1			Situation #2	Situation #1			Situation #2
	+	-	0	+ - 0	+	-	0	+ - 0
ST								
SUB								

those which do not refer to basketball are irrelevant. (See Appendix A and B).

Under each condition an additional manipulation was devised and these are referred to as Situation 1 and Situation 2. These manipulations are positions which were attributed to the confederates in the experiment. The high status and low status confederates were each assigned a positive or negative position on the questionnaire. The subjects were told, prior to their taking the questionnaire, to assume certain responses had been made by the confederates (Appendix C). Four manipulations were possible. They were:

Relevant Situation 1	Hi+	Lo-
Relevant Situation 2	Hi-	Lo+
Irrelevant Situation 1	Hi+	Lo-
Irrelevant Situation 2	Hi-	Lo+

Each heading of "Situation" was further subdivided into categories indicated a + for plus, - for minus, and 0 for a neutral position. These cells were designed to record the total number of responses made by the subjects for each question under the appropriate response category. The responses made by starting players and those who were substitutes were further subdivided.

The Instrument

The questions asked of the subjects were framed in such a way so as to conform generally to the Judeo-Christian

ethic. Three choices of responses were available and those responses identified as (+) are those acceptable within the ethic. Negative (-) responses are those considered unacceptable and responses designated as neutral (0) may mean indecision, avoidance of the issue, or that the respondent had no feelings on the issue. Three filler items were added to the ten question instrument. This was done in an attempt to disguise the intent of the instrument from the subjects. Filler items were not scored.

The relevant questions were based rather broadly upon the Action-Choice tests for competitive sports situations (Haskins). Responses were reduced to three rather than the original five so as to allow a dichotomy of response choices. In addition, the questions and responses were tailored to accommodate some of the unique characteristics of the YMCA program and to accommodate the level of understanding of the boys.

The irrelevant questions were not based on a previously constructed device but were devised specifically for the research being undertaken. Each question was designed to allow three responses on a continuum as was the relevant response choice pattern. Filler items were provided as in the case of the relevant instrument.

Both instruments were submitted to three members of the YMCA staff for approval. In addition their comments for improving the instrument were solicited. Prior to the staff

reviewing the instrument, the questions had been submitted to three of the coaches in the program, one public school teacher, and one lay person. The original instruments had well in excess of ten questions. In addition to suggestions for amending certain questions the reviewers were asked to reduce the instrument to the final ten item instrument.

A director of the remedial reading program for the city of Greensboro was consulted. He reviewed both instruments and expressed assurance that if the questions were read to the subjects the problem of reading levels causing misunderstanding could be overcome. Consequently, the questions were staged, that is, read to the subjects.

Both instruments were given to two children of the same age of those in the sample prior to being used in the experiment. This was done to determine if any problems might be foreseen when the experiment began as well as to give the experimenter the experience of administering the instrument.

It is important to emphasize that there was no contention made that a measure of ethics or morals was being accomplished. The data being sought were to provide an indication of influence for relevant and irrelevant conditions in situations where persons of high and low status had been used as confederates and whose positions were made known to the subjects.

Determination of Status

Status was defined in terms of the relative athletic ability as perceived by teammates. Players were asked to select the best player on their team based on playing ability. During a regularly scheduled practice session each boy was individually asked to make such a rating. He was seated before a table and twelve cards were spread out before him. On each card was printed the name of a team member and each member was included. The player was then instructed to place the cards (players) in the order of their playing ability. The rating was done one by one while the rest of the team continued to practice.

The card sorting task allowed the rater to change his mind as a card could be relocated, whereas a written list required a great deal of alteration. In addition spelling and handwriting problems were overcome. Finally, this method masked the intent of the rating to some degree. Had the players been asked to select only the best and poorest players, the poorest players might have been embarrassed.

Each first place vote was valued at twelve points, second place was valued at eleven points, down to place twelve valued at one point. The player with the highest point total was defined as the high status person (Hi) and the player with the lowest point total was defined as the low status person (Lo).

Procedure

Following a regularly scheduled game on a Saturday morning the players were brought into the room made available for the research. They were seated at a table and provided with a questionnaire, an answer sheet, and a pencil. They were instructed as to the use of the answer sheet, and were told that in addition to having a copy of the questionnaire the questions would be read for them. Before testing began they were told to make two assumptions. These assumptions were as follows:

"You are to assume that (name of boy) and (name of boy) have answered these questions already."

With this instruction the second assumption was given.

"You are to assume that the answers shown in the margins of your answer sheet are those of (name of boy) and (name of boy)."

It had been stated that the positions of the confederates were made known to the players during testing. This was done as shown in the following example:

Billy		1	2	3	Tom
1	1.	( )	( )	( )	3

Billy and Tom were the confederates. The numerals 1 and 3 are their responses. When a question was read the players were told that, "Billy chose number one, Tom chose number three. Now choose your answer and make an X on the space provided on the answer sheet." This format was

followed throughout the questioning period. The confederates were not identified to the players as being high or low status persons but as having been randomly selected. A sample answer sheet appears in Appendix C.

Each manipulation was conducted with two teams providing a total of eighty subjects initially. Twenty subjects were to be included in the Relevant Situation 1 (Rel. Sit. 1), twenty in the Relevant Situation 2 (Rel. Sit. 2), twenty in the Irrelevant Situation 3 (Irrel. Sit. 3), and twenty in the Irrelevant Situation 4 (Irrel. Sit. 4). In actuality, the projected numbers did not materialize because of normal group mortality factors.

Responses were separated so as to record the responses of the starters and the substitutes separately. Each cell in model reflects the total number of responses made under that particular condition by the subjects. This reflects an agreement or disagreement with the starter (Hi) and the same condition applies to the substitute (Lo). In addition a neutral position is shown.

That the responses of the starters and the substitutes had been identified is especially significant. Cohesion had earlier been defined as a condition which is the result of all forces acting upon the group to maintain itself. In the group in question the operating force is team membership. A secondary influence operating is the position a member holds on the team as a result of being a starter or substitute.

This influence is intragroup cohesion. The model allows for the investigation into the possibility of the existence of intragroup cohesion.

The mechanics of intragroup cohesion have been discussed in the review of the literature. More specific to the experiment and the rationale for assuming that intragroup cohesion exists in the groups studied is the peculiar organizational makeup of the league. League rules required that every boy must play for an entire quarter. To insure that the poorer players gain the fullest measure of participation, a rule required that the five weakest players enter the game for the entire second quarter. This is designed to eliminate the possibility of making a substitution of one or two weak players and not allowing them to handle the ball by having the stronger players control the play.

Inasmuch as the five weakest players play as a unit this was presumed to be a factor creating intragroup cohesion. As a result two subgroups were presumed to exist. These consisted of the five starters and the five substitutes. The two remaining boys (each team has twelve members) were labeled sliders. Sliders would play with the first or second teams as required by absenteeism and were prone to being a starter one week and a substitute the next week. In addition, because their skills placed them closer to a modal position than the extremes on the skill continuum, the chances of the slider fluctuating from a starting or a

substituting role were greater than the players of greater or lesser skill.[1]

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[1]Exact computational procedure utilizing the UNC-G Computer Center were determined and facilitated under the guidance of Professor William A. Powers of the Department of Mathematics.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION

The responses to each question on the questionnaires were tabulated and are presented in the Appendix. Appendix D contains the responses of the starters and substitutes for the relevant condition, situation 1. Appendix E contains the responses for the relevant condition, situation 2. Appendices F and G contain the responses for the irrelevant conditions under situations 1 and 2 respectively.

The data were non-parametric. To test the hypotheses a technique devised by Freeman and Halton (1951) was utilized. This technique is a modification of the Fisher Exact test which permits the use of a 2 x 3 analysis. Inasmuch as there are ten questions on each questionnaire, ten calculations were required for each analysis conducted.

The responses of 59 subjects were compiled. This is considerably less than the anticipated 80 subjects and the reason is two-fold. Five of the missing subjects were starters or substitutes who were sick and not present during the questioning. Two of the team rosters had been reduced to eleven players and one had been reduced to ten because of the usual mortality factors of serious illness, injury, families moving, and dropping out. The balance of the missing

subjects were sliders, the boys who could not be categorized as starters or substitutes.

It was originally the intent of the investigator to treat the sliders independently to determine if they would show a tendency to agree with the high status member and thereby seek upward mobility. Two factors altered this approach. The constant improvement of some boys and the relative consistent play of others at any given point made it possible for a boy to slide in either direction. A boy could be a starter or a substitute from one week to the next. A sample of sliders would be a fluctuating sample with some sliding up, others down, and a third stable group.

In addition to the fluctuating of the sample, two of the eight teams had only one slider and one team did not have any. Consequently the remaining sample of sliders was too small to treat statistically or to reveal any meaningful results.

Had the slider population been adequate subsequent events still may have revealed problems. It had been previously stated that league rules required that the five weakest players of each team enter and play for the entire second quarter. In several instances the player judged to be the weakest by the team was rated as a slider (sixth or seventh best) by the coach. The difference may have been as a result of the inability of the players to effectively

judge performance or for the coach to effectively make the same judgement. However, the agreement of the coach and players with respect to the best player was extremely close. In each instance, the player chosen as the best was always named as a starter by the coach.

Informal discussion with several coaches who were in agreement with the choices of their players revealed an interesting aside. It was the opinion of these coaches that some of the coaches would purposely place a stronger player in the second quarter so that advantage might be gained. A talented boy competing against less talented opponents could score more easily than when competing against the better players, it was suggested. While this has little bearing at this point on the data analysis, it was an additional reason to eliminate the slider from statistical consideration. In any event, the subjects used were actually starters and substitutes and not sliders, so the assumed integrity of the samples used was not compromised.

Differences Between the Responses Made in the Relevant and Irrelevant Conditions

Table 2 examines the differences between the responses made by the starters in the relevant and irrelevant conditions under Situation 1. At the .05 level of confidence questions 1 and 5 reveal a significant difference. The remainder of the questions are above the .05 level of confidence. Question 4 produced an alpha of .077.

Table 2

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in the Relevant and Irrelevant Conditions by the Starters Under Situation 1

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Rel.	3	0	5	0.025*
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
2	Rel.	5	0	3	0.569
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
3	Rel.	5	0	3	0.569
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
4	Rel.	4	2	2	0.077
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
5	Rel.	1	0	7	0.002*
	Irrel.	6	1	0	
6	Rel.	7	0	1	1.000
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
7.	Rel.	7	1	0	1.000
	Irrel.	6	1	0	
8	Rel.	3	0	5	0.315
	Irrel.	5	0	2	
9	Rel.	6	0	2	1.000
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
10	Rel.	5	0	3	0.200
	Irrel.	6	1	0	

* Significant at .05 level of confidence.

Table 3 examines the differences between the relevant and the irrelevant conditions for the starters under Situation 2. Again two of the questions reveal a significant difference. In this case they are questions 5 and 10. In addition three other questions approach the .05 level of confidence with questions 1, 3, and 8 revealing alpha levels of .73, .077, and .063 respectively.

Table 4 examines the differences between the relevant and the irrelevant conditions for the substitutes under Situation 1. Questions 3 and 5 reveal a significant difference of .026 and .001 respectively. Comparisons of the other questions do not reveal significant differences.

Table 5 examines the differences between the relevant and the irrelevant conditions for the substitutes under Situation 2. The differences between questions 2 and 5 are significant at .005 and .021 respectively. No other questions approach the .05 level of confidence.

Differences Between the Responses Made by the Starters and the Substitutes

The comparisons of the responses made by the starters and the substitutes were separated by condition and by situation. Tables 6 and 7 examine the differences in the relevant condition for Situations 1 and 2 respectively.

An examination of Tables 6 and 7 reveals no significant differences exist between the responses made by the starters and the substitutes. In no instance had the .05

Table 3

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in the Relevant and the Irrelevant Conditions by the Starters Under Situation 2

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Rel.	2	2	3	0.073
	Irrel.	7	0	1	
2	Rel.	5	0	2	0.200
	Irrel.	8	0	0	
3	Rel.	4	2	1	0.077
	Irrel.	8	0	0	
4	Rel.	4	0	3	0.282
	Irrel.	7	0	1	
5	Rel.	1	0	6	0.003*
	Irrel.	7	1	0	
6	Rel.	4	0	3	1.000
	Irrel.	5	0	3	
7	Rel.	5	2	0	0.323
	Irrel.	7	0	1	
8	Rel.	1	1	5	0.063
	Irrel.	6	0	2	
9	Rel	5	1	1	0.713
	Irrel.	7	1	0	
10	Rel.	3	0	4	0.031*
	Irrel.	6	2	0	

*Significant at .05 level of confidence

Table 4

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in the Relevant and the Irrelevant Conditions by the Substitutes Under Situation 1

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Rel.	5	0	3	0.200
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
2	Rel.	5	2	1	1.000
	Irrel.	5	1	1	
3	Rel.	3	2	3	0.026*
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
4	Rel.	6	0	2	0.467
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
5	Rel.	1	0	7	0.001*
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
6	Rel.	7	0	1	1.000
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
7	Rel.	4	3	1	0.128
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
8	Rel.	4	1	3	1.000
	Irrel.	4	0	3	
9	Rel.	4	3	1	0.128
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
10	Rel.	6	0	2	0.467
	Irrel.	7	0	0	

*Significant at .05 level of confidence

Table 5

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in the Relevant and the Irrelevant Conditions by the Substitutes Under Situation 2

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Rel.	3	1	3	0.192
	Irrel.	6	1	0	
2	Rel.	1	1	5	0.005*
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
3	Rel.	5	1	1	1.000
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
4	Rel.	7	0	0	1.000
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
5	Rel.	2	0	5	0.021*
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
6	Rel.	4	0	3	0.556
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
7	Rel.	5	1	1	0.462
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
8	Rel.	4	0	3	0.559
	Irrel.	6	0	1	
9	Rel.	5	0	2	0.462
	Irrel.	7	0	0	
10	Rel.	3	0	4	0.266
	Irrel.	6	0	1	

* Significant at .05 level of confidence

Table 6

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses of the Starters and the Substitutes in the Relevant Condition Under Situation 1

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Starter	3	0	5	0.619
	Sub.	5	0	3	
2	Starter	5	0	3	0.308
	Sub.	5	2	1	
3	Starter	5	0	3	0.521
	Sub.	3	2	3	
4	Starter	4	2	2	0.504
	Sub	6	0	2	
5	Starter	1	0	7	1.000
	Sub.	1	0	7	
6	Starter	7	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	1	
7	Starter	7	1	0	0.282
	Sub.	4	3	1	
8	Starter	3	0	5	0.619
	Sub.	4	1	3	
9	Starter	6	0	2	0.354
	Sub.	4	3	1	
10	Starter	5	0	3	1.000
	Sub.	6	0	2	

Table 7

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses of the Starters and the Substitutes in the Relevant Condition Under Situation 2

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Starter	2	2	3	1.000
	Sub.	3	1	3	
2	Starter	5	0	2	0.103
	Sub.	1	1	5	
3	Starter	4	2	1	1.000
	Sub.	5	1	1	
4	Starter	4	0	3	0.192
	Sub.	7	0	0	
5	Starter	1	0	6	1.000
	Sub.	2	0	5	
6	Starter	4	0	3	1.000
	Sub.	4	0	3	
7	Starter	5	2	0	1.000
	Sub.	5	1	1	
8	Starter	1	1	5	0.263
	Sub.	4	0	3	
9	Starter	5	1	1	1.000
	Sub.	5	0	2	
10	Starter	3	0	4	1.000
	Sub.	3	0	4	

level of confidence been approached suggesting that there was indeed no statistically significant difference in the responses made by the starters and the substitutes in the relevant condition.

Tables 8 and 9 examine the differences between the responses made by the starters and the substitutes in the irrelevant condition under Situations 1 and 2 respectively. Again there were no statistically significant differences found.

Differences Between the Responses Made in Situation 1 and Situation 2

To gain an additional insight, comparisons of the responses were made under Situation 1 and Situation 2. These comparisons were made separately for the starters and the substitutes under both the relevant and irrelevant conditions.

It had been suggested that because of the unique makeup of the team structure that subgroups of starters and substitutes might exist. This intragroup cohesion was presumed to exist because of the rule requiring the five weakest players to play together for an entire second quarter. It was then speculated that this circumstance might have an influence on the choices made by the subjects on the questionnaire. To determine if this was the case the starters and the substitutes responses might be examined separately, comparing their responses in Situation 1 and Situation 2.

Table 8

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses of the Starters and the Substitutes in the Irrelevant Condition Under Situation 1

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Starter	7	0	0	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
2	Starter	6	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	5	1	1	
3	Starter	6	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
4	Starter	7	0	0	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
5	Starter	6	1	0	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
6	Starter	6	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	6	0	1	
7	Starter	6	1	0	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
8	Starter	5	0	2	1.000
	Sub.	4	0	3	
9	Starter	6	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
10	Starter	6	1	0	1.000
	Sub	7	0	0	

Table 9

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses of the Starters and the Substitutes in the Irrelevant Condition Under Situation 2

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Starter	7	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	6	1	0	
2	Starter	8	0	0	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
3	Starter	8	0	0	0.467
	Sub.	6	0	1	
4	Starter	7	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
5	Starter	7	1	0	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
6	Starter	5	0	3	0.569
	Sub.	6	0	1	
7	Starter	7	0	1	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
8	Starter	6	0	2	1.000
	Sub.	6	0	1	
9	Starter	7	1	0	1.000
	Sub.	7	0	0	
10	Starter	6	2	0	0.467
	Sub.	6	0	1	

The responses of the starters are examined in Tables 10 and 11. There are no significant differences between the responses made under Situation 1 and Situation 2 in either the relevant or irrelevant conditions.

The responses of the substitutes were compared between Situation 1 and Situation 2. Tables 12 and 13 present the results of the comparisons. As was found in the comparisons made in the responses of the starters, there was no statistically significant difference between the responses made between Situation 1 and Situation 2 for the substitutes.

Discussion

At this stage it might prove instructive to discuss what had been found in the analysis in view of what had been expected. The researcher had anticipated results more in line with the findings of similar research done with non-athletic groups such as Schacter (1951) had conducted. Consequently influence was presumed to exist when such variables as relevance, status, and cohesion were isolated. This was not the case.

It might be concluded that the athletic teams investigated did not possess such characteristics as the Schacter groups and therefore did not respond as it was anticipated they might. In fact the players were acting as team members for about two hours per week, as there was one practice session of one hour and one game per week of approximately one

Table 10

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in Situation 1 and Situation 2 in the Relevant Condition by the Starters

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Sit. 1	3	0	5	0.499
	Sit. 2	2	2	3	
2	Sit. 1	5	0	3	1.000
	Sit. 2	5	0	2	
3	Sit. 1	5	0	3	0.386
	Sit. 2	4	2	1	
4	Sit. 1	4	2	2	0.608
	Sit. 2	4	0	3	
5	Sit. 1	1	0	7	1.000
	Sit. 2	1	0	6	
6	Sit. 1	7	0	1	0.282
	Sit. 2	4	0	3	
7	Sit. 1	7	1	0	0.569
	Sit. 2	5	2	0	
8	Sit. 1	3	0	5	0.469
	Sit. 2	1	1	5	
9	Sit. 1	6	0	2	1.000
	Sit. 2	5	1	1	
10	Sit. 1	5	0	3	0.619
	Sit. 2	3	0	4	

Table 11

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in Situation 1 and Situation 2 in the Irrelevant Condition by the Starters

Question		+	-	0	Alpha
1	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	0	1	
2	Sit. 1	6	0	1	0.467
	Sit. 2	8	0	0	
3	Sit. 1	6	0	1	0.467
	Sit. 2	8	0	0	
4	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	0	1	
5	Sit. 1	6	1	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	1	0	
6	Sit. 1	6	0	1	0.569
	Sit. 2	5	0	3	
7	Sit. 1	6	1	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	0	1	
8	Sit. 1	5	0	2	1.000
	Sit. 2	6	0	2	
9	Sit. 1	6	0	1	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	1	0	
10	Sit. 1	6	1	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	6	2	0	

Table 12

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in Situation 1 and Situation 2 in the Relevant Condition by the Substitutes

Question		+	0	-	Alpha
1	Sit. 1	5	0	3	0.782
	Sit. 2	3	1	3	
2	Sit. 1	5	2	1	0.075
	Sit. 2	1	1	5	
3	Sit. 1	3	2	3	0.517
	Sit. 2	5	1	1	
4	Sit. 1	6	0	2	0.467
	Sit. 2	7	0	0	
5	Sit. 1	1	0	7	1.000
	Sit. 2	2	0	5	
6	Sit. 1	7	0	1	0.282
	Sit. 2	4	0	3	
7	Sit. 1	4	3	1	0.765
	Sit. 2	5	1	1	
8	Sit. 1	4	1	3	1.000
	Sit. 2	4	0	3	
9	Sit. 1	4	3	1	0.354
	Sit. 2	5	0	2	
10	Sit. 1	6	0	2	0.315
	Sit. 2	3	0	4	

Table 13

Significance of the Differences Between the Responses Made in Situation 1 and Situation 2 in the Irrelevant Condition by the Substitutes

Question		+	0	-	Alpha
1	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	6	1	0	
2	Sit. 1	5	1	1	0.462
	Sit. 2	7	0	0	
3	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	6	0	1	
4	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	0	0	
5	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	0	0	
6	Sit. 1	6	0	1	1.000
	Sit. 2	6	0	1	
7	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	0	0	
8	Sit. 1	4	0	3	0.559
	Sit. 2	6	0	1	
9	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	7	0	0	
10	Sit. 1	7	0	0	1.000
	Sit. 2	6	0	1	

hour duration. It is possible that a sense of group identity and influence could not be expected to result under the conditions described but that it might occur if the group would play and practice more often.

The appropriateness of an experimental study for an inquiry of this type might be questioned. Descriptive research might have been of greater value. The review of literature suggests that experimental research can be applied in an inquiry of this type.

It might be suggested that the .05 level of confidence was too severe a test of significant differences. This indeed may be one place where more latitude would be allowed if the experimenter were to conduct a similar experiment again. Many experiments in the social sciences report levels of condifence of .07 and .10 as being significant. Other researchers have been even less rigorous.

Some question may be made of the use of the instrument which was used to measure responses. Another alternative would have been to use a forced-choice instrument which would allow the respondent only to agree or disagree with the confederates by eliminating the neutral (0) response. The effect of using such an instrument can only be speculated upon, however, and it was considered before the experiment began. It was felt at that time that the neutral (0) position was in itself instructive to the researcher and was included purposely.

Indications of influence, where they were discovered, appeared when comparisons were made between the relevant and the irrelevant conditions. The comparisons revealed statistically significant differences in eight of forty comparisons. Questions 1, 2, 3 and ten revealed a difference one time each whereas question 5 revealed a difference on four occasions. It is difficult to attach any meaning to this result.

Because the "filler" items were eliminated when the responses were scored, the responses that are identified as being for question five on the appendices D and E are the responses to questions six of the questionnaires (Appendices A and B). Question 6 on the relevant questionnaire dealt with the problem of using substitutes when a large lead is being enjoyed as opposed to crushing an opponent. The respondents took the position that substitutes should be allowed additional playing time in the interest of good sportsmanship. The irrelevant question dealt with the disposition of circus tickets and the subjects agreed, for the most part, they should be given to a friend rather than wasted. These positions were maintained despite the position of the confederates or the status of the respondents. In the case of question 5, at least, the subjects were drawn to the position which was designated as being the positive position.

A visual analysis of the raw data (Appendices D, E, F, and G) reveals an additional insight. Under the relevant condition as represented by Appendices D and E a greater number of responses appear in the columns representing the negative (-) and the neutral (0) responses. Consequently fewer positive (+) responses appear. Appendices F and G show a majority of the responses in the positive (+) columns with relatively few negative (-) or neutral (0) responses. This would suggest little influence occurred in the irrelevant condition, but that some occurred in the relevant condition.

A word of caution is in order at this point. There might exist a temptation to total the responses in each of the Appendices D, E, F, and G. The totals would facilitate comparisons between conditions and situations. These totals would represent cumulative data and would not reflect independent data inasmuch as they would include the responses of a given individual more than once. This precluded the use of using totals with a "chi-square" calculation and was the reason for the analysis of the data to be done on the individual question basis.

In no instance did the manipulations of the confederates as represented by Situations 1 and 2 prove to be a significant factor. It had been speculated that intragroup influence might result within the starting and substituting players. Comparisons of the responses of the starters and the substitutes under both situations in the relevant and

irrelevant conditions was presumed to reveal an influence should it exist.

Another possible method of investigation might have utilized one confederate instead of two. Inasmuch as the evidence suggested that intragroup cohesion was not a factor it might have been possible that the use of two confederates had an effect of weakening the influence of the best player. An initial tendency to agree with the high status confederate, although perhaps not the initial tendency of the subject, would be more easily overcome by the position of the low status confederate. It should be recalled that the awareness of someone expressing another opinion can have the effect of reinforcing the position of a subject. Consequently, the awareness of the position of the low status confederate could have been a factor in opposing the position of the high status confederate. A similar experiment with only one confederate might prove a legitimate avenue for further research into this question.

In addition to what has been already speculated an interesting comparison can be made between Tables 6 and 8 with Tables 7 and 9. Neither of these tables revealed significant differences. Upon comparison it becomes apparent that the alpha levels of the starters and the substitutes are much higher in the irrelevant condition. In the irrelevant condition seventeen questions resulted in an alpha level of 1.00 whereas in the relevant condition the alpha

level of 1.00 was calculated on ten comparisons. What such a visual inspection may mean can only be speculative as there is no statistical evidence to warrant any conclusion. The writer would tentatively suggest that perhaps there were some small shifts by the subjects under the relevant condition upon reversal of the confederate positions that did not occur in the relevant condition.

This same visual inspection might be applied between Table 10 and Table 11 and alpha levels of 1.00 appear three and seven respectively. Comparing Tables 12 and 13, the alpha level of 1.00 appear two and seven times respectively. As in the previous visual inspection no conclusion can be statistically confirmed. It might be suggested that perhaps a small amount of influence might have been operating on the sub-groups of which the subjects were members.

In concluding the discussion, it is incumbent upon the writer to stress that the observations made under the heading "Discussion" are speculative at best. They are included in an attempt to share the insights gained from the intimate association with the data which was gained in the data analysis. The majority of the statistical evidence, as presented earlier in the chapter, clearly states a limited degree of statistically significant differences existed. The subsequent discussion sought merely to clarify further the data available.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the purpose of this study to examine the possible influence of persons of high and low status on the decisions made by their teammates on a youth basketball team. The following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the responses made in the relevant and the irrelevant conditions.

2. There is no statistically significant difference between the responses made by the starters and the responses made by the substitutes.

To test the hypotheses the responses of the subjects were compared in three categories. Differences were tested between conditions (relevant and irrelevant), between starters and substitutes, and between situations. Each of these comparisons was further subdivided into four separate tests. Each of the ten questions was examined yielding a total of 120 individual calculations.

In comparing the relevant and the irrelevant conditions a total of eight of 49 questions yielded a significant difference. In addition there were four other questions which yielded low alpha levels upon comparison although they

were not statistically significant at the .05 level. It was concluded that eight questions yielded a statistically significant difference when comparisons were made between the relevant and the irrelevant conditions. In 32 instances there were no significant differences. The differences which did result were highly significant and it should be pointed out that the questions were not initially equated and this might account for a portion of the difference.

In summary, the first hypothesis was found tenable as there were no significant differences between the responses made by the subjects in the relevant and the irrelevant conditions. There were eight exceptions where significant differences were found. Under Situation 1 questions 1 and 5 revealed a significant difference for the starters and questions 3 and 5 revealed a significant difference for the substitutes.

Under Situation 2 there were also four exceptions where the hypothesis was found tenable. Questions 5 and 10 revealed significant differences for the starters as did questions 2 and 5 for the substitutes.

There were no statistically significant differences between the responses made by the starters and those of the substitutes. For each question a high alpha level was obtained. The highest alpha levels were found under the irrelevant condition but in both conditions the second hypothesis, that there were no differences, was found tenable.

To test the differences between the responses made between Situation 1 and Situation 2 Tables 12 and 13 were compiled. This was done to reveal the influence, if any, that the positions attributed to the confederate starters and substitutes. Inasmuch as no significant differences were found, it was concluded that the positions of the starters and substitutes were not affected by the confederates. This lack of influence was more pronounced under the irrelevant condition.

In summary it can be stated that the only statistically significant differences found resulted in the comparisons made between the relevant and the irrelevant conditions and then only in eight of 40 questions.

There were no differences between the responses made by the starters and substitutes. Additionally there were no differences between the responses made in Situation 1 and 2.

It might then be concluded that the responses were in no way influenced by the position of the respondent as either a starter or substitute. In addition the position ascribed to the confederates had no influence on the responses of the subjects. The only influence demonstrated occurred when the conditions were the measured variable and in those instances the influence occurred in only eight of the total of 40 cases.

Contrary to what much of the prevailing theory might predict, status was of no value as a predictor of the groups'

choices on the questionnaire. Also in contrast with much of the group theories, the intragroup cohesion produced by the forming of subgroups of starters and substitutes did not result. On only one variable, relevance, was in accordance with group theory reached, and in that instance the agreement proved to be less than unanimous. That the relevant or basketball related questions yielded some degree of difference whereas the irrelevant questions which were not related to basketball yielded no differences is not surprising in view of existing theory.

The league rule requiring the five weakest players to play as a unit for the entire second quarter was limiting. It might be speculated that intragroup cohesion resulted from the rule resulting in a lessening of the influence of the high status confederate. Consequently a more normal situation would enhance the position of the starter and his influence. This is merely speculative and, while suggesting an avenue for further research, has no statistical basis.

No attempt was made to consider the success or failure of the teams in their goal direction; that is, winning or losing. What effects success or failure of a team would have on the status of the best or poorest player might be worthy of investigation.

The influence of the coach was not considered and may have a significant bearing on the choices made by the players

on the questionnaire. It might be speculated that an athletic coach would influence his team and that his influence would be strong. Research of this type would require a different working definition of status in terms of an authoritative position. There does exist a growing body of research describing the personality types of athletic coaches and this would provide an excellent beginning for exploring the possible influence of coaches on their players.

For centuries the advocates of sports have suggested that sports and games are a means of promoting the development of traits which societies have deemed to be desirable. When these values are enlarged to include the psycho-social factors there is very little evidence that sports and games in themselves have any influence. That there are athletes on both sides of the bar of justice belies the contention that a sport experience automatically builds desirable traits. Many ex-athletes are judges and many are the judged. There is little statistical evidence that sports build character.

This study, it is hoped, may make a modest contribution to the body of knowledge dealing with the effects of sports on the participants. It would seem that desirable results do not automatically happen but that they can occur if they are carefully planned for in the conduct of the program. If this proves to be true the understanding of the

group dynamics of athletic teams and the factors which influence members would be a valuable facet of knowledge.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE AND SCORING KEY FOR RELEVANT CONDITION

The following questions are examples of situations which could occur. When you select an answer to each situation please do not write on this paper but write on the sheets which are provided.

1. The referee was not in a good position to see what happened when a player moved into the path of a dribbler. The whistle was blown and a jump ball was called. What should the defensive player do?

   (1) Accept the decision of the referee.
   (2) Try to convince the referee that he was charged.
   (3) Admit that he was blocking and committed a foul.

2. A team went into a game undefeated but was beaten in a very close game. Afterward, when someone spoke to him, the coach said, "We really didn't play a good game."

   (1) The coach is right to say that if he thinks it is true.
   (2) This is a smart thing to say because it might make the other team believe they were lucky and scare them in case the teams should play again.
   (3) A good loser would never say such a thing.

3. It is not legal to place your hand on the man you are guarding. It is called "hand checking." What should a player do?

   (1) Hand check. It is smart because it allows a player to watch the ball and guard his man at the same time.
   (2) He should do as his coach tells him to do. It is not his job to make such decisions.
   (3) He should not handcheck. It is illegal and should not be done.

4. A team is getting new uniforms. They may choose the color. Which of the following statements do you most agree with?

   (1) Red is the best color because it is bright and team mates can be seen more easily.

(2) Blue is best because the Tar Heels wear blue.
(3) They should vote and accept what the election decides.

5. Players are not allowed to move into the foul lane until the ball hits the rim during a foul shot. Some players might try to move into the lane a fraction of a second before the ball hits the rim to gain an advantage over the other team. This is hard for a referee to catch.

(1) If the referee cannot see it maybe it is O.K. In any case let the referee decide what is correct.
(2) This is against the rules and the players should not try to do it.
(3) This is smart basketball and the coach and players are right to try it.

6. One team is beating another team badly. If they wanted to, they could send in substitutes and still win but they would not be able to score as many points.

(1) The starters should remain in the game and let the other team know who is best. Run up a high score.
(2) The subs should be put into the game. They deserve to play and this is a good opportunity to give them playing time.
(3) Put the subs in because it is not good sportsmanship to try to beat an opponent too badly.

7. In a game with the score tied a player steals the ball and is going in for a layup shot which can win the game. A defensive player runs to catch him and tackles him to make sure the shot does not go in.

(1) A defender should try to block the shot legally and not try to illegally tackle the shooter.
(2) Tackling the shooter is the only sure way to prevent the basket from being made and the shooter should expect it.
(3) It is O.K. to grab the shooter to keep him from scoring but be sure he does not get hurt.

8. In our gym the coach and players are seated underneath the basket. During a game the coach stands up, leans over the referee's shoulder and points out that a player from the other team has been in the lane too long.

(1) The coach is right to tell the referee if it really did happen.

(2) The coach should not have pointed out the violation because the referee would probably have seen it anyway.
(3) The coach is wrong. He should let the referee do his job without interference, reminders, or attempts to influence his decisions.

9. During a game the ball barely touches a player's fingers and then goes out of bounds. What should he do?

(1) Tell the referee that he touched the ball last.
(2) Pretend someone on the other team touched the ball last.
(3) Let the referee decide. It is his job.

10. Which of the following teams is the best?

(1) Clemson
(2) Virginia
(3) Furman

11. The rules state that only the captain may talk to the referee. Some players and coaches feel that if they complain to the referee a lot he will give them a break on close calls.

(1) If only the captain may talk to the referee, the referee should make the coach and other players remain silent.
(2) Complaining is a good thing to do as it helps to find out if the referee is good or not.
(3) Complaining is not good sportsmanship and should not be done.

12. The referees did not arrive in time for a game and the coaches agreed to call the game. The coach of one team seems to be favoring his own team with his calls.

(1) The other coach should decide close calls in the favor of his team to even things out.
(2) The other coach should call the game fairly even if he thinks his opponent is not doing so.
(3) If there is any question about referees it should be handled by league officials.

13. In some leagues for boys the basket is lower. This is like Little League Baseball where the field is smaller. What should be done in your league?

(1) Do not lower the basket.
(2) Lower the basket.
(3) It doesn't matter.

KEY FOR THE RELEVANT QUESTIONNAIRE[a]

	+	-	0
1.	3	2	1
2.	3	2	1
3.	3	1	2
4.	1	3	Filler Item
5.	2	3	1
6.	3	1	2
7.	1	2	3
8.	3	1	2
9.	1	2	3
10.	2	3	Filler Item
11.	3	2	1
12.	2	1	3
13.	1	3	Filler Item

[a]For question #1 number 3 is considered as "acceptable," answer number 2 is "unacceptable," and answer number 1 is neutral.

Filler items are not scored. The numbers under the + and - columns are the positions assigned to the confederated.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE AND SCORING KEY FOR IRRELEVANT CONDITION

The following questions are examples of situations which could occur. Please do not write on this paper but on the answer sheets which are provided.

1. A boy agreed to feed and give water to a neighbor's dog while they are out of town for a few days. He did not do the job every day and knows if the people find out they will be disappointed in him. When they returned they offered him $5.00 for caring for the dog.

   (1) He should take the money. No one would find out and the dog can't tell on him.
   (2) He should not take the money but not tell the people why.
   (3) He should not take the money and explain that he did not properly care for the dog and did not deserve the money.

2. A boy is in a store with a friend. When they get outside his friend shows him some candy he had stolen and offers some to the boy.

   (1) He should threaten to tell on his friend if he does not go back to the store and return the stolen candy.
   (2) He might as well take some candy and eat it.
   (3) He should not eat the candy but not say anything about it.

3. Even boys pay taxes when they buy items from a store with their own money. Which statement seems best?

   (1) Taxes are much too high.
   (2) Taxes are not high enough.
   (3) Taxes are about right.

4. While throwing stones a boy accidently broke a street light. No one saw him do it. What should he do?

   (1) He should tell his parents what he had done.
   (2) If asked, he should deny breaking the light and no one could prove that he did it.
   (3) He should say nothing but if he is asked about it he should admit that he broke the light.

5. A man buys a sweater at the store. The clerk is new. By mistake he tells the customer that the sweater cost $6.00 but it really cost $12.00. The customer knows the sweater should cost $12.00.

   (1) The customer should pay the $6.00. If a mistake was made someone will notice and then he should pay the correct amount.
   (2) The man should pay the clerk $6.00 and leave fast.
   (3) The customer should point out to the clerk that a mistake was made and offer to pay the correct price of $12.00.

6. A boy was given tickets for the circus. His parents planned to visit his aunt that day and he could not go to the circus.

   (1) He should throw his tickets away. If he can't use them no one will.
   (2) So they would not go to waste he should give them to a friend.
   (3) He should raise a fuss to stay home so he could use his tickets.

7. A boy's grandmother knitted him a hat which he did not like. It looked funny and the other kids teased him when he wore it.

   (1) He should wear it anyway because he shouldn't want to hurt his grandmother's feelings.
   (2) He should wear it only when his mother made him wear it, like when he visited his grandmother.
   (3) He should leave the hat at school or on the bus and pretend that he lost it.

8. Which statement best describes homework.

   (1) There isn't enough to do any good as far as helping people to learn.
   (2) The amount of homework assigned is just about right.
   (3) There is too much homework assigned.

9. The children on a boy's school bus throw paper and trash on the floor. The bus is always a mess. What should he do?

   (1) He should pick up the paper and trash and keep the bus clean and maybe others will then do the same thing.

(2) He should not throw paper but should not pick up any trash.
(3) If the others make a mess it is O.K. if he makes a mess too.

10. Sometimes grownups are stopped by the police for driving too fast. Some try to argue with the policeman and pretend they were not speeding, even when they know they were.

(1) It probably doesn't matter. Policemen know their jobs and arguing will not change anything.
(2) It is bad to argue. If a man deserves a ticket he should quietly accept it.
(3) If he can talk the policeman out of giving him a ticket he should do so. Everyone else would do it so why shouldn't he? Besides, a lot of people drive too fast and they never get caught.

11. While playing monopoly with his friend a boy noticed that he passed "GO" and forgot to collect his $200.00.

(1) The boy should remind his friend to collect his $200.00.
(2) The boy should not tell his friend to collect his $200.00 and refuse to let him collect it if he remembered it later.
(3) The boy should not tell his friend to collect the $200.00 but should let him collect it if he remembers it later.

12. The best T.V. shows are on which channel?

(1) Channel 2
(2) Channel 8
(3) Channel 12

13. There is a neat place not very far from your house. It has a pond with tadpoles, frogs, and fish. The owner chases boys away when he sees them. A boy plans to play there Saturday and asks his friend to go with him. What should the friend do?

(1) Go with the boy. It is a fun place to be and the owner is an old grouch.
(2) The friend should not go. If the boy goes it is none of his friends business after that.
(3) The friend should not go and try to talk his friend out of going.

KEY FOR THE IRRELEVANT QUESTIONNAIRE[a]

	+	-	0
1.	3	1	2
2.	1	2	3
3.	2	1	Filler Item
4.	1	2	3
5.	3	2	1
6.	2	3	1
7.	1	3	2
8.	3	1	Filler Item
9.	1	3	2
10.	2	3	1
11.	1	2	3
12.	2	1	Filler Item
13.	3	1	2

[a]For question #1, answer number 3 is considered as "acceptable," answer number 1 is unacceptable, and answer number 2 is neutral.

Filler items are not scored. The numbers under the + and - columns are the positions assigned to the confederates.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE ANSWER SHEET

Bobby		1	2	3	Alan
3	1.	( )	( )	(x)	1
1	2.	(x)	( )	( )	2
2	3.	(x)	( )	( )	1
1	4.	(x)	( )	( )	2
3	5.	( )	( )	(x)	2
2	6.	( )	(x)	( )	3
1	7.	(x)	( )	( )	3
3	8.	( )	(x)	( )	1
1	9.	(x)	( )	( )	3
2	10.	( )	(x)	( )	3
1	11.	(x)	( )	( )	2
2	12.	(x)	( )	( )	1
3	13.	( )	( )	(x)	1

APPENDIX D

RAW DATA FOR THE RELEVANT CONDITION SITUATION 1

Ques	Starters			Substitutes		
	+	-	0	+	-	0
1	3	0	5	5	0	0
2	5	0	3	5	2	1
3	5	0	3	3	2	3
4	4	2	2	6	0	2
5	1	0	7	1	0	7
6	7	0	1	7	0	1
7	7	1	0	4	3	1
8	3	0	5	4	1	3
9	6	0	2	4	3	1
10	5	0	3	6	0	2

APPENDIX E

RAW DATA FOR THE RELEVANT CONDITION SITUATION 2

Ques	Starters			Substitutes		
	+	-	0	+	-	0
1	2	2	3	3	1	3
2	5	0	2	1	1	5
3	4	2	1	5	1	1
4	4	0	3	7	0	0
5	1	0	6	2	0	5
6	4	0	3	4	0	3
7	5	2	0	5	1	1
8	1	1	5	4	0	3
9	5	1	1	5	0	2
10	3	0	4	3	0	4

APPENDIX F

RAW DATA FOR THE IRRELEVANT CONDITION SITUATION 1

Ques	Starters			Substitutes		
	+	-	0	+	-	0
1	7	0	0	7	0	0
2	6	0	1	5	1	1
3	6	0	1	7	0	0
4	7	0	0	7	0	0
5	6	1	0	7	0	0
6	6	0	1	6	0	1
7	6	1	0	6	0	1
8	5	0	2	7	0	0
9	6	0	1	7	0	0
10	6	1	0	7	0	0

APPENDIX G

RAW DATA FOR THE IRRELEVANT CONDITION SITUATION 2

Ques	Starters			Substitutes		
	+	-	0	+	-	0
1	7	0	1	6	1	0
2	8	0	0	7	0	0
3	8	0	0	6	0	1
4	7	0	1	7	0	0
5	7	1	0	7	0	0
6	5	0	3	6	0	1
7	7	0	1	7	0	0
8	6	0	2	6	0	1
9	7	1	0	7	0	0
10	6	2	0	6	0	1