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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT GOAL AND PERCEPTIONS OF MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE IN GREEK HANDBALL ATHLETES

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between goal orientation and motivational climate and to define which combination of achievement goals perceived the motivational climate as more mastery or performance oriented. Three hundred and seven Greek handball players filled the Greek version of Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport-2 and the Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire. Correlation and multiple analysis of variance analysis showed that the critical factor regarding mastery climate, was the degree of task orientation. For example, athletes that were rated low in task orientation and high in ego orientation perceived the motivational climate of their team as the most performance oriented. It appears that there is relationship between motivational climate and goal orientation. Handball coaches should aim to create a suitable team environment for goal orientation and achievement.

Key words: Achievement Goals, Motivational Climate, Handball.

*An extended Summary Plus English version is freely available at www.hellenicjsport.com
Introduction

The study of the goal orientation has significant importance in sports and the natural activity, in a way that different strategies of motivation are able to influence the knowledge, the emotions and the behavior of athletes (Ames, 1992). During the last decade, goal perspective theory has played an important role in the study of achievement motivation in sport. According to this theory there are two primary goal perspectives, task and ego involvement. Several findings showed that social situations, created by significant others can impact the probability of whether an athlete will be task or ego involved (Nicholls, 1989, Pintrich, 2000). The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between goal orientation and motivational climate and which combined group of achievement goals perceived the motivational climate as more mastery or performance oriented.

Methods

In this research the sample included 307 Greek handball athletes, 168 men and 139 women (Mage= 16, 35 ± 4.23) and all the participants are members of teams from Northern Greece. The Greek version of Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport-2 (PMCSQ-2) (Georgenas & Daroglou, 2007) and the Greek version of Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) (Barkoukis, Zahariadis, Anastasiadis, Tsorbatzoudis & Grouios, 2003) were used for the needs of the study. For the Greek version of PMCSQ-2 responders completed 33 items with reference to the stem “On my handball team…”. Example of the items of perceived task-involving climate includes: “each player contributes in some important way” and “the coach encourages player contributes to help each other learn”. Example of the items on the ego-involving climate subscale includes: “the coach praises players only when they outplay team-mates” and “players are punished when they make a mistake”. For TEOSQ responders completed 13 items (7 task, 6 ego) with reference to the stem: “I feel most successful in handball when…” . Example of task orientation items includes: “I work very hard” and “I do my very best”, while example of ego orientation items includes: “Others mess up and I don’t”, and “I’m the best”. For both questionnaires response options fall on a 5-point Likert scale of (1) “strongly disagree”, (2) “disagree”, (3) “neutral”, (4) agree”, (5) “strongly agree”.

Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were satisfactory for all scales of the two questionnaires (table 1). The correlation analysis showed positive relation between the perception of task involving climate and task orientation and negative with ego orientation (table 2). For the purpose of the study were created four groups of achievement goal orientation: high task/ high ego (n=73) high task/ low ego (n= 69) low task/ low ego (n=66), low task/ high ego (n=65). A one-way MANOVA was conducted with the groups of goal orientations to be the independent variables and the other two dimensions of perceived motivational climate to be the dependent variables (table 3).
Table 1: Means, standard deviations and Cronbach a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task climate</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego climate</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Correlation coefficients between goal orientations and perceived motivational climate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Orientation</th>
<th>Ego Orientation</th>
<th>Task climate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task Orientation</td>
<td>.531**</td>
<td>-.247**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Orientation</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task climate</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.157**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego climate</td>
<td>-.157**</td>
<td>.485**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.454**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01

Table 3: Means (X), standard deviations (SD) and F values for each comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High task/ high ego</th>
<th>High task/ low ego</th>
<th>Low task/ high ego</th>
<th>Low task/ low ego</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the athletes perceived a high mastery climate and a low performance climate in their team. The analysis showed that the critical factor regarding mastery climate, was the degree of task orientation since those with high scores in this factor (irrespectively of the degree of their ego orientation) perceived the climate as more mastery-oriented than those with low scores in task orientation. On the contrary, the athletes that were rated low in task orientation and high in ego orientation perceived the motivational climate of their team as the most performance oriented.
Overall the findings of the present study provided evidence in regard to the relation of motivational climate and goal orientation. Specific attention should be drawn to the evaluation of the effects from parents and the remainder social environment.

References *


References have been cited in the Greek (printed) version of the manuscript.