Motivational Climate Assignment

Sport Psychology HHPK 528

Part I: PMCSQ-2 Results and Reflection

Using my most recent competitive experience (high school football), I completed the Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire (PMCSQ-2)

Scores

- Task (Mastery) Score: 4.38 / 5
- Performance (Ego) Score: 2.07 / 5

Reflection

These scores show that my most recent setting climate is task-oriented (mastery climate) with low emphasis placed on ego/performance comparison. This aligns with how I see myself as a coach. I value effort, improvement, and player development over simply winning on Friday nights. With that notwithstanding, even with a high mastery score, there are times, especially in tight district games, when performance cues creep in. Decisions around playing time, depth chart transparency, and reactions to mistakes can subtly tilt climate toward ego orientation. This assessment further cemented that climate is much more than a philosophy; it's daily behavior. When athletes feel afraid to make mistakes or believe only starters matter, the climate changes regardless of intent.

Part II: Research Article Summary

Theoretical Framework

This study integrates Achievement Goal Theory (AGT) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to explain how coach-created climate influences athletes' motivation and emotional reactions over time. AGT distinguishes between task-involving (mastery) climates and ego-involving (performance) climates, while SDT focuses on athlete's autonomous versus controlled motivation, with autonomous motivation reflecting self-determined reasons for participation.

Purpose of the Study

The main goal was to examine the temporal (over time) interplay between perceived motivational climate, athlete's motivation regulations, and their emotional experiences (pleasant states, anxiety, anger) prior to practice. Specifically, the researchers wanted to explore how different climates predicted changes in emotions and motivation over a 3-month period.

Participants and Setting

A total of 217 competitive athletes completed self-report measures at two time points spaced about 3 months apart. They reported on:

- The motivational climate created by their coach,
- Their motivation regulations (autonomous vs. controlled), and
- The intensity and impact of emotions they experienced before training.

Instruments Used

Athletes completed validated questionnaires assessing:

- Perceived motivational climate (task vs. ego features),
- Motivation regulations (autonomous vs. controlled motivation), and
- Emotional states (pleasant states, anxiety, functional and dysfunctional anger).

Overall Results

- A task involving climate (mastery/effort focus) predicted positive motivational outcomes, including higher autonomous motivation and lower increases in dysfunctional anxiety and anger over time.
- An ego involving climate (win/compare emphasis) was linked to increased controlled motivation and greater dysfunctional anger intensity and impact.
- The study also found reciprocal relationships between controlled motivation and certain emotions (e.g., anxiety), suggesting that motivation and emotions influence each other over time.
- Although effect sizes were small, consistent trends showed that climate predicts emotional adaptations, particularly how athletes experience anxiety and anger before practice.

Take Home Message

This study demonstrates that:

- Coach created climate matters not just in the moment, but over time, it influences how athletes regulate motivation and experience emotions related to performance stress.
- Task involving climates help athletes adapt to psychological stress by supporting autonomous motivation and reducing dysfunctional anxiety and anger.
- Ego involving climates can contribute to maladaptive emotion patterns and more controlled motivation.

In simpler terms: Mastery-focused environments help athletes feel better motivated and emotionally stable, while performance-focused environments may make stress, anxiety, and anger more likely or intense.

Part III: Incorporating a Mastery Oriented Mentality

If I were overseeing a high school football or softball program, I would incorporate mastery orientation in the following realistic ways:

1. Redefine Success Metrics

Instead of grading only wins and losses, we would track:

- Assignment execution percentage
- Effort grading on film
- Skill progression benchmarks

- Strength and conditioning improvements

We would post “Most Improved” and “Effort Champion” recognitions weekly, not just Player of the Week.

2. Practice Structure

Practices would include:

- Individual skill stations with progress tracking
- Competitive drills based on execution quality, not just score
- Built-in reflection periods (“What did you improve today?”)

Mistakes would be treated as teaching reps, not punishable events.

3. Language and Feedback

I would intentionally shift feedback toward:

- Effort-based praise (“Great adjustment.”)
- Strategy reinforcement (“You read that coverage correctly.”)
- Process focus (“Good footwork progression.”)

Film sessions would highlight improvement clips, not just mistakes.

4. Playing Time Transparency

Clear developmental goals would be outlined so athletes understand:

- What skills must improve
- How practice habits influence opportunities
- That development is ongoing, not fixed

5. Leadership Culture

Senior leadership councils would be trained to reinforce:

- Peer encouragement
- Accountability without ridicule
- Team-first mentality

Final Reflection

Winning matters. But long-term athlete development matters more, especially in high school. A mastery climate does not eliminate competitiveness; it redirects it. Instead of competing against teammates, athletes compete against their previous performance.

The research and my PMCSQ-2 results confirm something I already believe as a coach: Climate is culture. Culture drives development. Development sustains winning.

Reference

Ruiz MC, Robazza C, Tolvanen A, Haapanen S, Duda JL. Coach-Created Motivational Climate and Athletes' Adaptation to Psychological Stress: Temporal Motivation-Emotion Interplay. Front Psychol. 2019 Mar 22;10:617. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00617. PMID: 30967817; PMCID: PMC6438958.