



HOCKEY SASKATCHEWAN

“Improving the State of Our Game”

EDI Survey Results

December 2021

PRAXIS

RESEARCH | STRATEGY | RESULTS

Research Method

This document reports the findings of a province-wide online survey conducted by Praxis Consulting on behalf of Hockey Saskatchewan. The survey was developed as part of a long-term strategy and action plan to improve the equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) of organized hockey in Saskatchewan.

The survey development phase was informed by two focus groups conducted in June 2021 to identify and understand the barriers to play. The report detailing the findings from the focus groups can be found under separate cover.

Praxis programmed and hosted the survey using Qualtrics, an online survey software tool. Upon completion of the survey, participants were offered an opportunity to enter their name into a draw for a chance to win Hockey Saskatchewan branded clothing. The survey link was distributed broadly using a variety of channels, including emails to the Hockey Saskatchewan membership, postings on social media platforms associated with Hockey Saskatchewan, distribution to the Praxis Indigenous Panel, and emails to several organizations around the province who provide supports for New Canadians. Several media outlets also covered news around the survey.

Data collection began on October 4, 2021. As of November 5, 2021, the survey had yielded responses from 4,251 participants. This demonstrated exceptional interest.

The fieldwork method produces a non-probability, or non-random, sample (since respondents self-selected). While margins of error cannot be applied to non-probability samples, a probability sample of this size would yield a general margin of error of plus or minus 1.5% at the 95% confidence level (19 times out of 20).

The following report summarizes the main findings from the survey.

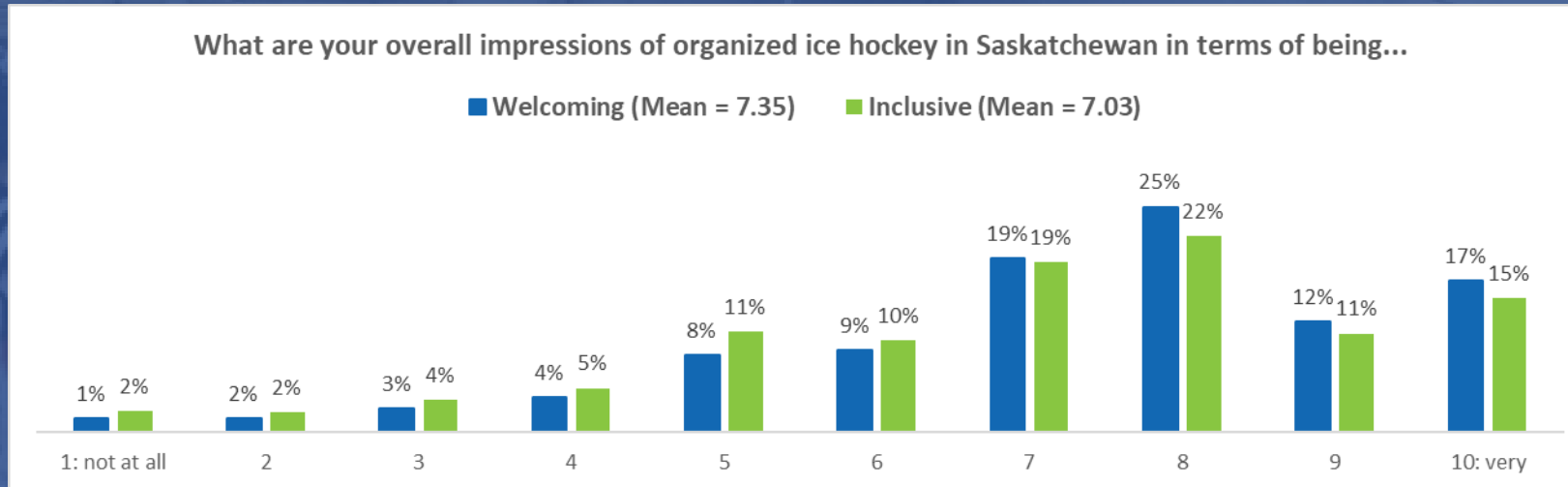


SURVEY RESULTS



Overall Impressions of Hockey in Saskatchewan

On average, survey participants rate their overall impression of organized ice hockey in the province to be slightly more welcoming than inclusive.



Currently hockey players are the most likely to view the sport as both welcoming and inclusive. Those who have quit the sport, non-hockey families, and Indigenous respondents provide ratings that are statistically significantly lower.

Demographic Differences:

Current Hockey Players

- Welcoming: Mean = 7.66
- Inclusive: Mean = 7.29

Parents of Players who have Quit

- Welcoming: Mean = 6.68
- Inclusive: Mean = 6.28

Indigenous Respondents

- Welcoming: Mean = 7.17
- Inclusive: Mean = 6.73

Non-Hockey Families

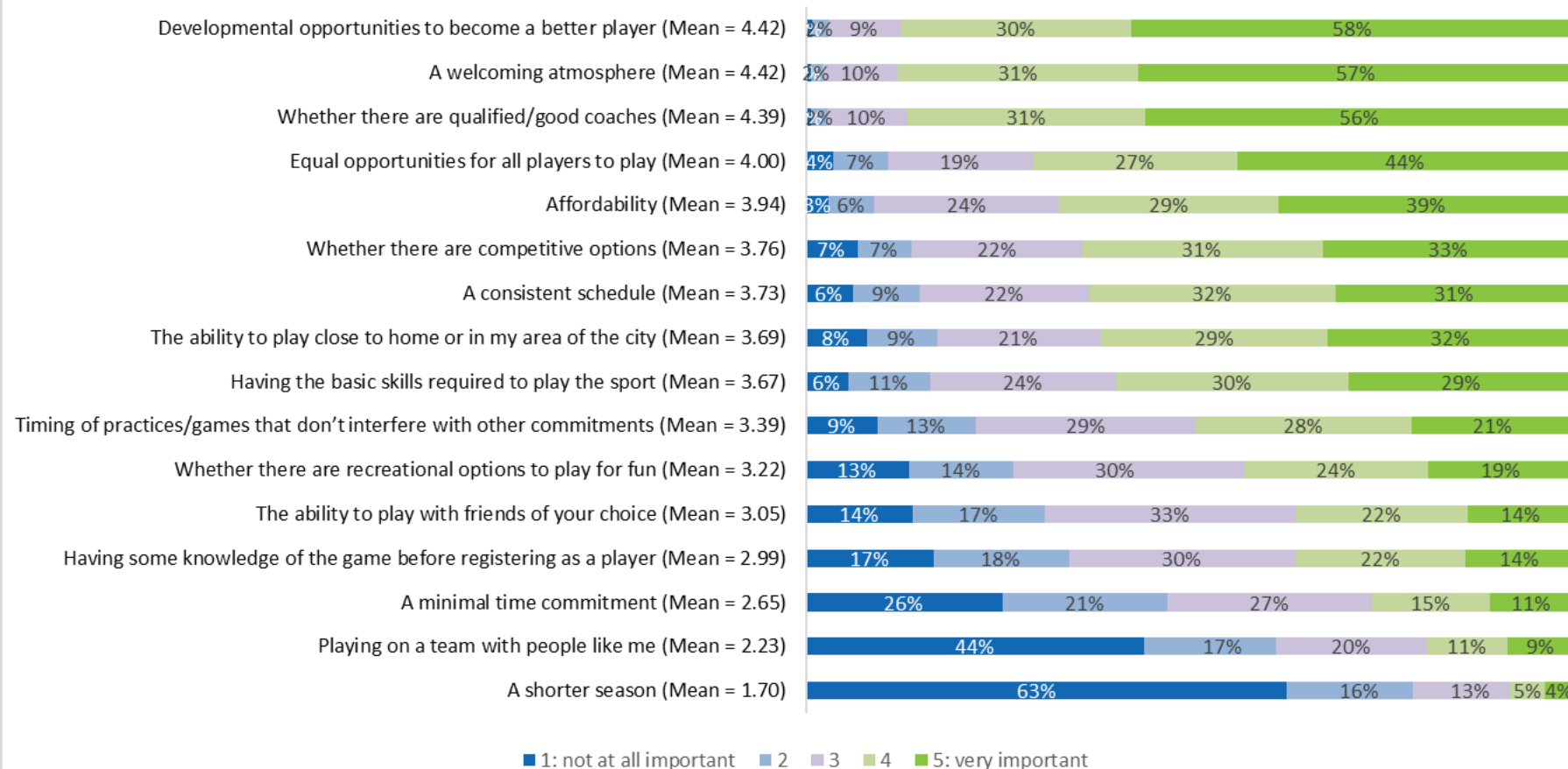
- Welcoming: Mean = 6.77
- Inclusive: Mean = 6.24

Areas of Importance

The most important elements that are taken into consideration when registering for a sport or activity are deemed to be important by at least 87% of respondents:

- developmental opportunities to become a better player;
- a welcoming atmosphere; and,
- whether there are qualified/good coaches.

When deciding whether to register your child (or yourself) in a team sport or activity, how important are each of the following to you personally?



Areas of Importance – Demographic Differences

The boxes below show the 5 areas considered to be of greatest importance by each demographic, as well as the 5 areas deemed to be of lowest importance by that demographic group.

Current Hockey Players

Top 5:

1. A welcoming atmosphere (4.36)
2. Developmental opportunities to become a better player (4.23)
3. Qualified/good coaches (4.18)
4. Affordability (4.14)
5. Whether there are competitive options (4.06)

...

Bottom 5:

12. The ability to play with friends of your choice (3.31)
13. Having some knowledge of the game before registering as a player (3.30)
14. A minimal time commitment (2.79)
15. Playing on a team with people like me (2.39)
16. A shorter season (1.69)

Parents of Players who have Quit

Top 5:

1. Qualified/good coaches (4.44)
2. A welcoming atmosphere (4.43)
3. Developmental opportunities to become a better player (4.36)
4. Equal opportunities for all players to play (4.13)
5. Affordability (3.99)

...

Bottom 5:

12. The ability to play with friends of your choice (3.08)
13. Having some knowledge of the game before registering as a player (2.83)
14. A minimal time commitment (2.71)
15. Playing on a team with people like me (2.23)
16. A shorter season (1.89)

Indigenous Respondents

Top 5:

1. A welcoming atmosphere (4.48)
2. Developmental opportunities to become a better player (4.43)
3. Qualified/good coaches (4.36)
4. Affordability (4.15)
5. Equal opportunities for all players to play (4.13)

...

Bottom 5:

12. Having some knowledge of the game before registering as a player (3.28)
13. The ability to play with friends of your choice (3.06)
14. A minimal time commitment (2.84)
15. Playing on a team with people like me (2.62)
16. A shorter season (1.84)

Non-Hockey Families

Top 5:

1. A welcoming atmosphere (4.44)
2. Qualified/good coaches (4.21)
3. Equal opportunities for all players to play (4.18)
4. Developmental opportunities to become a better player (4.17)
5. Affordability (4.07)

...

Bottom 5:

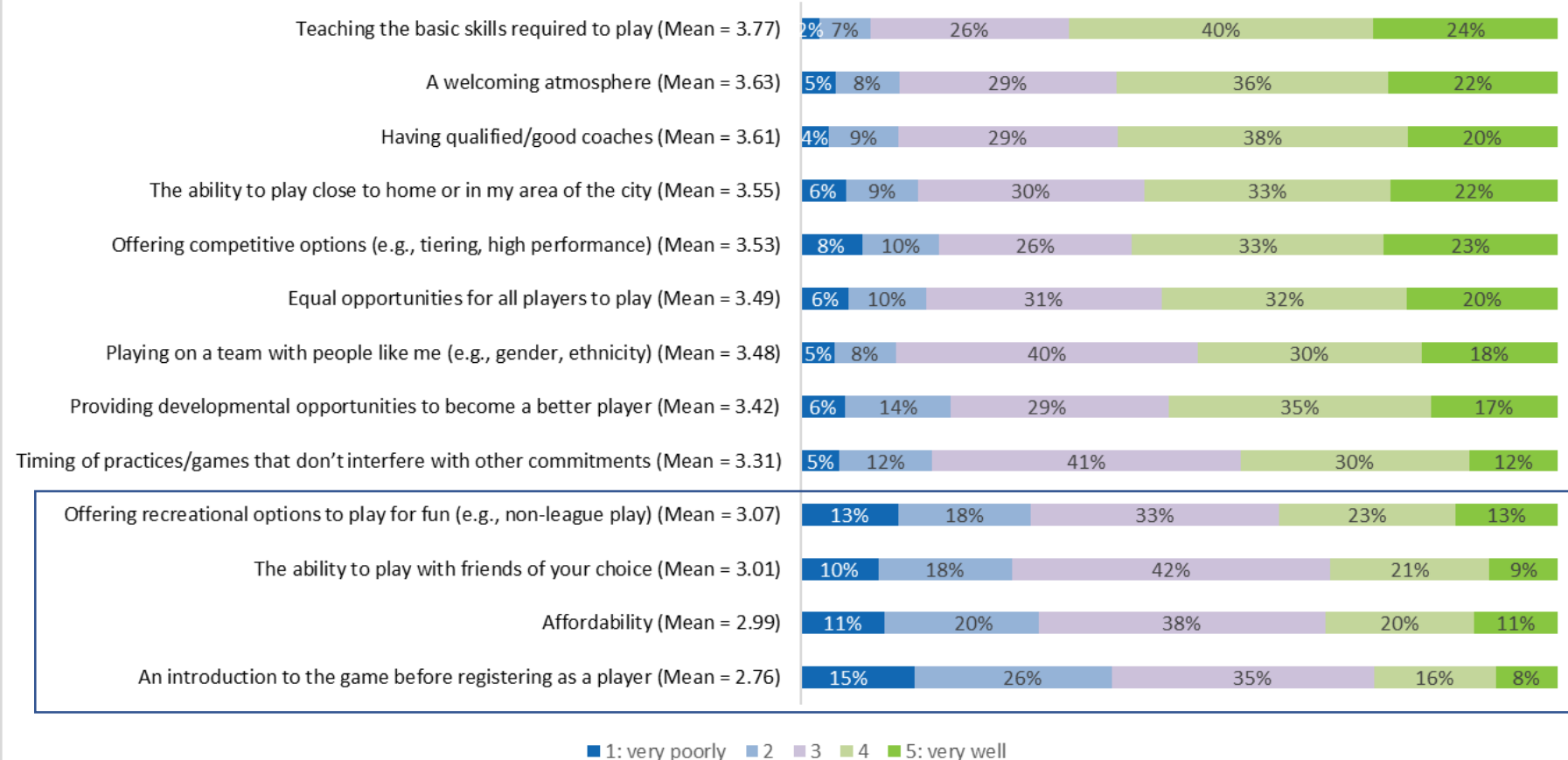
12. The ability to play with friends of your choice (3.28)
13. Having some knowledge of the game before registering as a player (3.18)
14. A minimal time commitment (3.09)
15. Playing on a team with people like me (2.75)
16. A shorter season (2.24)

Hockey Saskatchewan Performance

There are four areas where Hockey Saskatchewan is perceived to be doing less well relative to the other areas tested. These include:

- an introduction to the game before registering as a player;
- affordability;
- the ability to play with friends of your choice; and,
- offering recreational options to play for fun.

Now thinking specifically about ice hockey, how well or how poorly is Hockey Saskatchewan and/or your local minor hockey association doing at offering options that address each of the following?



Hockey Sask Performance – Demographic Differences

Current Hockey Players

Top 5:

1. Offering competitive options (3.86)
2. Teaching the basic skills required to play (3.77)
3. A welcoming atmosphere (3.75)
4. The ability to play close to home (3.59)
5. Providing development opportunities to become a better player (3.59)

...

Bottom 5:

9. Offering rec options to play for fun (3.45)
10. Timing of practices/games that don't interfere with other commitments (3.34)
11. The ability to play with friends of your choice (3.34)
12. An introduction to the game before registering as a player (3.06)
13. Affordability (2.79)

Parents of Players who have Quit

Top 5:

1. Teaching the basic skills required to play (3.78)
2. Offering competitive options (3.44)
3. Qualified/good coaches (3.38)
4. The ability to play close to home (3.37)
5. Providing development opportunities to become a better player (3.30)

...

Bottom 5:

9. Equal opportunities for all players to play (3.10)
10. Affordability (2.89)
11. Offering rec options to play for fun (2.79)
12. The ability to play with friends of your choice (2.79)
13. An introduction to the game before registering as a player (2.51)

Indigenous Respondents

Top 5:

1. Teaching the basic skills required to play (3.78)
2. Qualified/good coaches (3.62)
3. A welcoming atmosphere (3.60)
4. The ability to play close to home (3.54)
5. Offering competitive options (3.52)

...

Bottom 5:

9. Timing of practices/games that don't interfere with other commitments (3.40)
10. Offering rec options to play for fun (3.24)
11. Affordability (2.96)
12. An introduction to the game before registering as a player (2.93)
13. The ability to play with friends of your choice (2.91)

Non-Hockey Families

Top 5:

1. Teaching the basic skills required to play (3.90)
2. Qualified/good coaches (3.74)
3. A welcoming atmosphere (3.63)
4. Providing development opportunities to become a better player (3.59)
5. Equal opportunities for all players to play (3.58)

...

Bottom 5:

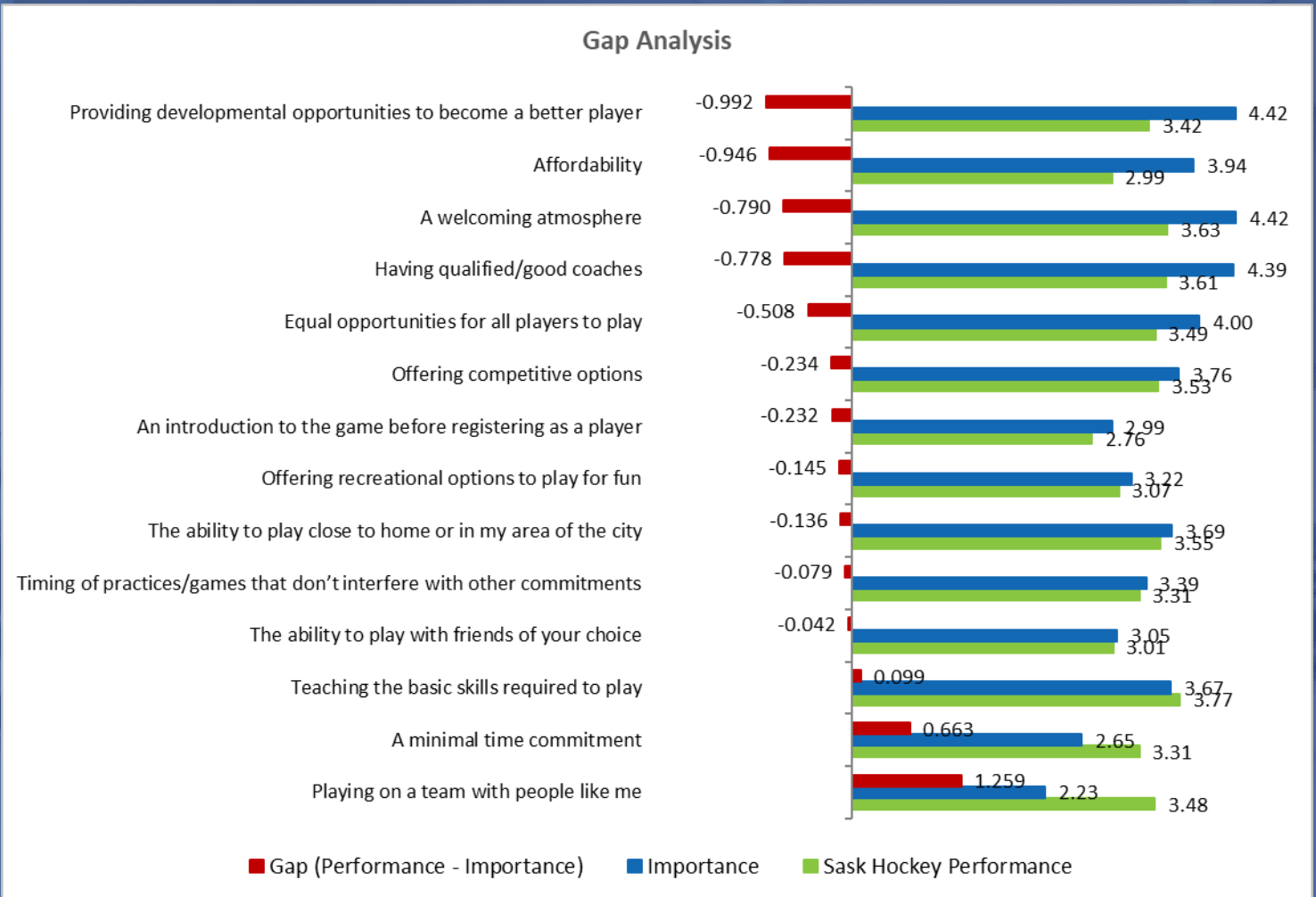
9. The ability to play close to home (3.31)
10. An introduction to the game before registering as a player (3.22)
11. Affordability (3.21)
12. Offering rec options to play for fun (3.20)
13. The ability to play with friends of your choice (3.14)

Gap Analysis

A gap analysis helps to prioritize areas that should be improved and/or focused on. Those areas with the largest gaps are the ones where importance exceeds performance by the greatest margin, suggesting they are in greater need of attention.

The largest gaps between importance and perceived performance are in the following areas:

- developmental opportunities to become a better player;
- affordability;
- a welcoming atmosphere;
- qualified/good coaches; and,
- equal opportunities for all players to play.



Gap Analysis – Demographic Differences

The boxes below reveal the differences between importance and perceived performance for each demographic. Each list is ordered from largest to smallest gaps. Those areas with the largest gaps are the ones where importance exceeds performance by the greatest margin, suggesting they are in greater need of attention with that demographic group.

Current Hockey Players

Biggest to Smallest:

- 1.35: Affordability
- 0.68: Qualified/good coaches
- 0.64: Developmental opportunities
- 0.61: Welcoming atmosphere
- 0.31: Equal opportunities for play
- 0.25: Timing of practices/games
- 0.24: Introduction to the game
- 0.23: Ability to play close to home
- 0.19: Competitive options
- +0.03: Ability to play with friends
- +0.03: Having the basic skills
- +0.05: Recreational options
- +0.55: Minimal time commitment
- +1.13: Playing with people like me

Parents of Players who have Quit

Biggest to Smallest:

- 1.14: Welcoming atmosphere
- 1.10: Affordability
- 1.06: Qualified/good coaches
- 1.06: Developmental opportunities
- 1.02: Equal opportunities for play
- 0.49: Recreational options
- 0.33: Ability to play close to home
- 0.32: Introduction to the game
- 0.29: Ability to play with friends
- 0.23: Timing of practices/games
- 0.08: Competitive options
- 0.01: Having the basic skills
- +0.44: Minimal time commitment
- +1.03: Playing with people like me

Indigenous Respondents

Biggest to Smallest:

- 1.18: Affordability
- 0.97: Developmental opportunities
- 0.87: Welcoming atmosphere
- 0.74: Qualified/good coaches
- 0.69: Equal opportunities for play
- 0.35: Introduction to the game
- 0.31: Competitive options
- 0.22: Ability to play close to home
- 0.16: Recreational options
- 0.15: Ability to play with friends
- 0.10: Timing of practices/games
- +0.14: Having the basic skills
- +0.56: Minimal time commitment
- +0.78: Playing with people like me

Non-Hockey Families

Biggest to Smallest:

- 0.86: Affordability
- 0.81: Welcoming atmosphere
- 0.59: Equal opportunities for play
- 0.58: Developmental opportunities
- 0.46: Qualified/good coaches
- 0.42: Ability to play close to home
- 0.28: Recreational options
- 0.14: Ability to play with friends
- 0.01: Competitive options
- +0.01: Timing of practices/games
- +0.04: Introduction to the game
- +0.40: Minimal time commitment
- +0.57: Having the basic skills
- +0.66: Playing with people like me

Barriers

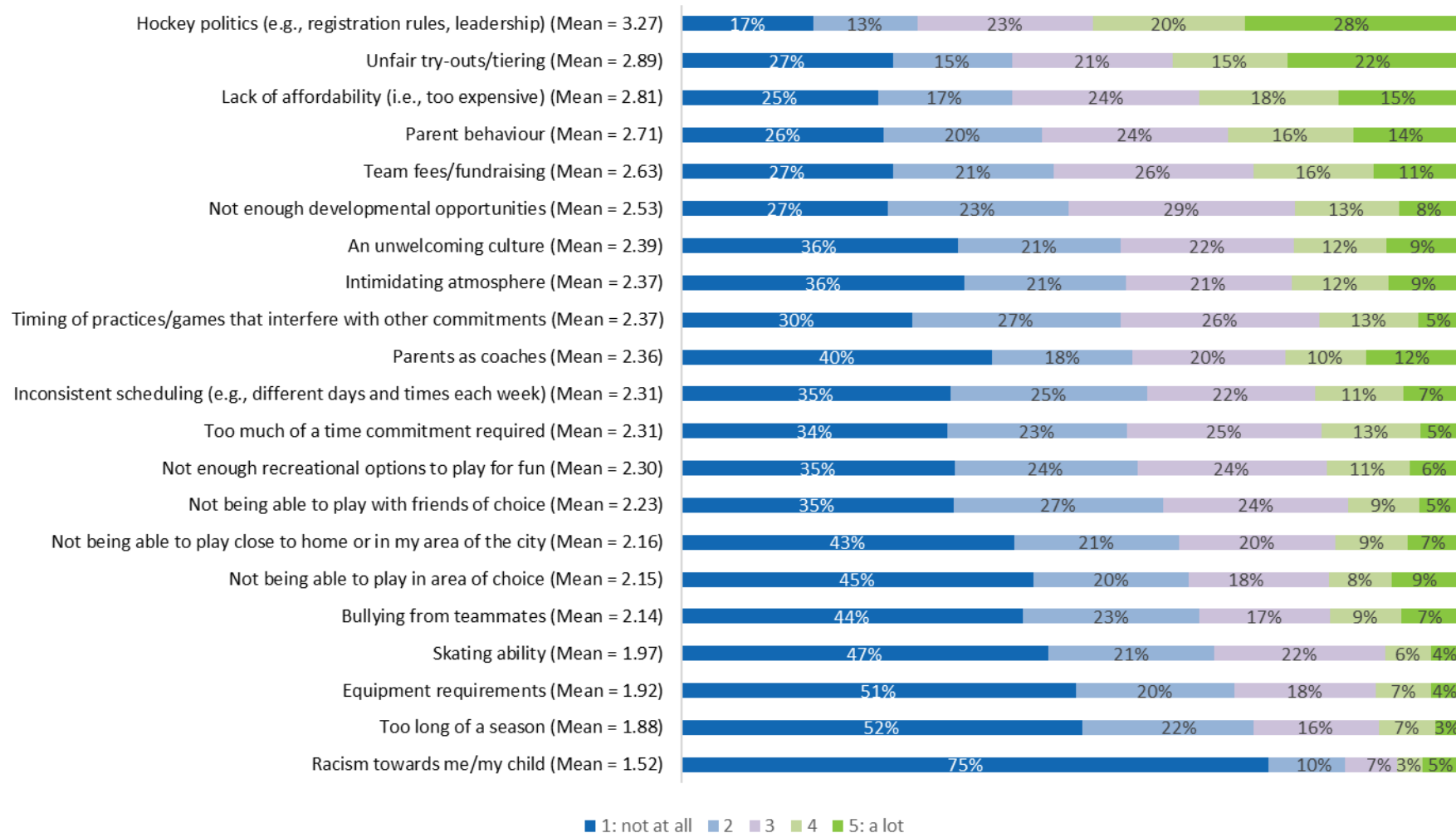
Among the barriers tested, one stands out above the rest, with 48% of respondents indicating it is a barrier that affects either their or their child's willingness to participate in ice hockey:

- Hockey politics

The next most significant barriers to participation include:

- Unfair try-outs/tiering;
- Lack of affordability;
- Parent behaviour;
- Team fees/fundraising; and,
- Not enough developmental opportunities.

The following is a list of barriers that may affect people's willingness to participate in ice hockey in some capacity. To what extent do each of the barriers listed affect you or your child's willingness to participate?



Barriers – Demographic Differences

The boxes below list the top 10 barriers for each demographic group. Hockey politics is the top barrier across all demographics tested.

Current Hockey Players

Top 10:

1. Hockey politics (3.35)
2. Lack of affordability (3.35)
3. Team fees/fundraising (2.95)
4. Parent behaviour (2.91)
5. Unfair tryouts/tiering (2.86)
6. Timing of practices/games (2.55)
7. Not enough developmental opportunities (2.53)
8. Parents as coaches (2.52)
9. Too much of a time commitment (2.50)
10. Intimidating atmosphere (2.47)

Parents of Players who have Quit

Top 10:

1. Hockey politics (3.56)
2. Unfair tryouts/tiering (3.15)
3. Parent behaviour (2.93)
4. An unwelcoming culture (2.80)
5. Lack of affordability (2.76)
6. Parents as coaches (2.70)
7. Intimidating atmosphere (2.68)
8. Not enough recreational opportunities (2.67)
9. Not enough developmental opportunities (2.60)
10. Team fees/fundraising (2.56)

Indigenous Respondents

Top 10:

1. Hockey politics (3.37)
2. Unfair tryouts/tiering (3.18)
3. Lack of affordability (3.14)
4. Parent behaviour (2.90)
5. Team fees/fundraising (2.87)
6. Not enough developmental opportunities (2.68)
7. An unwelcoming culture (2.64)
8. Parents as coaches (2.63)
9. Intimidating atmosphere (2.59)
10. Not enough recreational opportunities (2.48)

Non-Hockey Families

Top 10:

1. Hockey politics (3.58)
2. Lack of affordability (3.39)
3. Parent behaviour (3.32)
4. Team fees/fundraising (3.12)
5. Too much of a time commitment (3.02)
6. Not being able to play close to home (3.01)
7. Timing of practices/games (2.98)
8. Unfair tryouts/tiering (2.95)
9. An unwelcoming culture (2.91)
10. Not being able to play in area of choice (2.90)

The background of the slide features a photograph of an ice hockey game. In the upper half, a player in a black jersey and helmet is visible, looking towards the right. To their right, another player in a blue jersey is partially visible, holding a hockey stick. The lower half of the image shows the lower legs and skates of a player in black, with a hockey stick and puck on the ice. A solid blue horizontal band runs across the middle of the image, containing the word 'RECOMMENDATIONS' in white capital letters. There are also green decorative shapes in the top right and bottom left corners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

An unprecedented response rate, combined with thousands of comments from survey participants, is indicative of a systemic problem that transcends organized ice hockey in Saskatchewan. Many comments received provide context around the biggest barriers to play and reasons for lower participation rates.

Hockey politics and unfair try-outs/tiering tend to be the leading causes of children quitting the sport, and are more pronounced in urban centres, suggesting that a deeper-dive to address some of the issues may be necessary in cities and catchment areas. Lack of affordability and associated team fees/fundraising is one of the primary barriers among current players and a deterrent for non-hockey families. Making hockey more accessible and affordable for everyone, including those who desire recreational or semi-competitive participation, will be key to improving inclusivity.

Focusing on the following will have the greatest impact in addressing some of the issues identified in the survey:

- reducing barriers to play, including hockey politics and unfair tryouts/tiering;
- addressing affordability issues, including team fees and fundraising demands;
- providing developmental opportunities to become a better player;
- ensuring a welcoming atmosphere;
- having qualified/good coaches; and,
- ensuring equal opportunities for players to play.

To attract new players to the game or bring back those who have quit, considerations should also include:

- recreational options that offer the ability to play with friends regardless of boundaries;
- an introduction to the game before registering as a player; and,
- teaching the basic skills required to play.

Thank you!



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About Praxis Consulting

- Incorporated in 1999, Praxis is Saskatchewan's largest locally owned management consulting and research firm.
- Praxis delivers consulting services in public, private, not-for-profit, and Indigenous sectors across Canada.
- Our team is comprised of lead thinkers in strategy and research. This dual lens allows us to ensure data is relevant to decision-makers from point of collection through to analysis and reporting. We work with decision-makers to make the most of research results to inform organizational strategy.
- We care about communities. We gather data and recommend actions in a manner that is respectful of community opinions. We honour all voices by designing processes that accommodate multiple perspectives and worldviews.
- We draw on the knowledge, skills, and judgment of seasoned specialists with backgrounds in business, government, institutional, industry, and Indigenous sectors.

Praxis' Business Lines

Research

Stakeholder engagement and analysis, information gathering, and data analytics.

- Quantitative sample surveys and statistical analysis
- Jurisdictional best practice research & interviews
- Environmental scans
- Secondary literature and document reviews
- Market research
- Public engagement
- Economic impact assessments
- Background research and leads development

Strategy

Thought-leadership, rigorous planning, and pragmatic strategies.

- Strategy development
- Strategy map creation
- Business planning
- Organizational reviews
- Organization structure/culture
- Policy development
- Policy and program assessments and evaluations
- Business analytics/reporting
- Board of Directors governance and planning

Results

Cascading strategy and culture within the organization.

- Portfolio, program, and project management
- Community & stakeholder engagement
- Facilitation
- Executive coaching
- Balanced scorecard development
- Change management
- Communications support