2012-08-10

The Effect of Presumed Media Influence on College Athletes

Justin E. Anderson
Brigham Young University - Provo

The Effect of Presumed Media Influence on College Athletes

Justin E. Anderson

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

John J. Davies, Chair
Mark A. Callister
Tom Robinson

Department of Communications

Brigham Young University

December 2012

ABSTRACT

The Effect of Presumed Media Influence on College Athletes

Justin E. Anderson
Department of Communications, BYU
Master of Arts

In this article, I examine the notion that perceptions of media have a perceived effect on performance and morale on both the athlete and the team. I test this idea on a sample of college athletes at Nicholls State University (N=94), at the end of the 2011-2012 school year. Findings show that the presumed media influence is displayed in the context of athletics and that there are some indirect effects from one's perceptions of how their teammates were portrayed in the media. Research found that positive media had a perceived effect on the team but not on ones' self. Findings also showed that positive and negative media can be a predictor of overall team performance. Nothing was found to support the idea that positive or negative media had an impact on personal performance or morale. Nothing was found that gave credence to the fact that perception of media whether positive or negative has an impact on personal or team morale.

Keywords: Presumed media influence, Third-person, Pygmalion effect, perceptions, athletics

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With thanks to my wife, Anne, and to my children, Dakota, Kenedi, Rubee, and Peyton, for all their love, support, and encouragement to finish my master's.

And to my committee, Doctors Davies, Callister, and Robinson—without their counsel I would not have finished my thesis.

The fact I finished in a timely manner is in no small part due to the Brigham Young University Football coaching staff who gave me an opportunity to earn a master's degree and also be part of a great learning experience as a coach, and I am thankful.

Finally, and most importantly, all thanks be to my Savior Jesus Christ who gave me strength when strength was needed, for understanding when none was to be found, and for guidance when all seemed to be lost.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

The Effect of Presumed Media Influence on College Athletes

Chapter I: Introduction

Media can act as a distraction to athletes and influence their actions on and off the field. Today media are all around the sports arena, as sports have become a main source of entertainment for many individuals. This has caused an abundance of media exposure. The media report not only on an athlete's performance on the field, but also their social activities, leaving little room for error. Society wants to know everything about the athlete which increases the pressure placed on athletes to not only perform well but to also be in control of their personal lives. Yet, little has been done to research the impact the media are having on the athlete's performance and its impact on the athlete's behavior off the field.

The media portray athletes images off the field of play and they discuss their performance on the field of play; this exposure and scrutiny will have an impact on the athletes themselves. The question is do the athletes recognize these effects or do they believe that the media only affects their teammates?

As a former player and a current coach, I have dealt with the media on both sides of the fence. As a former college football player, I remember our coaches would often remind us to stay away from viewing internet sites, television media, and reading the newspaper, because they believed that, whether positive or negative, those sources would have an effect on us as players. As players, we were taught how to deal with the media and given suggestions on what types of things we should say and not say when speaking with the media. Over the last eight years as a coach both at the high school level and now at the collegiate level I have found myself telling players to stay away from viewing the media as much as possible, knowing, as a former player, the media's impact both on me and my teammates. I tried not to single out players when talking

to the media in fear of how players may feel if they do consume the media. These experiences have led me to wonder why coaches are constantly telling their players to be careful with the media. These experiences with athletics have given me some insight to possible media perceptions and their impact on athletes.

Perceptions can be related to how one defines themselves depending on what others believe. I find myself, as a father and a coach, watching what I say about my children or players because I believe the more you tell someone they are something they usually begin to believe that is what or who they are. For example, if I tell my child they are not smart, it is likely they will begin to believe that they are not smart and use that as an excuse for why they cannot do well in school. If I tell a player they are a poor catcher, then they may believe it and will not practice to become a better catcher; they will not try since they already doubt their abilities. These perceptions are called self-fulfilling prophecies, or Pygmalion effect, which is one important theory in this study. It has been said by many players, including myself, that "I can watch the media or read stories about the team because it does not affect me and I don't listen to what they say", yet all the while believing that teammates are getting caught up in all of the media. This idea is called the third-person effect. By understanding these ideas one can then begin to see why perceptions can be important in the realm of athletics.

W.I. Thomas once said, "It is not important whether or not the interpretation is correct--if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." This statement lends some great insight to how athletes may perceive what is being said about themselves and their team. These perceptions can come from various sources including the media.

College teams begin each competitive season with a positive outlook, a fresh start, and high expectations. The media is in full swing predicting each team's probable success and which players will have the greatest impact. Teams and their players are surrounded with messages both good and bad prior to the start of and throughout a season. But what happens to the media consumption of those teams' players when they are struggling? This study looks at perceptions of media and what role perceptions play when media is sending both positive and negative messages.

Purpose Statement

With the plethora of studies that have focused on the effects of media on children, young adults, health, and politics, it is surprising that little research has focused on what possible effect media may have on athletes. The sports industry is a billion dollar market, attracting attention around the globe; it is no wonder why so many athletes in today's society find themselves increasingly in the media spotlight. As the popularity of sports continues to grow with increasing attention to athletes in so many different venues—blogs, newspapers, internet, television, and talk radio—we need to determine if all this attention positively or negatively impacts the athletes. If there is an effect, athletes need to be aware of the correlation to listening, watching, or reading media which may impact the way they play.

What happens to a team that is struggling? Does their media consumption go up or down? What is the local coverage like: positive or negative? And what is the impact on the community? How much do the athletes view the local media in times of success or in times of struggle? These are all questions that can be raised when looking at media effects in sports.

Research Overview

Research has been done to look at how media are consumed and the effects they have on violence and aggression and other effects to one's actions; yet I have found very little research that looks directly at how it may impact athletes.

Some research in the area of athletics has focused on the concept of professional sports as male dominated, while suggesting an underlying traditionally feminine gender role for the female athletes (Hilliard, 1984) and gender stereotypes of female athletes (Knight & Giuliano, 2001). Media effects research over the last 30 years falls broadly into the following areas of focus**:**

- Third-person effects (Davison, 1983)
- Media effects, uses and gratifications (Rubin, 1994)
- Agenda setting and politics (Weaver, Graber, & McCombs, 1981)
- Media and Violence (Anderson & Berkowitz, 2003)
- Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming (Scheufele, 2007)

With an understanding that research has been done on media effects, this paper will look at the different forms of media, the role that media plays in influencing individuals, and how it may impact athletes.

While research has shown that there is a correlation to watching media or viewing internet media and the effects it may have on individuals in political and health arenas, there needs to be more research done about the impact it may have on athletes. Athletes and teams are surrounded by messages and images about what type of an athlete they need to be, and how they should act off the field; they are judged weekly by their performance, wins, and losses. As a form of entertainment they are judged and critiqued by all who watch.

With all of the studies on Pygmalion effect (self-fulfilling prophecy), third-person effect, and the theory of presumed influence this research will look at how these theories can give insight on the impact of messages that media send and how it is impacting athletes on the field.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Related Theories

Pygmalion effect (self-fulfilling prophecy). In 1948 the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy was introduced by Robert Merton and since this time much has been done to research the idea. Later this was referred to as the Pygmalion effect, which suggests that the greater the expectation placed upon the individual the better they will perform. The term Pygmalion effect came about by a study done by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) looking at how teacher expectancy could improve student performance. This study validated the idea of self-fulfilling prophecy experimentally.

In the experiment performed by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), all students of a class were given an IQ test. Teachers were led to believe that some of their students had scored very high on IQ tests and that these students had more potential for greater achievement than some of the other students in the class. The students that were deemed as achieving high IQ test scores were actually randomly selected. This randomly selected group was equal in potential to the control group. In this experiment the Pygmalion hypothesis was confirmed when the students that were deemed high potential achieved more than the control group. It was evidence that the teachers had treated the high potential group differently. Since this classroom experiment (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968), much research and controversy have stemmed concerning the nature of the Pygmalion effect and its possible flaws (Barber & Silver, 1968; Elashoff & Snow, 1971; Jensen, 1969; Snow, 1969; Thorndike, 1968).

Despite the many studies of the Pygmalion effect in educational and social psychology, nothing to date has been done in the sports arena. The questions that needs answering: If raising teacher expectations enhances pupil performance, then would negative or unrealistic media

expectations decrease player productivity and would positive media expectations increase player productivity?

A study done on enlisted airmen at a United States Air Force Academy Prep School looked at what was then called the labeling effect (Schrank, 1968). This study tested 100 airmen, in which they were informed they would be participating in a study that dealt with organizational matters. The men were randomly assigned to different class sections that were supposedly based on ability levels. The results showed that this labeling effect came from giving ability labels to different groups (Schrank, 1968). Results demonstrated that those who were labeled higher in ability level within the groups achieved higher scores than those who were labeled lower in ability levels (Schrank, 1968). This study helps to give reasoning to the Pygmalion effect, that when individuals are expected to perform a certain way, or in the case of athletes, when the media expects an athlete to perform or be a certain way, that particular expectation is elicited.

Building from the experiment by Schrank (1968) and using a similar sample (Israeli Defense Forces), another field experiment was done on the Pygmalion effect (Eden & Shani, 1979, 1982). In this particular experiment 105 trainees were assigned at random to one of three conditions: high, regular, or unknown command (leadership) potential. The instructors of these trainees were given descriptions of their pupils according to these conditions. The instructors and their assistants were then manipulated using the idea of expectancy. The results from this experiment showed that those who were the experimental trainees outperformed the control groups. From the results it was found that over 70% of the variance in the desired achievement scores was due to the expectancy induction used on the instructors. As well, those who were in the high command potential group were more pleased with the course and had a greater desire to move on to the next course. In the study by Eden and Shani (1979, 1982) they also wanted to

know which characteristic changed the instructors behavior which then affected the performance of their pupils. Using parts of the Bowers and Seashore (1966) scale of leadership, they asked the students to explain the leadership behavior of their instructor. The results found that instructors were more supportive and task-oriented to those in the high command potential which led to higher performance. Eden and Shani concluded that leadership is the characteristic by which superiors unintentionally produce better results with those whom they expect more. This idea leads to this current study of college players and the expectations that are placed upon them by the media, whether positive or negative. Will the players become who the media expect them to be according to write-ups, etc.? How does this play into the presumed influence theory?

Eden and Ravid (1981a, 1982) took the Israeli military experiment (Eden & Shani, 1979) and replicated it at a different training base. However, in this experiment they wanted to test trainee self-expectancy. This self-expectancy idea had only been studied in school type settings (Rappaport & Rappaport, 1975; Zanna, Sheras, Cooper, & Shaw, 1975). To test self-expectancy trainees were randomly told by a psychologist they had "high potential to succeed" in the course. The results of this study once again showed the Pygmalion effect was demonstrated as those who were expected to do well significantly did better than those who had not.

From the results of these studies one could expect that when authoritative, credible sources convey their ability of high expectations, it evidently motivates them to perform well and makes them use more of their abilities to perform well. Within much of the sports world, the media are considered authoritative and credible. It should be expected that this Pygmalion type effect could be seen when media provide expectations, whether good or bad, and the athlete will then fulfill those expectations.

The many different military experiments used to test the Pygmalion effect show that information can impact the performance of others, especially when one is expected to perform either poorly or exceptionally. In this study of the media it would be the media's expectations that would lead to a corresponding performance.

Third-person effect. Researching the third-person effect theory is vital to discover how athletes view the effect of media on their teammates and on themselves. Third-person theory proposes that people tend to overestimate the influence of mass media effects on others' attitudes and behaviors (Davidson, 1983). Therefore one expect, according to this theory, that those who are exposed to persuasive messages by the media will assume that the message will affect others (e.g., teammates) more than themselves. The third-person effect is not simply related to direct effects but rather to the perceptions of people's predictions of the possible reactions of others (Perloff, 1999). Even when the individuals are not the apparent audience for the message, the impact that they expect this communication to have on others may lead them to take some action (Davidson, 1983). It is possible that any effect the communication achieves may be caused, not by the reaction of the supposed audience, but, instead, by the behavior of those who anticipate, or think they perceive, some reaction on the part of others (Davidson, 1983). For example, an owner of a gas station notices a massive campaign for a particular item that his convenience store carries. Expecting those who visit his store to be persuaded to buy that item, he puts it in a location where it is easily seen. Another example may be when athletes perceive the media making positive comments about another player's performance based on his interactions with the media. Because of this perception, players then try and interact with the media in a similar way expecting a similar outcome. These examples demonstrate the indirect but very real possibilities of the effects of media that can take place even if one's perceptions are exaggerated or false. In

the end, this theory suggests that individuals have a desire to have a positive self-image and, therefore, they will often evaluate themselves in a more favorable light than others, giving themselves credit for having positive attributes and negative attributes as more characteristic of others (Brown, 1986). This perception that "one is less susceptible to persuasion than others helps to enhance self-esteem and preserve feelings of control" (Duck, Terry, & Hogg, 1995, p. 306). These basic concepts of the third-person effect, the importance of perceptions, and one's desire to be seen positively and in control set great ground-level research opportunities and insight to the current study of athletes. These concepts also give understanding to the possibilities of negative and positive messages and the perceptions that athletes may have on themselves and their teammates.

One study, looking at the normal ideal of female thinness used the third-person effect to determine its effect on perceptions of thinness (Park, Yun, McSweeney, & Gunther, 2007). Because the third-person theory suggests that people perceive others as more vulnerable than themselves to negative or undesirable media effects, this study proposed that people perceive their same-sex and opposite-sex peers to be more affected by images of thinness than themselves, which would lead to an overestimation of the norm of ideal female thinness held by others. The results supported their hypothesis, showing that both men and women had a thin ideal for themselves, but it was not nearly as extreme as what they believed to be others' ideal for thinness.

Third-person theory then gives some possible insight on how athletes might perceive their own personal viewing of the media: the athletes believe they are not affected by media messages but that their teammates are affected by the media.

Recent literature of third-person effect has separated this hypothesis into two parts: the perceptual, which looks at why people are biased to perceive media influence on others more so than on themselves; and the behavioral, which affects people's expectations regarding media leading them to take actions (Perloff, 2002; Salwen, 1998). Salwen (1998) has suggested that there is less support for the behavioral component, which this current study will try and give some insight too.

This current study will examine other studies that are similar to the third-person effect, which will describe the ways in which athletes view the media as affecting others and not so much themselves (Perloff, 1993; Price & Tewksbury, 1996). The persuasion knowledge model suggests when people understand or have knowledge of the persuasion techniques of the media they then believe the media's persuasive attempts on themselves are ineffective (Friestad & Wright, 1994). Helping to define and give clarity to the third-person effect theory is the fundamental attribution error, which states that people tend to underestimate how others perceive certain situations, like media content, and because of this they overestimate how much others are influenced by the content (Gunther, 1991; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990). This attributional error also suggests that individuals judge themselves to be aware of persuasive material and because of this awareness they are not as easily influenced by the messages, which is what really leads to the third-person effect (Gunther, 1991). These studies give some understanding to why athletes perceive effects on others differently from how they perceive effects of persuasion on themselves.

The teams that participated in the study struggled in their performance, which would garner negative types of media. Early research was done by Gunther (1991) looking at negative messages and its' impact on perceptions. He found that individuals felt unintelligent when

messages were negative, and they believed that the negative messages would have a greater impact on others in order to increase their perception of personal invulnerability and control. The idea that messages with negative consequences produce greater perceptions of an effect on others was termed negative influence corollary by Gunther and Mundy (1993), supporting Gunther's earlier research. Cohen et al. (2006) found in their study of indirect media influence on adolescent smoking that the negative influence corollary does exist. Their research found that young people believed that anti-smoking messages were persuasive to others, but that those same messages were significantly less influential on their peers than pro-smoking messages. This demonstrates that the undesirable pro-smoking messages were perceived to be more persuasive to others because their peers are more vulnerable. The anti-smoking messages, which to most of the respondents were considered to have beneficial purposes, were perceived as less influential than the pro-smoking messages. This supports the theory that athletes who perceive media messages negatively will also perceive that their teammates will be more affected because their teammates are more vulnerable. It is important to note that the third-person effect seems most likely when messages with undesirable consequences are perceived and is most evident when a message has little benefit and seems to disappear when the message has positive consequences (Gunther & Storey, 2003). It is also important to recognize an individual's perceptions in regards to negative media. Their perceptions reinforce in the individual that they are less susceptible to persuasion of negative outcomes or media which creates this third-person effect (Gunther & Mundy, 1993). Gunther and Mundy (1993) similarly study the impact of harmful media and beneficial media: the results showed that individuals still perceived the harmful media to have a greater effect on others than themselves. Interestingly the beneficial media showed no significance in its self-other differences.

Tsfati and Cohen (2003) also found when leaders speak out against the negative coverage received it may actually back-fire. This is because it will draw more attention to the media and then enhance the effects by focusing individuals' attention on what the media portrayals are thereby increasing the likelihood of bias and its potential impact on the individual. This is an interesting idea because so many coaches speak out against watching the media that this may not be the approach to take. This idea will not be expounded upon in this paper but it does have relevance to the theory of third-person effects.

With all of this research on negative messages and outcomes, Perloff (1993) believed there still needed to be research done to see if the third-person effect would emerge for positive messages. This study also seeks to determine if the third-person effect found its way in positive media for athletes.

Researchers have found in other studies that a similar effect influence takes place when messages are considered positive, except now the individuals attribute more effect on themselves because they are smart enough to catch the value of the message (Cohen & Davis, 1991; Gunther & Thorson, 1992). Those who are more involved with viewing media are more likely to recognize that coverage may be biased and exaggerate its influence on others in regard to self and therefore affect themselves (Tsfati & Cohen, 2003). Finally, other research has found when there is a greater difference between perceived effects on the self and others and when the source of the message is judged to be negatively biased, the third-person effects are greater (Gunther, 1991; Park et. al, 2007).

These studies of negative media and it possible effects lend strength to the current study because much of what would be expected is the greatest effects of the third-person theory stemming from negative media. What are the effects of negative media? Davison's (1983) initial

research suggested that this overestimation of negative effects causes people to take preventative actions. Interestingly enough, Gunther (1991) did not find in his early research that this behavior outcome actually existed. Since the study by Gunther (1991), other researchers have suggested that there are preventative behaviors that are taking place because of negative media. Tsfati and Cohen (2003) believed that "If what media say about me and my life has an impact on how I believe I am judged by others, then it should also affect how I view myself and hence impact my behavior" (p. 712). But some recent research by Xu and Gonzebach (2008), which looked at the behavioral component of the third-person theory, suggests that people's perceptions of media directly impact their attitudes and behaviors. One's self-image can be affected by the way we believe others see us (Mead, 1936) and how others see the groups to which we belong (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This would suggest that those media, which provide us with information about what others think of us, our groups, or our achievements, could potentially cause a change in behavior (Tsfati & Cohen, 2003). If this is true then the effects would be true for someone who is in the spotlight, like an athlete. For example, if an athlete thinks media depictions influence how others judge his athletic skill or that he is on a bad team, he may not want to be associated in public as an athlete or recognized as a player on that particular team. But, transversely, if the athlete perceives the media's depictions of how others believe he is a great player or his team is successful he may want to brag about himself or his team and make sure people know who he is. This simple example only suggests that indirect effects of perceived media influence impact not only perceptions but also behavior. The behavior component of third-person theory was also found to influence important life decisions (Tsfati & Cohen, 2003). Tsfati and Cohen (2003) wanted to find out why people in developmental towns decide to relocate using the third-person theory. Surveys were given to approximately five hundred individuals who were asked about

perceptions of media and its effect on their decision to relocate. Results confirmed the third-person theory by finding that those in developmental towns believed that perceived image caused them to consider relocation. The study found that those in developmental towns believed that those in larger cities saw their developments more negatively because of negative media, which led to a desire to relocate. Results from this study also showed that images have influence; those images do not have to be accurate or even grounded in reality to have an effect on individuals. These results suggest that perception of negative media coverage influences others and this may also lead individuals to dissociate from their groups or change their behaviors because they believe the media has an impact on others (Tsfati & Cohen, 2003). This behavioral component provides early evidence of the possibility that there could be a link to media and athletic performance. More research needs to be done with this idea; the current study of college athletes will look at the behavioral component.

An interesting finding in the third-person arena was the suggestion that, according to Duck et al. (1995), the perception of message influence on one's self and on others sometimes depends on the quality of an advertisement. This finding suggests that it is *what* is said which is important and not *how* it is said. If one's perceptions are not based on quality this lends importance to this current study on perceptions of media and perceptions of performance. This idea is supported by earlier findings of Gunther and Thorson (1992) who suggested that the differences in perception between self and others in media influence is dependent upon features of the specific media message or advertisement. The study by Duck et al. (1995) looks at third-person effects and positive media. They found that "fear appeal" commercials (negative consequences which were seen as good commercials) created a reverse in third-person effect where individuals admitted the effect was greater on themselves than on others. These negative

commercials that created the reverse in third-person effect opposed Gunther and Thorson's (1992) idea that positive emotional content would create the reverse third-person effect, where individuals see the greater media influence on self than others. This study gives some credence to how an athlete may view the quality of each of the local media outlets. This also lends further support that media which is viewed as negative creates the third-person effect, but also demonstrates that the third-person effect can be reversed by certain types of media, where individuals may see it as socially acceptable. This study will not examine the quality of the media, but this is a factor for future research to take into consideration.

The social status of individuals has been found to be a possible predictor of the third-person effect. In a study done by Duck, Hogg, and Terry (2000) they found that those who were high-status respondents (political party winners) viewed those of low-status (those who had lost) as more susceptible to media influence. That study was followed up by Scharrer (2002) which confirmed the third-person effect as respondents viewed others more influenced by negative media. The study also found continued support for the importance of social distance in the third-person perception (Hoffner et al., 2001; Perloff, 1999). The respondents in the study viewed themselves as least influenced, their neighbors as more influenced, and the general public as the most influenced by the negative effects of media violence. These findings are important to this study. Although, future studies may want to look at athletes and how they view other athletes of different sports teams and what they perceive the effect to be on them. Those of closest proximity are given more of a favorable perception to possibly protect one's own sense of identity. While not looked at in this study, this could be used for further research.

In the athletic arena, particularly in college football, athletes want others to believe they are in control of the outcome of games they play in. The research done on third-person effect

shows that negative media may have the greater impact even though the athlete may not believe it is affecting them. The current study looks at this third-person effect using both how perceptions of negative and positive media impact ones' attitude and behavior.

The third-person effect is a well-established theory backed by studies looking at the political and health arenas. However, the third-person effect looking at the results of perceptions on ones' attitude and behavior are also important.

The theory of presumed media influence. With such an abundance of media effects studies and information suggesting that media or social factors influence a viewer's ability, this research can be used in the study of television, internet news, and college athletes.

The study of perception and its effects have been studied for a long time: Lee and Lee (1939) posited that when important people adopt a certain position, others should follow their example and adopt a similar belief. The Spiral of Silence coined by Noelle-Neumann (1974) simply states that one's perceptions of the media will influence if they should express their opinion of a particular topic; finally, W. P. Davison's (1983) third-person effect theory suggests that media effects take hold on society because society perceives media as influential. These earlier theories led to the theory of presumed influence, which sought to look at the indirect effects of mass communication on an unintended audience (Gunther & Storey, 2003). Adding to the third-person effect, the Presumed Media Influence theory (PMI) posits that people's perceptions of the effects of mass media can shape their reactions to media and interactions with media (Gunther & Storey, 2003). PMI is a much simpler model which states that "people perceive some influence of a message on others and then react to that perception of influence" (Gunther & Storey, 2003, p.201). One's reaction to the media is not always based on accuracy, but perceptions of what they believe (Cohen, Tsfati, & Sheafer, 2008). This idea that the "myth

of media impact is influential, too" (Katz, 1986, p.32) is an interesting idea, especially when looking at how athletes perceive what the media is saying about the athletes and their teammates.

One aspect of the presumed media influence theory is being able to identify what the mediating variables may be when the studied subject changes their attitudes or behaviors; or how certain types of perceived mass media influence on others (athletes) might in turn affect these individuals themselves (Gunther, Bolt, Borzekowski, Liebhart, & Dillard, 2006). This study will look to give some insight on what variables could have an impact on perceptions.

At first glance it is easy to think the theories of presumed media influence and third-person effect are the same, but a closer look shows the important differences. PMI differs from the third-person theory because it does not require overestimation of perceived media influence, and also there is no longer a need for comparison between perceived effects on others and self (Gunther & Storey, 2003). Finally, perceived influence of media on others can be either negative or positive, which is an important distinction between third-person and presumed influence. These particular distinctions "allow for many more types of attitudinal and behavioral consequences compared to the restrictive third-person effect prescription" (Gunther & Storey, 2003, p.201).

The variable most researched by studies using negative influence has been message restrictions. This research has found that "the more people perceive strong negative influence or harmful media content on others, the more they support censorship" (Tal-Or, Cohen, Tsfati, & Gunther, 2010, p.803). Gunther, Perloff, and Tsfati (2008) also noted in their findings that people's attitudes were formed based on biased perceptions of negative media impact on others.

Research looking at the possible effects of negative media has confirmed the theory of PMI. If a team or player is receiving negative media, the perceptions of the negative media by

the player and their teammates should lead to perceptions of bad performance on teammates and players, therefore, these perceptions have effects on the players themselves. One study, done by Tsfati and Cohen (2005), wanted to discover if perceptions of negative or biased media coverage would affect perceptions of the image the public had on the settlements, and whether or not these negative perceptions led to increased violence. The study also sought to find out if perceived negative images of these particular settlements would lead to political inefficacy, and if the perceived negativity would influence individuals in these settlements desire to move. To test this, like most studies using PMI, a survey was used. The study was tested on settlers in the Middle East in a political situation that would affect settlers and their homes. The results revealed that perceptions of negative media coverage of these particular settlements were associated with the political situation, which in turn led to settler's justification of violence. Perceptions of the negative media also had an impact on settlers' political inefficacy and their thoughts of relocating. The perception one has can be associated with action, attitudes, and behaviors. The perceptions of negative media attention or coverage of a player or his teammates should lead to a similar perception in one's performance and morale in this current study.

Besides the effect negative types of media could have on the perceptions of athletes and their teammates, this study wanted to find if positive types of media will lead to perceptions of positive performance and morale. An important study used to look at PMI and positive messages was done by Gunther and Storey (2003). This study used a Nepalese radio campaign aimed at improving health care, particularly baby deliveries, in clinics. This campaign used a drama format and was intended to improve the interpersonal communication and counseling skills of the health care workers. The indirect effects model was tested by measuring the effects of the campaign on unintended audiences—the general Nepalese population—using their perceptions

of the influence of the radio program on health workers. It was found that besides influencing the intended audience (health care workers) the radio drama program had an indirect effect on much of the general population (Nepalese people). It was also found that the general public perceived that health care workers were being influenced on how to better treat clients; this presumed influence led to not only a more positive image but it also improved interactions between the public and the health care workers. This study examined one possible suggestion for PMI: people who assume positive influences of mass media on a target audience will adapt their own attitudes and behaviors to match their perceptions. This demonstrates that positive messages can also affect attitudes and behaviors when using PMI. The current study on the effect of PMI on athletes will also look at how perceptions of positive messages may affect perceptions of influence on self and others using PMI. An interesting finding in the study by Gunther and Storey (2003) is the indirect effect the media campaign had on two different groups of clients: those who were surveyed and those who were interviewed. Interestingly enough, those who were interviewed after a visit to the health clinic stated that they were not more likely to report improved interactions with health care workers if they perceived more radio program influence. Their perceptions were a result of their interactions at the clinic; although, their perceptions may have resulted from exposure to the radio messages. Gunther and Storey (2003) believed that these findings supported PMI, which suggests that the consequences of PMI are "subjective perceptions most likely affected by mass media content than by actual experiences" (p.212).

Because media has such a broad reach with athletics, this study expected that athlete's perceptions of the media would affect them more than actual experiences or interviews with the media. Looking at different sports should help to provide greater depth on this idea because each of the sport receives different amounts of coverage. This will be an interesting aspect of the

study, whether the effect will be greater with sports that receive the most coverage or greater with those who may be in the spotlight more often. By examining both male and female sports, the study will also consider if gender affects perceptions of the media.

Since the study done by Gunther and Storey (2003), most of the research on PMI has been focused on how attitudes and behaviors of an audience are affected by an individual's media perceptions (Gunther, Perloff, & Tsfati, 2008). This indirect effects model has been extensively tested in a variety of contexts in recent years (Andsager & White, 2007). For example, a recent study found that politician perceptions concerning the influence of media content increased politician's motivation and effort to appear in media coverage, which then led both to greater media prominence and to more parliamentary activity (Cohen, Tsfati, & Sheafer, 2008). In this study the coverage of politicians by the news media indirectly influenced the lobbyist and their perceptions of media influence. Players should be influenced indirectly by their perceptions of how they see the media's influence on others in the current study.

An important element in the theory of PMI is presumed reach. Presumed reach suggests that the more exposure one has to media messages, the more the individual then believes the messages reach more people, leading them to believe that their circle of friends, peers, and others are influenced by the media (Cohen et al., 2006).

One study that looked at attitudinal experimental was done using PMI research (Tal-Or et al., 2010). It found that providing positive effects of pornography weakened the support for censorship, which provides empirical evidence that one's perceptions of media influence is responsible for the consequent changes in attitude. In this study, the researchers also manipulated beliefs about media influence and found that it impacted attitudes, lending continued support that PMI does impact attitudes.

Another illustration of this theory was found in a study that suggested that female college students who read fashion magazines perceived that thin images were prevalent in media. This perception of thin women in the media created an assumption that others were influenced by this ideal image and, in fact, preferred thin body types. This perception then reinforced the influence of the thin image in the females who read the magazines, which added pressure to conform to what they perceived to be the norm (Park, 2009). With the growth of PMI, research has confirmed this idea in many different contexts. One study found that youth who perceived sexual messages on TV made their peers more promiscuous were significantly more likely to be promiscuous themselves (Chia, 2006). This provides a base on which a study of athletes and the "perception" they have of the media and its effects on others can indirectly have an effect on themselves.

In summary, there is empirical evidence supporting the claims behind PMI and demonstrating the applicability of this theory in a wide range of different contexts. Studies have shown that attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors are changed when there is a presumed media influence. Because college sports receive so much media attention and criticism by many, the idea that players believe whatever the media has said about them, has reached the masses. Many also believe that media could have a potential effect on the athletes' performance and therefore, the performance of a team. PMI and its differences from third-person theory lend important insight on this study which looks at the potential of perceptions on both negative and positive media and its impact on perceptions of one's performance and the perceived performance on teammates.

Chapter III: Hypotheses

Current Study

Each of the mentioned theories falls under the umbrella of the media effects hypothesis which, in general, states that public opinion or belief responds to a pseudo-environment that has been constructed by the media (Lippmann, 1922). With an understanding of what research has been done about media effects, this study will apply ideas from each theory named: Pygmalion effect, third-person effect, and the theory of presumed media influence (PMI).

The theory of greatest relevance is the theory of presumed media influence (PMI) (Gunther & Story, 2003): people will perceive some influence of communication from others and, as a result, will change their own attitudes or behaviors accordingly. In relation to third-person effect, PMI provides a strong background for why media may in fact influence the way an athlete performs based on what he believes others perceive about himself or his team.

This idea that the media has some effect on others is well established. However, little has been done to examine sports news media to see if the same experimental conditions are present that exist in politics and other social issues. If they do, an argument can be made that athletes' performance can be linked in some way to the issues about players or teams. By reporting results of the survey of athlete's, the player may be affected either positively or negatively using the PMI theory. The intent of the current study is to have players on a college sports team complete a survey and run the results of the survey against media consumption to examine the link of the theory of PMI on performance and morale of players and teams.

Using the aforementioned theories, the following hypotheses were tested by administering a survey:

H1: Athletes will assume that the media affects their teammates more than themselves.

H2: Athletes perceptions of the effects of media on their teammates will be related to perceptions of personal performance**.**

H3: Perceived negative media coverage of the team will be related to perceived poor team performance and overall morale.

H4: Perceived negative media coverage of individual athletes will be related to perceived poor performance and morale by athletes.

H5: Perceived positive media coverage of individual athletes will be related to perceived good performance and morale of athletes.

H6: Perceived positive media coverage of the team will be related to perceived good team performance and morale.

Chapter IV: Methodology

Survey research was done to examine links between the local media consumption and how Nicholls State University athletes view the effects of that consumption during a season. The study examined the results of a survey given to the members of the 2011–2012 Nicholls State Men's Football, Men's and Women's Basketball, Men's Baseball, Women's Softball, and Women's Soccer players to determine what possible effects the media had on themselves and their teammates.

Research Design

To test the research questions, an online survey created through Qualtrics.com was sent to all members of the following 2011–2012 Nicholls State sport teams: Men's Football, Men's and Women's Basketball, Men's Baseball, Women's Softball, and Women's Soccer. The athletes answered questions related to perceived personal and teammate consumption of local media and the perceived effect of both negative and positive local media messages. The link, along with an online survey request, was sent through email to every member of the 2011–2012 athletic teams. To maintain anonymity, each teams' head coach was asked to send only player emails and no name so that there would be no link to the individual athletes.

The questions ranged from what media the players viewed, how often they viewed media, how much they perceived the media influenced their performance, and how much they perceived the media influenced their teammates. Each survey (Appendix A) was evaluated using statistical regression tests, which will provide insight into the third-person effect and PMI theories.

The survey was given from June 4, 2012 until June 22, 2012 to help avoid some possible influence that could take place. By giving a survey weekly, players were not influenced to consume more media or to not consume media at all. It was also determined that players may be

more open to answering questions about teammates after a season so they would not feel that their response would affect their standing with the team. There are risks to distributing a survey at the end of the season: trying to remember how much and how often they viewed media; distorting how well they played as well as how well their teammates played; feeling obligated to complete the survey because I am a football coach; and fearing that their anonymity could be compromised, thereby risking punishment. It was possible that participants in the study could have felt uneasy about providing opinions pertaining to their own media habits and their teammates' media habits and performance. However, this risk was minimized by assuring that the information would only be used for the purposes of the study and that anonymity would be strictly maintained. Despite these possible risks of obtaining survey responses, the June 4, 2012 to June 22, 2012 period was determined to be the most effective time.

The decision was made that a survey would be the most effective and commonly used method to obtain data and find connections between perceived influence of the media on the player and the perceived influence on their teammates in both the third-person and PMI theories.

Sample. The population for this study was composed of the members of the following Nicholls State athletic teams: Men's Football, Men's and Women's Basketball, Men's Baseball, Women's Softball, and Women's Soccer. Nicholls State University is nestled in a small community in Southern Louisiana. The football program competes in the Football Championship Series (FCS) and all other sports compete at the Division 1A level. The university receives limited media attention and has somewhat lower expectations due to many years of limited success. These characteristics are important to this study because if significance can be found in this study with a small university receiving limited media attention and possibly limited expectations it would be expected that larger institutions receiving greater media attention and

greater expectations would also see these same results at a more significant level. This population was also selected because it is readily available and convenient due to limitations to access and availability of information. There were 186 emails sent to all members of the aforementioned athletic teams. Ninety-four athletes filled out the survey and, of those, only seventy-three completed the survey. The percentages of athletes per sport who completed the survey are as follows: Men's Football–67%; Men's Basketball–1.4%; Women's Basketball–2.7%; Men's Baseball–8.2%; Women's Softball–5.5%; and Women's Soccer–15.1%. In terms of year in school: Freshman–4.1%; Sophomore–20.5%; Redshirt Sophomore–6.8%; Junior–24.7%; Redshirt Junior–1.4%; Senior–23.3%; and Redshirt Senior–19.2%.

The sample period was the 2011 Football and Soccer season, the 2011–2012 Basketball seasons, and the 2012 Baseball and Softball seasons; these periods were when media coverage of the team was most intense and players were most likely to view media about themselves and their teammates. Only local media where Nicholls State Football was the main focus were included in the survey.

Measures

Frequency. To help define how frequently athletes were consuming local media outlets the question, "How frequently did you view the following media throughout your sport's season?" was asked. The choices were the following media outlets: Houma Courier newspaper, HTV-10 Sports Show, Tri-parish Times newspaper, Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show, Daily Comet newspaper, Nicholls Worth Newspaper, Houma Courier Internet news, Daily Comet Internet news, and Tri-parish Times Internet news. This question then used a six-item Likert-type scale: 1 (never) to 6 (daily). Using this question, a new variable was created called *Frequency* which compiled the data from the nine items asking about the frequency of viewing the local media

(Houma Courier newspaper, HTV-10 Sports Show, Tri-parish Times newspaper, Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show, Daily Comet newspaper, Nicholls Worth Newspaper, Houma Courier Internet news, Daily Comet Internet news, and Tri-parish Times Internet news).

Negative media. To help determine how negative the athletes perceived the local media to be, they were asked "How negative was the coverage of your sport at Nicholls State in the following media outlets" and each of the following media outlets were given as options: Houma Courier Newspaper, HTV-10 Daily Sports Show, Tri-parish Times Newspaper, Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show, Daily Comet Newspaper, Nicholls Worth Newspaper, Houma Courier Internet News, Daily Comet Internet News, and the Tri-parish Times Internet News. Respondents were then prompted to respond to the Likert-type survey question with answers ranging from 0 (Not Negative) to 100 (Very Negative). Using this question, a new variable was created called *Negative Media*, which compiled the data from the nine items asking about the negativity of the local media (Houma Courier newspaper, HTV-10 Sports Show, Tri-parish Times newspaper, Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show, Daily Comet newspaper, Nicholls Worth Newspaper, Houma Courier Internet news, Daily Comet Internet news, and Tri-parish Times Internet news).

Favorable media. To measure perceptions of favorable media coverage in local outlets athletes were asked "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's team was during the season?" with Likert-type responses ranging from 0 (Not Favorable) to 100 (Very Favorable).

Positive media. To measure perceptions of positive media coverage in local outlets, athletes were asked "How positive was the local media coverage of your sport's players during the season?" Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Not Positive) to 100 (Very Positive).

It is important here to distinguish that favorable media coverage and positive media coverage are different predictor variables. How athlete's perceived favorable media versus positive media helps to strengthen the possibility of effects that athlete's may perceive from positive types of media.

Presumed media influence. Two questions assessing perceived media influence were included in the survey. The first was "To what extent were you, yourself, affected by the way you were portrayed in the local media?" The second was "To what extent were your teammates affected by how they were portrayed in local media coverage?" The indicators were Likert-type survey questions, with answers ranging from 0 (No Influence) to 100 (Strong Influence).

Athletic performance affected by presumed media influence. Several questions were used to assess indirect effects of PMI on performance. Four questions were used as criterion variables. The first question, to assess the effects on personal performance, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The second, to assess the effects on pressure situations, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The third, to assess the effects during home games, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The fourth, to assess the effects during road games, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The indicators were Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent). The predictor variable used was "To what extent were your teammates affected by how they were portrayed in local media coverage?" The indicators were Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (No Influence) to 100 (Major Influence). These were tested using a linear regression.

Athletic performance. To measure perceptions of athletic performance the following questions were used as criterion variables and tested in a two-step linear regression test. The first, which looked at personal performance, was "Overall, how well did you perform in the following situations?" The second, which was used to look at team performance, was "Overall, how well did the team perform in the following situations?" with the following responses given as options: personal performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent).

Morale. To measure perceptions of morale, the following questions were used as criterion variables and tested in a two-step linear regression test. The first, which was used to test personal morale, was "How much influence did the coverage of your sport influence your overall morale?" The second, which was used to test team morale was, "How much influence did the media coverage of your sport have on your teammates overall morale?" Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (No Influence) to 100 (Major Influence).

Chapter V: Results

H1: Athletes will assume that the media affects their teammates more than themselves.

A paired sample t-test was calculated to compare the mean of the survey question, "To what extent were you, yourself, affected by the way you were portrayed in the local media?" to the mean of the survey question "To what extent were your teammates affected by how they were portrayed in local media coverage?" The mean on the survey question, "To what extent were you, yourself, affected by the way you were portrayed in the local media?" was $M = 36.80$ ($SD = 31.07$) and the mean of the survey question "To what extent were your teammates affected by how they were portrayed in local media coverage?" was $M = 58.28$ ($SD = 26.34$). A significant increase from "To what extent were you, yourself, affected by the way you were portrayed in the local media?" to the question "To what extent were your teammates affected by how they were portrayed in local media coverage?" was found at $t(49) = -5.68$, $p < .001$. This evidence supports H1.

H2: **Athletes perceptions of the effects of media on their teammates will be related to perceptions of personal performance.**

Several questions were used to assess indirect effects of PMI on performance. Four questions were used as criterion variables. The first question, to assess the effects on personal performance, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The second, to assess the effects on pressure situations, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The third, to assess the effects during home games, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The fourth, to assess the effects during road games, was "Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?" The indicators were Likert-type survey

questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent). The predictor variable used was "To what extent were your teammates affected by how they were portrayed in local media coverage?" The indicators were Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (No Influence) to 100 (Major Influence). These were tested using a linear regression. Table 1 displays the major statistics for the regression analyses.

Personal performance. Perceptions that one's teammates are affected by local media marginally predicted personal performance overall, F [1,56] = 3.0, p = .091. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation in personal performance (adjusted R^2= 3%). There is partial support for H2 when looking at overall personal performance.

Personal performance in pressure situations. Perceptions that one's teammates are affected by local media significantly predicted personal performance in pressure situations, F [1,55] = 6.30, p = .015. The predictor variable accounted for 10% of the variation in personal performance (adjusted R^2 = 9%). H2 is supported when looking at performance in pressure situations.

Personal performance in home games. Perceptions that one's teammates are affected by local media significantly predicted personal performance in home games, F [1,55] = 11.30, p = .001. The predictor variable accounted for 17% of the variation in personal performance (adjusted R^2 = 15%). H2 is supported when looking at performance in home games.

Personal performance in road games. Perceptions that one's teammates are affected by local media significantly predicted personal performance in road games, F [1,55] = 4.60, p = .037. The predictor variable accounted for 7% of the variation in personal performance (adjusted R^2 = 6%). H2 is supported when looking at performance in road games.

The overall results provide support for the hypothesis that athletes will be indirectly affected by assuming that their teammates are affected by the media (H2).

Table 1

Predictors of Overall Performance, Pressure Situations, Home Games and Road Games in the Athlete's Personal Performance.

	Overall Performance	*Pressure Situation*	*Home Game*	*Road Game*
Variable	β	β	β	β
Media Effect on Teammate	.22#	.32*	.41**	.28*

Note. #p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01

H3: Perceived Negative Media Coverage Of The Team Will Be Related To Perceived Poor Team Performance And Overall Morale.

To measure perceptions of negative media coverage in local outlets and its perception of bad performance on teammates (H3) the following question was asked in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variables used were "Overall, how well did the team perform in the following situations?" with the following responses given as options: personal performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent). The first step of the model used the predictor variable *Frequency.* The second step of the model then added the predictor variable *Negative Media*. Table 2 displays the major statistics for the regression analyses.

To measure perceptions of negative media coverage in local outlets and its perception of poor team morale (H3) the following question was asked in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variable tested was "How much influence did the local media coverage of your sport have on your teammates overall morale?" Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (No Influence) to 100 (Major Influence). The first step of the model

used the new predictor variable *Frequency*. The second step of the model added the *Negative Media* variable created to measure the negativity of the local media. Table 2 displays the major statistics for the regression analyses.

Overall team performance. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall team performance, F [1,35] = 2.33, p = .14. The predictor variable accounted for 6% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 4%).

The second step of the model included the *Negative Media* variable. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict overall team performance, F [1,34] = .80, p = .230. The predictor variable accounted for 8% of the variation in overall team performance and *Negative Media* increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 3%) but this is not significant. There is no support for H3.

Team performance in pressure situations. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict team performance in pressure situations, F [1,34] = .370, p = .55. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* does not significantly predict team performance in pressure situations, F [1,33] = .02, p = .830. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in team performance in pressure situations and *Negative Media* demonstrated no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). However, these results were not statistically significant and do not support H3.

Team performance in home games. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media marginally predicts team performance in home games, F [1,36] = 2.83, p = .10. The predictor variable accounted for 7% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 5%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict team performance in home games, F [1,35] = .350, p = .22. The predictor variable accounted for 8% of the variation in team performance in home games and *Negative Media* increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 3%) but not statistically significant. There is no support for H3.

Team performance in road games. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict team performance in road games, F [1,36] = 1.23, p = .28. The predictor variable accounted for 3% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 1%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict team performance in road games, F [1,35] = .60, p = .420. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation in team performance in road games and *Negative Media* demonstrated no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%) but is not significant. Again, this does not support H3.

Overall team morale. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall team morale, F [1,34] = 2.01, p = .17. The predictor variable accounted for 6% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 3%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict overall team morale, F [1,33] = .04, p = .381. The predictor variable accounted for 6% of the variation in overall team morale and *Negative Media* showed no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). Again, these findings do not support H3.

The overall results show no support for the hypothesis that perceptions of team performance and morale are affected by negative media (H3).

Table 2

Predictors of Teammates Overall Performance, Pressure Situations, Home Games, Road Games and Overall Team Morale.

	Overall Performance	*Pressure Situation*	*Home Game*	*Road Game*	*Morale*
Variable	β	β	β	β	β
Step 1					
Frequency	-.25	-.10	-.27#	-.19	.24
Incremental R^2	.06	.01	.07	.03	.06
Step 2					
Frequency	-.23	-.10	-.26	-.20	.24
Negative Media	-.15	-.02	-.10	.13	-.04
Incremental R^2	.02	.00	.01	.02	.00
Total R^2	.08	.01	.08	.05	.06

Note. #p < .10

H4: Perceived negative media coverage of individual athletes will be related to perceived poor performance and morale by athletes.

To measure perceptions of negative media coverage in local outlets and its perception of bad performance on individual athletes (H4) the following questions were asked in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variables used were "Overall, how well did you perform in the following situations?" with the following responses given as options: personal performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent). The first step of the

model used the predictor variable *Frequency.* The second step of the model then added the predictor variable *Negative Media*. Table 3 displays the major statistics for the regression analyses.

To measure perceptions of negative media coverage in local outlets and its perception of poor personal morale (H4) the following questions were asked in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variable tested was "How much influence did the local media coverage of your sport have on your overall morale?" Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (No Influence) to 100 (Major Influence). The first step of the model used the new predictor variable *Frequency*. The second step of the model added the *Negative Media* variable created to measure the negativity of the local media. Table 3 displays the major statistics for the regression analyses.

Table 3

Predictors of Personal Overall Performance, Pressure Situations, Home Games, Road Games and Overall Personal Morale.

	Overall Performance	*Pressure Situation*	*Home Game*	*Road Game*	*Morale*
Variable	β	β	β	β	β
Step 1					
Frequency	.17	.27	.21	.08	.10
Incremental R^2	.03	.07	.05	.01	.01
Step 2					
Frequency	.17	.26	.23	.06	.10
Negative Media	.03	.03	-.06	.13	-.10
Incremental R^2	.00	.10	.00	.02	.01
Total R^2	.03	.17	.05	.03	.02

Overall personal performance. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media does not predict overall personal performance, F [1,31] = 1.00, p = .340. The predictor variable accounted for 3% of the variation in overall personal performance (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict overall personal performance, F [1,30] = .03, p = .630. The predictor variable accounted for 3% of the variation in overall personal performance and *Negative Media* showed no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). H4 is not supported by these findings.

Personal performance in pressure situations. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall personal performance in pressure situations, F [1,30] = 2.20, p = .15. The predictor variable accounted for 7% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 4%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict personal performance in pressure situations, F [1,29] = .02, p = .350. The predictor variable accounted for 7% of the variation in personal performance in pressure situations and *Negative Media* increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 1%). H4 is not supported by these findings.

Personal performance in home games. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media marginally predicts personal performance in home games, F [1,30] = 1.51, p = .230. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 2%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict personal performance in home games, F [1,29] = .110, p = .470. The predictor variable accounted for 8% of the variation in

personal performance in pressure situations and *Negative Media* showed no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). H4 is not supported by these findings.

Personal performance in road games. The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict personal performance in road games, F [1,30] = .170, p = .700. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in personal performance in road games (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict personal performance in road games, F [1,29] = .500, p = .730. The predictor variable accounted for 2% of the variation in personal performance in road games and *Negative Media* showed no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). H4 is not supported by these findings.

Overall personal morale. The first step of the model found that the perceptions that one's own self are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall personal morale, F [1,30] = .233, p = .633. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included *Negative Media*. It was found that, together, *Frequency* and *Negative Media* do not significantly predict overall personal morale, F [1,29] = .180, p = .820. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team performance and *Negative Media* showed no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). H4 is not supported by these findings.

The overall results show no support for the hypothesis that perceptions of personal performance and morale are affected by negative media (H4).

H5: Perceived positive media coverage of individual athletes will be related to perceived good performance and morale of athletes.

To test the relationship of favorable media coverage in local outlets and its perception of positive performance on individual athletes (H5), the following questions were used in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variables used were "Overall, how well did you perform in the following situations?" with the following responses given as options: personal performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent).

The first step of the model used the new variable called *Frequency*. The second step of the model added the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's team was during the season?" with Likert-type responses ranging from 0 (Not Favorable) to 100 (Very Favorable). To test perceptions of positive media coverage in local outlets and its perception of good performance on individual athletes (H5) the following questions were used in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variables used were "Overall, how well did you perform in the following situations?" with the following responses given as options: personal performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent).

The first step of the model used the new variable *Frequency*. The second step of the model added the predictor question which asked, "How positive was the local media coverage of your sport's players during the season?" Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Not Positive) to 100 (Very Positive).

Overall personal performance (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does

not predict overall personal performance, F [1,60] = .400, p = .540. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall personal performance (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) team was during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict overall personal performance, F [1,59] = 3.27, p = .170. The predictor variable accounted for 6% of the variation in overall personal performance and favorability increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 3%). H5 is not supported by these findings.

Personal performance in pressure situations (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict personal performance in pressure situations, F [1,58] = .180, p = .670. The predictor variable accounted for 0% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) team was during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict personal performance in pressure situations, F [1,57] = .100, p = .870. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in personal performance in pressure situations and favorability demonstrated no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). Results do not support H5.

Personal performance in home games (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local

media marginally predicts personal performance in home games, F [1,59] = .500, p = .500. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= -1%).

The second step of the model included the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) team was during the season?" It was found that together the *Frequency* variable and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict personal performance in home games, F [1,57] = 3.24, p = .160. The predictor variable accounted for 6% of the variation in personal performance in home games and favorability increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 3%). These results do not support H5.

Personal performance in road games (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict personal performance in road games, F [1,59] = 1.04, p = .310. The predictor variable accounted for 2% of the variation in personal performance in road games (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) team was during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict personal performance in road games, F [1,58] = .434, p = .490. The predictor variable accounted for 3% of the variation in personal performance in road games and favorability increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). These results do not support H5.

Overall personal morale (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall personal morale, F [1,50] = .180, p = .670. The predictor variable accounted for 0% of the variation in overall personal morale (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) team was during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict personal morale, F [1,49] = 1.81, p = .380. The predictor variable accounted for 4%of the variation in personal morale situations and favorability did not increase variations explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). There is no support for H5.

The results do not support the hypothesis that perceptions of personal performance are affected by positive media (H5) when using the predictor variable of favorable media. There is also no support that perceptions of personal morale are affected by positive media (H5). Table 4 displays the major statistics of the regression analyses.

Table 4

Predictors of Personal Overall Performance, Pressure Situations, Home Games, Road Games and Morale.

	Overall Performance	*Pressure Situation*	*Home Game*	*Road Game*	*Morale*
Variable	β	β	β	β	β
Step 1					
Frequency	08	.06	.10	.13	-.06
Incremental R^2	.01	.003	.01	.02	.01
Step 2					
Frequency	-.03	.08	-.02	.10	-.15
Favorable Media	.25#	-.05	.26#	.10	.21
Incremental R^2					
Total R^2	.05	.002	.05	.01	.04
	.06	.005	.06	.03	.05

Note. #p < .10

Overall personal performance (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predicted overall personal performance, F [1,60] = .400, p = .540. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall personal performance (adjusted R^2= -1%).

The second step of the model included the question "How positive was the local media of your sports players during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predicted overall personal performance, F [1,59] = 2.15, p = .290. The predictor variable accounted for 4% of the variation in overall personal performance and positivity increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 1%). H5 is not supported by these findings.

Personal performance in pressure situations (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predicted personal performance in pressure situations, F [1,58] = .420, p = .520. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How positive was the local media of your sports players during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing positivity does not significantly predict personal performance in pressure situations, F [1,57] = .220, p = .732. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in personal performance in pressure situations and positivity did not increase variability of step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). H5 is not supported by these findings.

Personal performance in home games (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media marginally predicts personal performance in home games, F [1,59] = .563, p = .460. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 1%). The second step of the model included the question "How positive was the local media of your sports players during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing positivity does not significantly predict personal performance in home games, F [1,58] = 2.20, p = .260. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation in personal performance in home games and positivity increased variability of step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 1%). H5 is not supported by these findings.

Personal performance in road games (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predicted personal performance in road games, F [1,59] = 1.00, p = .330. The predictor variable accounted for 2% of the variation in personal performance in road games (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How positive was the local media of your sports players during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question

analyzing positivity does not significantly predict personal performance in road games, F [1,58] = .700, p = .450. The predictor variable accounted for 3% of the variation in personal performance in road games and positivity did not increase variability of step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). H5 is not supported by these findings.

Overall personal morale (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's own self is affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall personal morale, F [1,50] = .110, p = .740. The predictor variable accounted for 0% of the variation in overall personal morale (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How positive was the local media of your sports players during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict personal morale, F [1,49] = .170, p = .870. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in personal morale situations and positivity demonstrated no increase in variability of step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). H5 is not supported by these findings.

The results do not support the hypothesis that perceptions of personal performance or personal morale are affected by positive media (H5) when using the predictor variable of positive media. Table 5 displays the major statistics of the regression analyses.

Table 5

Predictors of Personal Overall Performance, Pressure Situations, Home Games, Road Games and Morale.

	Overall Performance	*Pressure Situation*	*Home Game*	*Road Game*	*Morale*
Variable	β	β	β	β	β
Step 1					
Frequency	.08	.09	.10	.13	-.05
Incremental R^2	.01	.01	.01	.02	.002
Step 2					
Frequency	.03	.07	.04	.10	-.04
Positive Media	.19	.06	.20	.11	-.06
Incremental R^2	.04	.00	.04	.01	.003
Total R^2	.05	.01	.05	.03	.005

H6: Perceived positive media coverage of the team will be related to perceived good team performance and morale.

To test the relationship of favorable media coverage in local outlets and its perception of positive performance on teammates (H6), the following questions were used in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variables used were "Overall, how well did the team perform in the following situations?" with the following responses given as options: personal performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent).

The first step of the model used the new variable called *Frequency*. The second step of the model added either the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's team was during the season?" with Likert-type responses ranging from 0 (Not Favorable) to 100 (Very Favorable). Table 6 displays the major statistics of the regression analyses.

Table 6

Predictors of Team Overall Performance, Pressure Situations, Home Games, Road Games and Morale.

	Overall Performance	*Pressure Situation*	*Home Game*	*Road Game*	*Morale*
Variable	β	β	β	β	β
Step 1					
Frequency	-.23#	-.12	-.20	-.23#	.09
Incremental R^2	.05#	.01	.04	.05#	.01
Step 2					
Frequency	-.34**	-.18	-.33**	-.22#	.07
Favorable Media	.27*	.15	.34	.-.01	.07
Incremental R^2					
Total R^2	.06	.02	.10**	.00	.01
	.11*	.03	.14*	.05	.02

Note. #p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

To test perceptions of positive media coverage in local outlets and its perception of good performance on teammates (H6) the following questions were used in a two-step linear regression test. The criterion variables used were "Overall, how well did the team perform in the following situations?" with the following responses given as options: personal performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Very Poorly) to 100 (Excellent).

The first step of the model used the new variable *Frequency*. The second step of the model added the predictor question which asked "How positive was the local media coverage of your sport's players during the season?" Respondents were asked Likert-type survey questions with answers ranging from 0 (Not Positive) to 100 (Very Positive). Table 7 displays the major statistics for this regression analyses.

Table 7

Predictors of Team Overall Performance, Pressure Situations, Home Games, Road Games and Morale.

	Overall Performance	*Pressure Situation*	*Home Game*	*Road Game*	*Morale*
Variable	β	β	β	β	β
Step 1					
Frequency	-.24#	-.12	-.20	-.26#	.10
Incremental R^2	.06#	.02	.04	.05#	.01
Step 2					
Frequency	-.33**	-.19	-.28*	-.26*	.12
Positive Media	.44***	.30*	.38**	.16	-.09
Incremental R^2	.18***	.08	.14**	.02	.01
Total R^2	.24***	.10*	.18**	.07#	.02

Note. #p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Overall team performance (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media marginally predicted overall team performance, F [1,61] = 3.44, p = .068. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 4%).

The second step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* and favorable media coverage significantly predicted overall team performance, F [1,60] = 4.04, p = .027. The predictor variable accounted for 11% of the variation in overall team performance and favorable media increased variability of step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 8%). The results support H6.

Team performance in pressure situations (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall team performance in pressure situations, F [1,60] = .860, p = .360. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) team

was during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict team performance in pressure situations, F [1,59] = 1.20, p = .370. The predictor variable accounted for 3% of the variation in personal performance in pressure situations and favorability demonstrated no increase in variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). There is no support for H6 when using favorable media to predict team performance in pressure situations.

Team performance in home games (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media marginally predicted team performance in home games, F [1,63] = 2.66, p = .10. The predictor variable accounted for 4% of the variation in team performance in home games (adjusted R^2= 3%).

The second step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* and favorable media coverage significantly predicted team performance in home games, F [1,62] = 6.85, p = .011. The predictor variable accounted for 14% of the variation in team performance in home games and favorable media increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 11%). The results support H6.

Team performance in road games (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media marginally predicted team performance in road games, F [1,63] = 3.39, p = .070. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 4%).

The second step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* and favorable media coverage do not significantly predicted overall team performance, F [1,62] = .011, p = .196. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation

in team performance in road games and favorable media increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 2%). The results support H6.

Overall team morale (favorable media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall team morale, F [1,54] = .410, p = .520. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team morale (adjusted R^2= 0%).

The second step of the model included the question "How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) team was during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question analyzing favorability does not significantly predict team morale, F [1,53] = .250, p = .720. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in team morale situations and positivity increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). These results do not support H6.

These results provide partial support for the hypothesis that positive media coverage will be related to perceptions that the team will play well (H6), when using the predictor variable favorable media coverage. The results, however, do not provide support for the hypothesis that perceptions of team morale are affect by positive media coverage (H6) when using favorable media as the predictor variable.

Additionally, "Overall, how well did the team perform during the season in the following situations?", "How positive was the local media of your sports players during the season" and *Frequency* were used to determine possible perceptions of good performance. These results confirmed that the greater the perceived positive coverage of the players the greater the perceived impact on team performance.

Overall team performance (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media marginally predicted overall team performance, F [1,61] = 3.65, p = .061. The predictor variable accounted for 6% of the variation in overall team performance (adjusted R^2= 4%).

The second step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* and favorable media coverage significantly predicted overall team performance, F [1,60] = 14.28, p = .000. The predictor variable accounted for 24% of the variation in overall team performance and favorable media increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 21%). These results support H6 that perceived overall team performance in road games is affected by perceived positive media.

Team performance in pressure situations (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media does not predict team performance in pressure situations, F [1,60] = .920, p = .343.

The second step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* and favorable media coverage significantly predicted team performance in pressure situations, F [1,59] = 5.35, p = .050. The predictor variable accounted for 10% of the variation in team performance in pressure situations and positive media coverage of players increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 7%). These results support H6 that perceived team performance in pressure situations is affected by perceived positive media.

Team performance in home games (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media does not predict team performance in home games, F [1,63] = 2.65, p = .110.

The second step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* and positive media coverage of players significantly predicted team performance in home games, F [1,62] = 10.15, p = .003. The predictor variable accounted for 18% of the variation in team performance in home games and positive media coverage of players increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 15%). These results support H6 that perceived team performance in home games is affected by perceived positive media.

Team performance in road games (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing local media marginally predicted team performance in road games, F [1,63] = 3.40, p = .072. The predictor variable accounted for 5% of the variation in team performance in road games and positive media coverage of players increased variability of step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 4%).

The second step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* and positive media coverage of players marginally predicted team performance in road games, F [1,62] = 1.60, p = .091. The predictor variable accounted for 7% of the variation in team performance in road games and positive media coverage of players increased variation explained by step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 5%). These results support H6 that perceived team performance in road games is affected by perceived positive media.

Overall team morale (positive media). The first step of the model found that perceptions that one's teammates are affected by the *Frequency* of viewing the local media does not predict overall team morale, F [1,54] = .570, p = .450. The predictor variable accounted for 1% of the variation in overall team morale (adjusted R^2= -1%).

The second step of the model included the question "How positive was the local media of your sports players during the season?" It was found that, together, *Frequency* and the question

analyzing favorability does not significantly predict personal morale, F [1,53] = .420, p = .610. The predictor variable accounted for 2% of the variation in team morale situations and positivity demonstrated no increase in variability of step 2 of the model (adjusted R^2= 0%). These results do not support H6.

Overall these results provide support for the hypothesis that positive media coverage will be related to perceptions that the team will play well (H6), when using the predictor variable positive media coverage. These results do not provide support that perceptions of team morale are affected by positive media (H6).

Chapter VI: Discussion

Presumed media influence research has found that "people perceive some influence of a message on others and then react to that perception of influence" (Gunther & Storey, 2003, p.201). The research also found that one's reaction to the media is not always based on accuracy, but perceptions of what they believe (Cohen, Tsfati, & Sheafer, 2008). This study attempted to provide insight on how perceptions can impact or have a possible effect on athletes. To do so, the following hypotheses were studied: H1 which looked at the idea that athletes will assume that the media affects their teammates more than themselves was found to be statistically significant; H2 which looked at athletes perceptions of the effects of media on their teammates in relation to perceptions of personal performance was found to be overall statistically significant; H3 wanted to know if perceived negative media coverage of the team would be related to perceived poor team performance and overall morale but there was nothing in the results that could statistically support this; H4 wanted to know if perceived negative media coverage of individual athletes would be related to perceived poor performance and morale by athletes but, once again, the results of the study did not find support for this hypothesis; H5 suggested that perceived positive media coverage of individual athletes would be related to perceived good performance and morale of athletes but once again there was not enough in the results to provide support for this hypothesis; H6 wanted to know if perceived positive media coverage of the team would be related to perceived good team performance and morale. The results found that positive media coverage did have a perceived effect of the team's performance but not their morale.

Findings from the college athletes' data indicate support for relationships and theoretical premises in the PMI model. This study found that PMI theory can be applied in the world of

college sports. While most research in the realm of PMI has dealt with politics or health, this finding helps to understand how perceptions of media can impact college athletes. Results demonstrated that athletes feel the effects not so much in themselves but rather in their teammates. In particular, findings suggested that athletes' perceptions are significantly affected by media according to PMI. Specifically, PMI was significantly related to the perceived performance of the individual athlete themselves in pressure situations, home games, and road games; it also had a marginal effect in overall performance. The data concerning overall performance suggests that an increased number of responses may have predicted more significance (H2). The more athletes perceived that their teammates were affected, the relationship to their performance became greater. These results suggest that a part of the influence of athletic performance occurs due to presumed influence on teammates. These results fall in line with the idea that people's perceptions of the effects of mass media can shape their reactions to media and interactions with media (Gunther & Storey, 2003).

The results of H2 imply that players believe that the media has an effect on their teammates which then is correlated to how well they think they play. For example, if their perception was that teammates were affected positively there is then a relationship between perception and the player's individual performance. This has implications for those in the coaching profession: therefore, the way a coach handles the media is important. It is unlikely that coaches will ever be able to completely ban media, but coaches should recognize that the players' perceptions of teammates are important and are related to player's reactions to certain situations and how they see their performance. If coaches understand this idea then they can try and use the media to benefit the team. Coaches still do not have to completely encourage media use but it will be important to use the media in ways to help player perceptions. Using this

information, coaches could try and direct athletes to media that they feel portrays the team in a positive light.

Information is not just for coaches alone but also for the athletes. If they can understand how the media can indirectly affect their perceptions and therefore impact how they believe they are performing, they can also then use the media to their benefit and may even try and resist viewing the media.

Positive media effects were demonstrated solely in the context of the positive effects on the overall team performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. The *Frequency* with which athletes consume positive media also showed a perceived positive effect on overall performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games. However, according to Table 7 above, *Frequency* is a negative predictor. So viewing less media is related to better perceived performance. The athletes in this study in general were not heavy consumers of media and findings demonstrated that the *Frequency* of viewing was monthly ($M = 1.90$). Those who understand the relationship between watching media less and perception of performance can then use this information to help athletes to have a better belief in their performance using positive types of media. This increases the scope of the findings in a study which found that politician perceptions concerning the influence of media content increased politician's motivation and effort to appear in media coverage, which then led both to greater media prominence and to more parliamentary activity (Cohen, Tsfati, & Sheafer, 2008). The world of athletics is constantly seeking for ways to help athletes believe in themselves and if coaches can use positive types of media in boosting perceptions these results give strength to the idea of the Pygmalion effect, you become what you believe others think. These results extend the scope of the influence of PMI theory into the domain of athletics. The effects of PMI, demonstrated in this article, point out

that even behaviors such as performance in athletic contests are affected by perceptions of media influence. What the current study shows is that in the context of one's performance, perceiving the image of one's teammates as positive can impact one's performance indirectly (H6). Athletes appear to find positive messages persuasive to their peers (although there is no apparent effect on themselves), but they regard negative messages as having no impact on either themselves or their teammates. The effects of positive media confirm some of the earlier findings of Gunther and Story, (2003) that positive media had an impact on perceptions of people in the community when they viewed the positive media of health care workers. Favorability of media, a separate but similar predictor to positive media, was seen as being a partial predictor of overall team performance, performance in home and road games, but not in pressure situations (H6). With such a high predictability regarding H6 this suggests that these findings would relate to all college athletes. Understanding that positive media have an indirect effect on performance is an important finding in this research. Helping those in athletics to understand that it is the positive that makes the difference can impact teams. I remember as a player in college our coaches would sometimes place negative comments said in the media about our team on a message board to help with motivation. This research suggests that coaches should use positive media to help perceptions as a motivation. It is important that we understand that perception, although not a direct effect, is an effect and that player perception of the positive is related to better performance. This may be a change in mindset for some to look at using media to help perception. As mentioned earlier, within the ranks of athletics, media is often perceived as having a negative effect. In this instance it was the positive media in which athlete's perceived as affecting their teammates. This finding adds to the study by Park (2009) which found that perception reinforced the influence of the thin image on the females who read the magazines

which then added pressure to conform to what they perceived to be the norm. The players in this study demonstrate that their perceptions were related to what they perceived to be the norm, positive media. The relationship between perception of positive media and player's performance from my experience as a coach and player can really have some positive implications for coaches and players. For those in the coaching world, it lends strength to the idea that players need to speak positively of their teammates, because this type of media can have an indirect effect. This understanding can help coaches find and use positive media, instead of negative media, to motivate and reinforce the good about the team to help performance. Coaches could also direct players to media that focused more on the positive and discourage them from reading certain media that may be more focused on the negative of the team. The implications of this study are exciting and they give some direction to those who are involved with the media and athletics.

Further results demonstrated that athletes did not perceive their personal performance in any of the situations (overall performance, pressure situations, home games, and road games) were correlated to *Frequency.* Results also found that when taking into account positive media (H5) and favorable media (H5) there was no change in an athlete's perception that these predictor variables had a relationship on perceived personal performance in any situation. Results also found that *Frequency* and *Negative Media* had no relationship to personal (H4) or team performance (H3). This is an interesting finding and can be explained by really looking at the results of this study. If an athlete does not perceive that the messages in the media about themselves or their teammates are negative, then there would be no reason for athletes to perceive that negative media would be related to performance. To help explain this relationship we need to look at the results, which found that the athlete's perception of *Negative Media* did not impact their perception on themselves or their teammates due to the fact that players viewed

local media as more positive than negative. For example, when asked "How positive was local media coverage of your sports players during the season?" the perceived image of positive media coverage was $M = 67.1$, SD = 25.0. When using the *Negative Media*, the perceived image of negative media coverage was $M = 25.1$, SD = 20.4. These means are consistent with the findings in this study those who viewed the media did not believe that negative media was related to performance. While these findings do not provide the perfect picture, they do demonstrate that athletes did not feel the media was very negative (M =25.1), but they perceived that the coverage of their sport was somewhat more positive (M =67.1). If a player's perception is that the media is more positive towards themselves and their teammates, then this can help explain why there was no perceived effect of *Negative Media* on one's self or teammates. Another possible explanation for this may be that the teams in this study were already performing on a poor level so there was no chance for the media to have an effect. I believe that with a larger study and greater number of respondents *Negative Media* would have been found to have an impact, especially with a team that may have had a little more success. More would need to be done to help provide insight on this and also to determine if *Negative Media* is related to performance in other athletic arenas.

The current study also looked at how perceptions of positive media and negative media may affect personal and team morale. None of the regression analyses found any significant predictor of morale. I believed that performance and morale would be related, meaning that whatever the perception about performance was then morale would be very similar to that finding. Possible explanations for these findings may be directly related to athletes' understanding of morale and its difficulty to possibly measure morale. When looking back on the season athletes may also remember performance more than morale. If a study was done surveying athletes during the season, I believe morale would be more related. The teams studied

also had struggling seasons and their morale may have already been so low that no effect was realized or recognized by the players. These findings may be as a result of limitations of the survey questions regarding morale and how it was perceived within the team. A significant portion of the study focused on perceptions of media and performance while only two questions were asked about morale. I believe these findings are limited to this study and a larger study with a greater number of responses would find some impact of perception and morale. More research needs to be done to determine media perceptions effect on morale.

Conclusion

As noted earlier, coaches are often found telling their players to stay away from reading the local media coverage of their particular team. The current study sheds some light on why coaches are constantly encouraging athletes to stay away from the media. While it is near impossible to find a direct causal relationship between media and athletic performance, PMI provides some answers to the way athletes view media and how they perceive its' effect on not only themselves but their teammates.

While PMI can only predict what variables may have an effect on team and individual performance, PMI demonstrates why college coaches for years have been asking their players to stay away from the media. The world of media will continue to cover college sports, athletes will continue to read and watch media, but with this little bit of insight found in the college sports world, maybe something can be done to help both coaches and athletes alike to use the media for the good.

This study is focused on perceptions; like all PMI research, it focuses on how people perceive that others are affected and by so doing they are also affected. The results of this study confirm that third-person effects are found in athletics. These perceptions are found to impact

how an athlete perceives they are performing. In this study, unlike most other PMI research, the greatest impact of perception was found in what athletes considered to be positive media. The results of the current study highlight the importance of player beliefs about media representations of sports issues and their presumed influence. Earlier research has shown that perceptions of media influence are important in shaping various aspects of society and the current data suggests that these perceptions shape athletes' sense of success. In this sense this study identifies some additional important, yet indirect, pathways which media affect athletic performance.

Chapter VII: Limitations

There are several limitations to this study that should be kept in mind when interpreting results. Although the sample contains members of each of the sports mentioned earlier, the greatest numbers of respondents were members of the football team, which does not allow for generalization for all sports. This was not a random sample, and therefore generalization is also uncertain. Another major limitation of the study is the number of valid respondents to the survey ($N = 73$). It was hoped that over one hundred responses would have been gathered, which may have allowed for more predictive variables to be used, such as what sports are affected or are males or females more impacted. Due to the low number of valid responses we were only able to provide basic insight on how perceptions of media may indirectly affect athletes. The impact of a limited number of responses was especially apparent with the *Negative Media* variable created from the question "How negative was the coverage of your sport at Nicholls State in the following media outlets?" It did not provide a high number of valid responses ($N = 45$) to be used with the different criterion variables. Although athletes were encouraged to complete the survey to ensure that a more accurate representation occurred, this was not the case. In relation to this, another weakness may have been that those who responded to the survey were those who did not play a significant amount during the season and this could have had an impact on why there were no findings related to personal performances. When an athlete is not playing very much they may not have responded to the question "To what extent where you, yourself, affected by the way you were portrayed by the following media outlets?" with any significance because they felt their contribution was not significant. There was also no control for amount played due to the low number of responses to the survey and every response was needed to gather enough

information to help with the results of the study. Therefore, the data are purely tentative at this point and would require more in-depth random sample for further verification.

Another limitation of the study was the fact that it was done after all the sports seasons were over. This may weaken how athletes may remember what they viewed, how often, and what impact they perceived it had in the moment. Research needs to be done surveying athletes immediately after their particular season to ensure the most accurate responses.

While there are some predictors found in this study on the PMI and other studies have found support that people change their attitudes and behaviors in accordance with their perceptions of media impact on others, one major limitation is that they show only some correlation. These types of studies do not offer a valid way to infer causal direction. Studies that look at PMI can sometimes be unclear whether people change their attitudes or behaviors because of PMI or if they change their perceptions of media influence as an excuse for why they act or think in certain ways (Tal-or et.al, 2010).

There are some issues of operationalization which could pose potential problems. For instance, the ordering of questions may have affected responses. In the survey, personal performance and morale were together and later in the survey came the team performance and morale. Respondents may have adjusted later responses in light of the former. Other issues with survey questions may have been wording of the questions. Many of the questions regarding media used more of a positive connotation. This may have primed athletes to perceive the media as being more positive than negative.

Chapter VIII: Future Research

Although this study is primarily concerned with local media effects, the presumed media influence of mass media on athletes could also depend heavily on interpersonal communication. What is left out from the current study is the role of others' actual remarks related to the particular media effect. For example, what is being said in the locker room by players about the local media coverage on how the team or individuals are performing? Such interpersonal communication may have served as some of the basis for the presumed influence of local media on other athletes. Perceived similarities between oneself and others, remarks by others, and other possible aspects of interpersonal communication could also increase or decrease the presumed level of media influence on others (Park, 2005). Tal-or et. al. (2010) also suggested that there may be an uncontrolled third variable that may underlie the reported associations between PMI and the dependent variables.

I believe it would be important for future research to look at those who rate the media as being highly negative versus those who believe that the media was highly positive. This could give greater detail on the importance of the relationship of positive or negative media on performance and morale.

Expanding this model to larger universities with more media attention or professional sports would be interesting. If it can be found that there is some predictability at a small college with little media attention, one would expect on a larger scale and with a greater number of respondents that the results may find a greater impact of negative media. It may also be important to look at high school sports. A combination of all three levels of sports (high school, collegiate, and professional) would also open up questions like if the level of maturity, amount of media, or experience with the media can predict performance of athletes. It would also be

interesting in future research if a struggling team was compared to a successful team. One could also look at a team that has long been very good and then struggled, to determine the outcomes of their perceptions of media.

Subsequent research would do well to further investigate the wording and ordering of questions pertaining to the characteristics of others in PMI theory research to determine whether respondents were primed to consider positive media. Future research is also necessary to further refine performance and morale. Based on the results of this study, I would argue that more needs to be done to determine the impact of negative media.

References

Anderson, C. A., Berkowitz, L., Donnerstein, E., Huesmann, L. R., Johnson, J., Linz, D., Malamuth, N., & Wartella, E. (2003). The influence of media violence on youth. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 4*, 81–110.

Andsager, J., & White, H. A. (2007). *Self versus others: Media, messages, and the third-person effect*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Barber, T. X., & Silver, M. J. (1968). Pitfalls in data analysis and interpretation. *Journal of Psychology, monograph supplement*, *70*, 1–29, 48-62.

Bowers, D. G., & Seashore, S. E. (1966). Predicting organizational effectiveness with a four-factor theory of leadership. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 11,* 238-263.

Brown, J.D. (1986). Evaluations of self and others: self-enhancement biases in social judgements. *Social Cognition, 4,* 353-376.

Cohen, J., & Davis, R. G. (1991). Third-person effects and the differential impact in negative political advertising. *Journalism Quarterly, 68(4),* 680–688.

Cohen, J., Tsfati, Y. & Sheafer, T. (2008). The influence of presumed media influence in politics: do politicians' perceptions of media power matter? *Public Opinion Quarterly, 72*(2), 331-344.

Crawford, K. S., Thomas, E. D., & Fink, J. J. (1980). Pygmalion at sea: improving the work effectiveness of low performers. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 16*, 482-505.

Davison, W. P. (1983). The third-person effect in communication. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 47*, 1–15.

Duck, J. M., Hogg, M.A., & Terry, D. J. (2000). The perceived impact of persuasive messages on "us" and "them." In D.J. Terry & M.A. Hogg (Eds.), *Attitudes,*

behavior, and social context: The role of norms and group membership, 265-291. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Duck, J.M., Terry, D.J., & Hogg, M.A. (1995). The perceived influence of AIDS advertising: third-person effects in the context of positive media content. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 17,* 305-325.

Eden, D., & Leviatan, U. (1975). Implicit leadership theory as a determinant of the factor structure underlying supervisory behavior scales. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 60*, 736-741.

Eden, D., & Ravid, G. Pygmalion vs. self-expectancy: effects of instructor- and self-expectancy on trainee performance. Paper presented to the Organization Behavior Division of the Academy of Management 41st Annual Meeting, San Diego, 1981a.

Eden, D., & Ravid, G. Effects of expectancy on performance among male and female trainees. Paper presented at the Inter-national Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Haifa, Israel, 1981b.

Eden, D., & Shani, A. B. (1982). Pygmalion goes to boot camp: expectancy, leadership, and trainee performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 67*, 194-199.

Elashoff, J., & Snow, R. E. (Eds.). (1971). *Pygmalion reconsidered*. Worthington, Ohio: Charles A. Jones

Friestad, M., & Wright, P. (1994). The persuasion knowledge: how people cope with persuasion attempts. *Journal of Consumer Research, 21*, 1–31.

Gunther, Albert C., and J. Douglas Storey. (2003). The influence of presumed influence. *Journal of Communication,* 35(2), 199–215.

Gunther, A. C. (1991). What we think others think: cause and consequence in

the third-person effect. *Communication Research, 18(3),* 355–372.

Gunther, A. C. (1995). Overrating the X-rating: the third-person perception and support for censorship of pornography. *Journal of Communication*, *45*, 27-38.

Gunther, A. C., & Mundy, P. (1993). Biased optimism and the third-person effect. *Journalism Quarterly, 70(1),* 58–67.

Gunther, A. C., Perloff, R. M., & Tsfati, Y. (2008). Public opinion and the third-person effect. In D. Wolfgang, & M. Traugott (Eds.), *Handbook of public opinion research,* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 184-191.

Gunther, A. C., & Thorson (1992). Perceived persuasive effects of product commercials and public service announcements: third-person effects in new domains. *Communication Research, 19(5),* 574–596.

Harwood, J. (1997). Viewing age: lifespan identity and television viewing choices. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electonic Media*, 41, 203-213..

Hilliard, D.C. (1984). Media images of male and female professional athletes: an interpretive analysis of magazine articles. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 1(3),* 251-262.

Hoffner, C., Plotkin, R. S., Buchanan, M., Anderson, J. D., Kamigaki, S. K., Hubbs, L. A., et al. (2001). The third-person effect in perceptions of the influence of television violence. *Journal of Communication*, *51*, 283-299.

Jones, R. A. (1977). *Self-fulfilling prophecies: Social, psychological, and physiological effects of expectancies.* Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum.

King, A. S. (1971). Self-fulfilling prophecies in training the hardcore: supervisors' expectations and the underprivileged workers' performance. *Social Science Quarterly, 52*, 369–378.

Lasorsa, D. L. (1989). Real and perceived effects of "Amerika." *Journalism*

Quarterly, 66, 373–378.

Lippmann, W. (1920). *Liberty and the news*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public opinion*. New York: Macmillan.

Lippmann, W. (1925). *The phantom public*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Merton, R. K. (1948). The self-fulfilling prophecy. *Antioch Review, 8*, 193–210.

Miller, D. T. (1976). Ego involvement and attributions for success and failure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 34*, 901–906.

Mutz, D. (1989). The influence of perception of media influence. International *Journal of Public Opinion Research, 1*, 3–24.

Park, S. Y., Yun, G. W., McSweeney, J. H., & Gunther, A. C. (2007). Do third-person perceptions of media influence contribute to pluralistic ignorance on the norm of ideal female thinness? *Sex Roles, 57*, 569–578.

Perloff, R. M. (1993). Third-person effect research 1983–1992: a review and synthesis. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 5*, 167–184.

Perloff, R.M. (1999). The third-person effect: a critical review and synthesis. *Media Psychology*, *1*, 353–378.

Perloff, R.M. (2002). The third-person effect. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research, 2,* 489–506). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Price, V., & Tewksbury, D. (1996). Measuring the third-person effect of news: the impact of question order, contrast and knowledge. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 8*, 120–141.

Rappaport, M. M., & Rappaport, H. (1975). The other half of the expectancy equation: Pygmalion. *Journal of Educational Research, 67*, 531-536.

Rojas, H., Shah, D. V., & Faber, R. J. (1996). For the good of others: censorship and the third-person effect. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *8*, 163-186.

Rosenthal, R. (1974). *On the social psychology of the self-fulfilling prophecy: Further evidence for Pygmalion effects and their mediating mechanisms*. New York: MSS Modular Publications, Module 53.

Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Rubin, A. M. (1994). Media uses and effects: a uses and gratifications perspective. In J. Bryant & D. Zillman (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research,* 417–436. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlhaum.

Rucinski, D., & Salmon, C. (1990). The "other" as the vulnerable voter: a study of the third-person effect in the '88 campaign. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 2*, 345–368.

Salwen, M.B. (1998). Perceptions of media influence and support for censorship: the Third-person effect in the 1996 presidential election. *Communication Research, 25,* 259–285.

Scharrer, E. (2002). Third person perception and television violence: the role of out-group stereotyping in perceptions of susceptibility to effect. *Communication Research, 29*, 681–704.

Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: the evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of Communication*, 57, 9–20.

Schrank, W. R. (1968). The labeling effect of ability grouping. Journal of Educational Research, 62, 51–52.

Seiz, R. C. (1982). Pygmalion: adrift at sea. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 18*, 127–129.

Snow, R. E. (1969). Unfinished Pygmalion. *Contemporary Psychology, 14*, 197–199.

Stephan, W. G., & Gollwitzer, P. M. (1981). Affect as a mediator of attributional egotism. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 17*, 442–458.

Tal-Or, N., Cohen, J., Tsfati, Y., & Gunther, A. C. (2010). Testing causal direction in the influence of presumed media influence. *Communication Research*, *37*, 801–824.

Thorndike, R. L. (1968). Review of Pygmalion in the classroom. *American Educational Research Journal, 5*, 708–711.

Tsfati, Y., & Cohen, J. (2003). On the effect of the ‘‘third-person effect’’: perceived influence of media coverage and residential mobility intentions. *Journal of Communication, 53*, 711–727.

Tsfati, Y., & Cohen, J. (2005). The influence of presumed media influence on democratic legitimacy: the case of Gaza settlers. *Communication Research*, 32, 794–821.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1973). Availability–Heuristic for judging frequency and probability. *Cognitive Psychology, 5*, 207–232.

Weaver, D., Gaber, D. A., McCombs, M. E., & Eyal C. H. (1981). *Media agenda-setting in a presidential election: Issues, images, and interest.* New York: Praeger

Xu, J., & Gonzenbach, W. J. (2008). Does a perceptual discrepancy lead to action? a meta-analysis of the behavioral component of the third person effect. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, *20*, 375–385.

Zanna, M. P., Sheras, P. L., Cooper, J., & Shaw, C. (1975). Pygmalion and Galatea: the interactive effect of teacher and student expectancies. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 11*, 279–287.

Appendix A

Player Survey

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study about media and athletic relationships. This study is being conducted by Brigham Young University (BYU) Assistant Professor John Davies, PhD and Justin Anderson, a graduate student at BYU. You were invited to participate in this study because you were a member of the 2011–2012 Nicholls State athletics team.

Procedures

You will be asked to complete this survey online at your earliest convenience. This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Questions in the survey will cover a broad range of subjects about the local media and you and your teams performance. Please take your time and respond to each question. Please do not leave any questions blank. You have 1 week to complete the survey.

Risks/Discomforts

It is possible you may feel uneasy about providing opinions pertaining to your performance and media habits. It is also possible that you may feel uneasy about answering questions about teammates and how it may affect your standing on your team. However, please realize the opinions you provide will only be used for the purposes of the study and anonymity will be strictly maintained.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. In responding to this survey you will help bring understanding to what needs and concerns athletes may have, and as much as possible, provide some answers to important questions.

Confidentiality/Anonymity

This survey is anonymous; there will be no reference to your identification at any point in the research. Responses in this study are used for computing data and responses will be stored in a password protected computer. Personal information will not be shared with any third party. Your email has been deleted and there is no information that links your responses to you as an athlete. Responses will be kept until the completion of the study. After this time the information will be deleted from all databases.

Participation

Involvement in this research project is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without penalty or refuse to participate entirely, without jeopardy to your standing at Nicholls State. The return of this survey is your consent to participate in the research.

Questions about the Research

If you have questions regarding this study you may contact John Davies, PhD at (801)422-1591, john_davies@byu.edu or the student researchers: Justin Anderson at (985)448-4797, justin.anderson@nicholls.edu

Questions about your Rights as Research Participants

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research projects, you may contact BYU IRB Administrator, Brigham Young University, A-285 ASB, Provo, UT 84602, (801)422-1461, irb@byu.edu.

I understand that my identity will remain anonymous and that there is no penalty for completing or not completing this survey. I understand that my opportunity to play and my standing in the athletic program will not be affected in any way by participating in this study. Results from this survey will only be available to the researchers.

- ❍ Yes, I understand and wish to continue (1)
- ❍ No, I do not wish to participate in this study at this time (2)

If Yes, I understand Is Selected, Then Skip to 1. How frequently did you view ...If No, I do not wish to partic... Is Selected, Then Skip to End of Survey

1. How frequently did you view the following local media throughout your sport's season?

	Never (1)	Monthly (2)	1-2 times/week (3)	3-4 times/week (4)	5-6 times/week (5)	Daily (6)
Houma Courier Newspaper (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
HTV-10 Sports Show (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Tri-parish Times Newspaper (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show (weekly) (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Daily Comet Newspaper (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Nicholls Worth Newspaper (weekly) (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Houma Courier Internet News (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Daily Comet Internet News (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Tri-parish Times Internet	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

News (9)						

2. How favorable did you think the local media coverage of your sport's team (i.e. Football, Softball, Basketball, Baseball, Soccer) was during the season?
_____ Media Coverage (1)

3. How positive was local media coverage of your sport's players during the season?
_____ Media Coverage (1)

4. How positive was the coverage of your sport at Nicholls State in the following media outlets?
_____ Houma Courier Newspaper (1)
_____ HTV-10 Daily Sports Show (2)
_____ Tri-parish Times Newspaper (3)
_____ Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show (4)
_____ Daily Comet Newspaper (5)
_____ Nicholls Worth Newspaper (6)
_____ Houma Courier Internet News (7)
_____ Daily Comet Internet News (8)
_____ Tri-parish Times Internet News (9)
_____ Other (10)

5. How negative was the coverage of your sport at Nicholls State in the following media outlets?
_____ Houma Courier Newspaper (1)
_____ HTV-10 Daily Sports Show (2)
_____ Tri-parish Times Newspaper (3)
_____ Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show (4)
_____ Daily Comet Newspaper (5)
_____ Nicholls Worth Newspaper (6)
_____ Houma Courier Internet News (7)
_____ Daily Comet Internet News (8)
_____ Tri-parish Times Internet News (9)
_____ Other (10)

6. Did you play in a game this past season?
❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To 13. How important was it to you to se...

7. How many games did you play in this past season?

- ❍ 1-2 (1)
- ❍ 3-4 (2)
- ❍ 5-6 (3)
- ❍ 7-8 (4)
- ❍ 9-10 (5)
- ❍ 11-12 (6)
- ❍ 13-16 (7)
- ❍ 17-20 (8)
- ❍ 21-25 (9)
- ❍ 26-30 (10)
- ❍ 30 or more (11)

8. How important was it to you to see that you as a player were covered in the local media?

	Not at all Important (1)	Very Unimportant (2)	Somewhat Unimportant (3)	Neither Important nor Unimportant (4)	Somewhat Important (5)	Very Important (6)	Extremely Important (7)
Media Coverage Importance (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Questions 9-12 deal with your media viewing habits and your performance in your sport. To answer questions drag the bar to the to indicate your response.

9. To what extent were you, yourself, affected by the way you were portrayed in the local media?
_____ Media Coverage (1)

10. To what extent were you, yourself, affected by the way you were portrayed by the following media outlets?
_____ Houma Courier Newspaper (1)
_____ HTV-10 Daily Sports Show (2)
_____ Tri-parish Times Newspaper (3)
_____ Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show (4)
_____ Daily Comet Newspaper (5)
_____ Nicholls Worth Newspaper (6)
_____ Houma Courier Internet News (7)
_____ Daily Comet Internet News (8)
_____ Tri-parish Times Internet News (9)
_____ Other (10)

11. How much influence did the media coverage of your sport influence your overall morale?
_____ Media Coverage (1)

12. Overall, how well did you perform during the season in the following situations?
_____ Personal Performance (1)
_____ In Pressure Situations (Ex. Red Zone, Goal Line, 3rd Down, last out, save opportunity, free throws, penalty kick, etc.) (2)
_____ Home Games Performance (3)
_____ Road Games Performance (4)

Questions 13-17 will deal with your teammates viewing habits and performance. Please select the answer that best describes the question by clicking on the item or moving the sliding bar to the appropriate response.

13. How important was it to you to see that your team was covered in the local media?

	Not at all Important (1)	Very Unimportant (2)	Somewhat Unimportant (3)	Neither Important nor Unimportant (4)	Somewhat Important (5)	Very Important (6)	Extremely Important (7)
Media Coverage Importance (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

14. To what extent were your TEAMMATES affected by how they were portrayed in local media coverage?
_____ Media Coverage (1)

15. To what extent were your TEAMMATES affected by how they were portrayed in the following media outlets?
_____ Houma Courier Newspaper (1)
_____ HTV-10 Sports Show (2)
_____ Tri-parish Times Newspaper (3)
_____ Charlie Stubbs Coaches Show (4)
_____ Daily Comet Newspaper (5)
_____ Nicholls Worth Newspaper (6)
_____ Houma Courier Internet News (7)
_____ Daily Comet Internet News (8)
_____ Tri-parish Times Internet News (9)
_____ Other (10)

16. How much influence did local media coverage about your sport have on your TEAMMATES overall morale?
_____ Media Coverage (1)

17. Overall, how well did the team perform during the season in the following situations?
_____ Overall Team Performance (1)
_____ Pressure Situations (Ex. Red Zone, Goal Line, 3rd Down, last out, save opportunity, free throws, penalty kick, etc.) (2)
_____ Home Games Performance (3)
_____ Road Games Performance (4)

Questions 18-20 are demographic questions. Please respond by clicking on the answer that best describes you.

18. How long have you been playing your sport (including high school and college)?
❍ 2 years (1)
❍ 3 years (2)
❍ 4 years (3)
❍ 5 years (4)
❍ 6 years (5)
❍ 7 years (6)
❍ 8 years (7)
❍ 9 years (8)

19. What year are you on the playing field?
- ❍ Freshman (1)
- ❍ Sophomore (2)
- ❍ Junior (3)
- ❍ Senior (4)
- ❍ Redshirt Freshman (5)
- ❍ Redshirt Sophmore (6)
- ❍ Redshirt Junior (7)
- ❍ Redshirt Senior (8)

20. What sport do you play?
- ❍ Football (1)
- ❍ Softball (2)
- ❍ Baseball (3)
- ❍ Women's Basketball (4)
- ❍ Men's Basketball (5)
- ❍ Women's Soccer (6)