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# Homo certus in professional basketball? Empirical evidence from the 2011 NBA Playoffs

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The current article builds on Berri and Eschker's (2005) research on the impact of crunch time, or pressure-packed performance, in professional basketball by searching for changes in individual player performance near the end of the game. In this way, our study is similar to the study of Savage and Torgler (2012), which examined World Cup soccer performances. Here, we focus solely on National Basketball Association (NBA) Playoff games (from 2011), which are the most stressful games to players. The empirical analyses presented in this study generally confirm earlier research contending that the existence of a prime time or clutch player in the NBA is a myth. On the contrary, our work supports the idea that professional basketball fans often exhibit confirmation bias, wherein they tend to overweight clutch performances that support their *a priori* beliefs.

**Keywords:** performance under pressure; confirmation bias; sports economics

**JEL Classification:** D03; L83

## I. Introduction

The notion that some in sports are 'clutch' performers (i.e. *homo certus*), while others are 'chokers', has seemingly always existed in the sports world. However, debates during 2011 and 2012 about the late-game reliability, or lack thereof, of some sports professionals reached such proportions that they have even spawned the use of the term 'clutch gene' in national sports media. For example, during the recently completed 2012 National Basketball Association (NBA) Playoffs, former NBA player Wally Szczerbiak publicly remarked that Boston Celtics star, Kevin Garnett, lacked the necessary 'clutch gene' for making, or even attempting, game-deciding shots (Cole, 2012; Dwyer, 2012). The discussion of the lack of a

clutch gene dogged even the Miami Heat's LeBron James, the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the 2012 NBA Championships, throughout the 2011–2012 season (Golden, 2012).

For all the emphasis that national sports media put on clutch performers, few academic studies have taken a close look at players' performances in high-pressure situations. This article fills the void by analysing the performances of various NBA stars during the 2011 NBA Playoffs. The players were evaluated on the basis of their performances (on a per-minute basis) across five statistical categories: points scored, field goals made, field goals attempted, 3-point field goals made and 3-point field goals attempted. The players were also evaluated on two percentage-based categories: field goals

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made and 3-point field goals made. The statistical tests performed here parse the late-game dependability differences among the NBA's most recognized stars.

## II. A Brief Review of the Literature

The economics literature has contributed to the exploration of performance under pressure. For example, Berri (1999) measured NBA players' productivity in terms of their contribution to their respective teams' wins (during the 1997–1998 regular season), wherein a player's contribution to total wins is calculated by combining a player's per-minute production and his team's tempo statistics, thus resulting in a player's relative value to his team. Berri (1999) provides the compelling comparison of Michael Jordan, glorified as the most clutch player in NBA history, with Karl Malone, often criticized for his inability to lead a team to an NBA championship, even though he is one of the all-time scoring leaders in NBA history. Through the wins added calculation, Berri (1999) shows that Karl Malone was the relatively more important player to his team during the regular season, adding two more victories to his team's total compared to the increase attributable to Michael Jordan.

More recently, Berri and Eschker (2005) determined that the notion of a 'prime time' or clutch player in the NBA is a myth and that most players perform below their regular season averages during high-pressure situations, such as in the NBA Playoffs. The performance of a player was, again, determined by production per minute in several areas, such as assists, rebounds, points and blocked shots. The current study builds on Berri and Eschker's (2005) research on crunch time or pressure-packed performance in professional basketball by examining changes in individual player performance or production during a particular game, as in the Savage and Torgler (2012) study of World Cup soccer performances, rather than between separate games, such as the comparison of regular season and playoff performances. In doing so, this article also focuses solely on NBA Playoff games

(from 2011), which are the most stressful games to participants (players).

## III. *Homo certus* in the NBA? Data and Analysis

The 2011 NBA Playoff performances data used in this study were downloaded from the official NBA game logs (see [www.nba.com](http://www.nba.com)). The players examined, along with their 2010–2011 regular season statistics, are listed in the appendix. The per-minute variables were created by calculating the statistics listed in the Introduction to this study for both the first through third quarters and the fourth quarters of all 2011 NBA Playoff games and dividing the totals by minutes played. The minutes played data were rounded to the closest whole minute in order to simplify the calculations. The shooting percentage variables included in our analysis were calculated by dividing the respective shots made by shots attempted. The final dependent variables used in our models – (1) field goals attempted per minute, (2) field goals made per minute, (3) field goal percentage, (4) 3-pointers attempted per minute, (5) 3-pointers made per minute, (6) 3-point percentage, and (7) points per minute – were calculated by subtracting the individual statistics for the first through third quarters from their respective fourth quarter totals (for each player and for each playoff game).

Table 1 provides the mean, median, maximum and minimum values for each dependent variable listed above. To establish whether each individual player's fourth quarter playoff performances are statistically different from how each performed over the first three quarters in each game, 10 separate OLS regressions – one for each different dependent variable – were run. The independent variables in each case are the dummy variables for each individual player. The constant term was omitted in each regression in order to simplify our discussion of the results. Inclusion of the intercept would require couching all discussions as comparisons to the omitted player. Without the intercept, a positive

**Table 1. Summary statistics for difference in variables**

Variable	<i>N</i>	Mean	Median	Maximum	Minimum
Field goals attempted per minute	478	−0.036	−0.035	+ 0.763	−0.064
Field goals per minute	478	−0.025	−0.035	+ 0.476	−0.5
Field goal (%)	478	−0.075	−0.081	+ 1	−1
3-Pointers attempted per minute	478	+ 0.009	0	+ 0.540	−0.455
3-Pointers per minute	478	0	0	+ 0.441	−0.409
3-Pointer (%)	478	−0.080	0	+ 1	−1
Points per minute	478	−0.001	−0.012	+ 1.373	−1.455

*Note:* The differences in variables are calculated between the fourth quarter and the first through third quarters.

coefficient indicates better performance by the player in the fourth quarter and a negative coefficient indicates poorer performance by the player in the fourth quarter.

The OLS estimation results are presented in Tables 2–4. We begin with field goals attempted per minute (see the first specification in Table 2),

which is a good measure of how willing players are to ‘step up’ and take critical shots in important games. As expected, the majority of players exhibit no significant performance elevation in the fourth quarter of NBA Playoff games. In fact, only Al Horford and O.J. Mayo – two of the unlikeliest of game changers – exhibited a statistically significant

**Table 2. Summary of OLS results**

Field goals attempted per minute			Field goals per minute			Field goal (%)		
Player	Coefficient	<i>t</i> -Value	Player	Coefficient	<i>t</i> -Value	Player	Coefficient	<i>t</i> -Value
T. Hansbrough	+0.137	+1.41	C. Paul	+0.069	+1.20	G. Wallace	+0.175	+1.18
A. Horford	+0.114*	+1.82	A. Miller	+0.063	+1.09	P. Pierce	+0.159	+1.32
O.J. Mayo	+0.098*	+1.64	O.J. Mayo	+0.051	+1.27	A. Miller	+0.097	+0.66
C. Paul	+0.098	+1.11	P. Pierce	+0.044	+0.93	J. Nelson	+0.067	+0.45
D. Granger	+0.079	+0.82	A. Stoudemire	+0.042	+0.59	D. Howard	+0.065	+0.44
T. Parker	+0.059	+0.67	A. Horford	+0.040	+0.97	T. Lawson	+0.055	+0.34
K. Bryant	+0.055	+0.81	K. Durant	+0.036	+1.04	J. Smith	+0.052	+0.50
A. Miller	+0.044	+0.50	T. Hansbrough	+0.031	+0.48	D. Rose	+0.048	+0.53
L. James	+0.042	+0.88	D. Howard	+0.029	+0.51	R. Jefferson	+0.038	+0.26
J. Holiday	+0.041	+0.42	J. Nelson	+0.029	+0.51	R. Rondo	+0.038	+0.32
R. Westbrook	+0.041	+0.78	D. Nowitzki	+0.029	+0.95	K. Durant	+0.034	+0.39
D. Wade	+0.032	+0.67	R. Rondo	+0.024	+0.52	D. Nowitzki	+0.027	+0.35
P. Gasol	+0.029	+0.43	P. Gasol	+0.021	+0.47	A. Stoudemire	+0.009	+0.01
K. Durant	+0.025	+0.48	D. Rose	+0.017	+0.48	J. Crawford	−0.004	−0.04
D. Nowitzki	+0.021	+0.44	D. Granger	+0.012	+0.20	H. Turkoglu	−0.007	−0.05
R. Jefferson	+0.001	+0.01	R. Jefferson	+0.007	+0.13	O.J. Mayo	−0.008	−0.09
R. Rondo	−0.006	−0.08	G. Wallace	+0.005	+0.01	D. Granger	−0.021	−0.13
D. Collison	−0.015	−0.16	D. Gallinari	−0.003	−0.05	P. Gasol	−0.027	−0.24
R. Allen	−0.018	−0.26	L. James	−0.009	−0.32	M. Ginobili	−0.028	−0.19
K. Garnett	−0.022	−0.30	T. Lawson	−0.011	−0.17	A. Horford	−0.038	−0.36
D. Howard	−0.028	−0.31	J. Holiday	−0.013	−0.21	C. Paul	−0.054	−0.37
Z. Randolph	−0.028	−0.47	R. Westbrook	−0.022	−0.63	C. Bosh	−0.057	−0.73
J. Johnson	−0.041	−0.66	J. Kidd	−0.023	−0.77	M. Conley	−0.063	−0.62
D. Rose	−0.044	−0.82	Z. Randolph	−0.026	−0.67	R. Westbrook	−0.066	−0.76
J. Crawford	−0.050	−0.79	J. Smith	−0.028	−0.67	L. Aldridge	−0.079	−0.54
L. Deng	−0.052	−0.97	J. Crawford	−0.029	−0.70	K. Garnett	−0.081	−0.67
J. Nelson	−0.053	−0.60	K. Garnett	−0.031	−0.66	L. Deng	−0.094	−1.03
P. Pierce	−0.053	−0.74	R. Allen	−0.034	−0.72	J. Johnson	−0.097	−0.93
D. Gallinari	−0.062	−0.64	M. Ginobili	−0.035	−0.60	J. Kidd	−0.106	−1.38
M. Conley	−0.081	−1.36	T. Parker	−0.038	−0.66	T. Duncan	−0.111	−0.75
T. Lawson	−0.086	−0.89	L. Deng	−0.042	−1.17	D. Gallinari	−0.113	−0.70
M. Ginobili	−0.095	−1.08	M. Conley	−0.049	−1.26	T. Hansbrough	−0.115	−0.71
G. Wallace	−0.099	−1.12	J. Johnson	−0.056	−1.36	M. Gasol	−0.123	−1.23
J. Terry	−0.102**	−2.16	J. Richardson	−0.059	−1.02	L. James	−0.132*	−1.67
A. Iguodala	−0.104	−1.07	H. Turkoglu	−0.059	−1.02	Z. Randolph	−0.135	−1.34
J. Richardson	−0.104	−1.19	D. Wade	−0.059*	−1.91	C. Anthony	−0.139	−0.77
Nenê	−0.107	−1.10	L. Aldridge	−0.065	−1.13	J. Richardson	−0.160	−1.08
J. Smith	−0.107*	−1.72	M. Gasol	−0.065*	−1.65	R. Hibbert	−0.175	−1.08
A. Stoudemire	−0.107	−0.98	C. Bosh	−0.068**	−2.20	D. Wade	−0.185**	−2.34
L. Aldridge	−0.122	−1.38	Nenê	−0.068	−1.08	J. Terry	−0.193***	−2.45
C. Bosh	−0.132***	−2.80	A. Iguodala	−0.074	−1.16	R. Allen	−0.201*	−1.67
H. Turkoglu	−0.146*	−1.65	K. Bryant	−0.084*	−1.86	T. Parker	−0.210	−1.42
E. Brand	−0.147	−1.52	C. Anthony	−0.099	−1.39	A. Iguodala	−0.214	−1.32
M. Gasol	−0.157***	−2.61	R. Hibbert	−0.099	−1.56	Nenê	−0.239	−1.48
R. Hibbert	−0.207**	−2.14	T. Duncan	−0.104*	−1.79	K. Bryant	−0.248**	−2.16
T. Duncan	−0.234***	−2.65	J. Terry	−0.113***	−3.65	E. Brand	−0.349**	−2.16
C. Anthony	−0.246**	−2.27	D. Collison	−0.142**	−2.23	J. Holiday	−0.363**	−2.24
J. Kidd	−0.640	−1.39	E. Brand	−0.148**	−2.33	D. Collison	−0.451***	−2.78

Note: \*\*\*, \*\* and \*Denote test statistic significance at 0.01, 0.05 and 0.10 levels, respectively.

Table 3. Summary of OLS results

3-Pointers attempted per minute			3-Pointers per minute			3-Point (%)		
Player	Coefficient	t-Value	Player	Coefficient	t-Value	Player	Coefficient	t-Value
D. Granger	+0.167***	+3.49	D. Granger	+0.062**	+2.00	P. Gasol	+0.100	+0.80
K. Bryant	+0.106***	+3.15	O.J. Mayo	+0.051***	+2.65	J. Crawford	+0.077	+0.67
R. Allen	+0.101***	+2.84	J. Holiday	+0.044	+1.43	D. Nowitzki	+0.076	+0.89
O.J. Mayo	+0.098***	+3.32	R. Allen	+0.033	+1.41	D. Wade	+0.067	+0.78
M. Conley	+0.055*	+1.85	P. Pierce	+0.033	+1.44	G. Wallace	+0.055	+0.34
R. Westbrook	+0.052**	+2.03	J. Crawford	+0.031	+1.53	D. Granger	+0.033	+0.19
C. Paul	+0.051	+1.15	M. Conley	+0.021	+1.09	J. Holiday	+0.020	+0.11
D. Wade	+0.047**	+2.00	D. Wade	+0.020	+1.33	L. Aldridge	0.000	0.00
J. Holiday	+0.044	+0.93	D. Nowitzki	+0.019	+1.27	C. Bosh	0.000	0.00
C. Anthony	+0.035	+0.67	P. Gasol	+0.013	+0.57	E. Brand	0.000	0.00
G. Wallace	+0.026	+0.61	G. Wallace	+0.008	+0.03	T. Duncan	0.000	0.00
L. James	+0.022	+0.96	R. Westbrook	+0.006	+0.38	K. Garnett	0.000	0.00
R. Rondo	+0.022	+0.61	L. James	+0.003	+0.20	M. Gasol	0.000	0.00
J. Richardson	+0.016	+0.38	Z. Randolph	+0.003	+0.19	T. Hansbrough	0.000	0.00
K. Garnett	+0.015	+0.45	L. Deng	+0.002	+0.14	R. Hibbert	0.000	0.00
D. Nowitzki	+0.012	+0.55	R. Jefferson	+0.001	+0.04	A. Horford	0.000	0.00
A. Iguodala	+0.011	+0.23	L. Aldridge	0.000	0.00	D. Howard	0.000	0.00
R. Jefferson	+0.011	+0.27	C. Bosh	0.000	0.00	Nenê	0.000	0.00
P. Gasol	+0.009	+0.27	E. Brand	0.000	0.00	Z. Randolph	0.000	0.00
J. Crawford	+0.008	+0.28	T. Duncan	0.000	0.00	R. Rondo	0.000	0.00
Z. Randolph	+0.008	+0.26	K. Garnett	0.000	0.00	A. Stoudemire	0.000	0.00
L. Deng	+0.006	+0.25	M. Gasol	0.000	0.00	M. Conley	-0.036	-0.33
M. Gasol	+0.006	+0.02	T. Hansbrough	0.000	0.00	K. Bryant	-0.040	-0.32
T. Parker	+0.006	+0.15	R. Hibbert	0.000	0.00	O.J. Mayo	-0.041	-0.37
C. Bosh	+0.004	+0.18	A. Horford	0.000	0.00	J. Nelson	-0.083	-0.52
A. Horford	+0.004	+0.15	D. Howard	0.000	0.00	T. Parker	-0.083	-0.52
K. Durant	+0.002	+0.08	Nenê	0.000	0.00	D. Rose	-0.085	-0.86
L. Aldridge	0.000	0.00	R. Rondo	0.000	0.00	L. Deng	-0.088	-0.88
E. Brand	0.000	0.00	A. Stoudemire	0.000	0.00	J. Smith	-0.104	-0.91
T. Duncan	0.000	0.00	A. Miller	-0.001	-0.06	C. Anthony	-0.108	-0.55
T. Hansbrough	0.000	0.00	K. Durant	-0.002	-0.13	R. Westbrook	-0.108	-1.12
R. Hibbert	0.000	0.00	T. Parker	-0.005	-0.20	P. Pierce	-0.120	-0.91
Nenê	0.000	0.00	D. Rose	-0.005	-0.33	R. Jefferson	-0.122	-0.76
A. Stoudemire	0.000	0.00	C. Paul	-0.008	-0.29	J. Kidd	-0.149*	-1.78
D. Howard	-0.004	-0.11	J. Smith	-0.009	-0.46	L. James	-0.161*	-1.88
P. Pierce	-0.009	-0.27	K. Bryant	-0.012	-0.53	K. Durant	-0.172*	-1.80
J. Terry	-0.016	-0.71	J. Nelson	-0.016	-0.58	J. Richardson	-0.178	-1.10
D. Collison	-0.017	-0.36	T. Lawson	-0.017	-0.55	H. Turkoglu	-0.183	-1.14
J. Nelson	-0.019	-0.45	C. Anthony	-0.018	-0.51	A. Iguodala	-0.200	-1.13
H. Turkoglu	-0.027	-0.61	J. Johnson	-0.018	-0.94	T. Lawson	-0.200	-1.13
J. Johnson	-0.030	-0.98	J. Richardson	-0.020	-0.70	J. Terry	-0.212***	-2.46
D. Rose	-0.035	-1.33	A. Iguodala	-0.022	-0.72	R. Allen	-0.215*	-1.63
A. Miller	-0.039	-0.89	H. Turkoglu	-0.022	-0.78	D. Gallinari	-0.233	-1.32
J. Smith	-0.039	-1.29	J. Kidd	-0.025*	-1.69	A. Miller	-0.250	-1.55
J. Kidd	-0.042*	-1.85	D. Gallinari	-0.027	-0.88	J. Johnson	-0.271***	-2.37
T. Lawson	-0.042	-0.88	D. Collison	-0.029	-0.94	M. Ginobili	-0.353**	-2.19
D. Gallinari	-0.067	-1.41	J. Terry	-0.040***	-2.66	C. Paul	-0.361**	-2.24
M. Ginobili	-0.132***	-3.03	M. Ginobili	-0.061**	-2.16	D. Collison	-0.600***	-3.39

Note: \*\*\*, \*\* and \*Denote test statistic significance at 0.01, 0.05 and 0.10 levels, respectively.

elevation, yet these were marginal, achieving  $p = 0.10$  only. At the other end of the spectrum, a number of players, including Carmelo Anthony, appeared to be unwilling to possess the ball and attempt critical shots near the end of critical

games. Almost all of these cases, including Anthony's, are significant at  $p = 0.05$  or better.

The remaining portions of Table 2 present OLS estimates of the field goals made per minute and the field goal percentage specifications. Interestingly, in



Table 4. Summary of OLS results

Points per minute		
Player	Coefficient	t-Value
C. Paul	+ 0.381***	+ 2.53
T. Hansbrough	+ 0.275*	+ 1.67
D. Nowitzki	+ 0.269***	+ 3.34
D. Granger	+ 0.201	+ 1.22
P. Pierce	+ 0.169	+ 1.38
G. Wallace	+ 0.161	+ 1.08
A. Miller	+ 0.146	+ 0.97
Z. Randolph	+ 0.134	+ 1.31
O.J. Mayo	+ 0.125	+ 1.22
J. Crawford	+ 0.118	+ 1.11
A. Stoudemire	+ 0.096	+ 0.52
K. Durant	+ 0.094	+ 1.06
J. Nelson	+ 0.089	+ 0.59
R. Westbrook	+ 0.087	+ 0.97
D. Rose	+ 0.086	+ 0.94
P. Gasol	+ 0.085	+ 0.73
J. Holiday	+ 0.072	+ 0.44
T. Lawson	+ 0.062	+ 0.37
M. Ginobili	+ 0.056	+ 0.37
K. Bryant	+ 0.055	+ 0.47
A. Horford	+ 0.040	+ 0.38
M. Conley	+ 0.039	+ 0.38
Nenê	+ 0.014	+ 0.08
R. Jefferson	+ 0.004	+ 0.02
J. Kidd	-0.004	-0.05
R. Rondo	-0.005	-0.05
D. Howard	-0.034	-0.22
R. Allen	-0.035	-0.28
L. James	-0.043	-0.53
D. Wade	-0.062	-0.77
M. Gasol	-0.072	-0.71
J. Smith	-0.074	-0.69
L. Aldridge	-0.076	-0.51
C. Bosh	-0.078	-0.97
L. Deng	-0.092	-0.99
D. Gallinari	-0.111	-0.67
K. Garnett	-0.116	-0.95
J. Johnson	-0.118	-1.11
T. Parker	-0.152	-1.01
A. Iguodala	-0.173	-1.05
R. Hibbert	-0.178	-1.08
H. Turkoglu	-0.186	-1.24
J. Richardson	-0.192	-1.27
T. Duncan	-0.225	-1.49
J. Terry	-0.257***	-3.19
E. Brand	-0.272*	-1.65
C. Anthony	-0.327*	-1.78
D. Collison	-0.389**	-2.36

Note: \*\*\*, \*\* and \*Denote test statistic significance at 0.01, 0.05 and 0.10 levels, respectively.

neither case does a playoff performer produce a fourth quarter that exceeds that of his first three quarters, while there are several cases (across both regressions) wherein playoff performances fall off in the fourth quarter. Some of the names included in

this list are noteworthy. For example, two prominent members of the Miami Heat – Dwayne Wade and Chris Bosh – along with the Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant appear at the bottom of both lists, while the Miami Heat star LeBron James exhibits a significant drop in scoring at the end of playoff games. Two of these, Bryant and James, are widely considered to be the best NBA players since Michael Jordan.

OLS estimates of the 3-point shots specifications are presented in Table 3. A number of NBA stars, including James, Wade, Ray Allen (Boston Celtics) and Russell Westbrook (Oklahoma City Thunder), exhibit a statistically significant (at  $p \leq .05$ ) willingness to take 3-point shots late in NBA Playoff tilts. However, none of these is among the small number of players whose fourth quarter 3-point shots made total significantly exceeds his total over the first three quarters of playoff games. That small group includes only the lesser-known Danny Granger and O.J. Mayo. Finally, Table 3 results reveal that none of the NBA stars in our sample saw their fourth quarter 3-point field goal percentage exceed his percentage over the first three quarters. On the other hand, a number of stars, including James, Allen, Kevin Durant (Oklahoma City Thunder) and Chris Paul (New Orleans Hornets), saw their fourth quarter 3-point field percentage fall statistically below (at  $p \leq 0.10$ ) their early game levels during the 2011 NBA Playoffs.

Scoring, arguably the most direct measure of being a 'clutch' performer, is examined in Table 4. Only two players – Paul and Nowitzki – are found to have increased their late game (fourth quarter) scoring (relative to scoring over the first three quarters) at  $p = 0.01$ , while another player, Tyler Hansbrough, exhibited a marginally significant ( $p = 0.10$ ) late-game improvement. At the other end of the continuum, Anthony saw his scoring fall significantly ( $p = 0.10$ ) by the end of the 2011 NBA Playoffs games in which he participated. Most of the remaining players are, in a statistical sense, *average* in that their performances do not rise or elevate as playoff games enter the so-called 'clutch time' portion. In this sense, Berri and Eschker's (2005) contention that the existence of a prime time or clutch player in the NBA is a myth is accurate, at least in terms of the 2010–2012 season. More specifically, their idea that sports fans exhibit confirmation bias, wherein they tend to only remember performances that prove their point, such as the idea that Kobe Bryant always makes the game-winning shot, and ignore evidence to the contrary, is supported by our results.

#### IV. Concluding Comments

This study builds on prior research on crunch time or pressure-packed performance in professional basketball by examining how individual player performance or production either progresses or regresses during pressure-packed NBA Playoff contests. Comparing performances in the fourth quarter of such tilts to those from the same player over the preceding three quarters, we find most players are, in a statistical sense, simply *average* in that their in-game performances do not rise or elevate as these playoff games enter the so-called 'clutch time' portion (at the end). Where statistical significance is found, most cases suggest that NBA stars typically succumb to end-of-game pressures, given that their performance in several statistical areas wanes.

The econometric analyses presented in this study generally confirm the research by Berri and Eschker (2005), which contends that the existence of a prime time or clutch player in the NBA is a myth. As such, our work supports the idea in Berri and Eschker (2005) that professional basketball fans exhibit confirmation bias, wherein they tend to overweight player performances that prove their point, such as the idea that certain athletes are clutch players (i.e. exhibit the so-called clutch gene), and thus, minimize evidence to the contrary.

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**Appendix: 2010–2011 Regular Season Statistics**

Player	Points per game	Field goal (%)	Minutes
LaMarcus Aldridge	21.8	50	39.6
Ray Allen	16.5	49.1	36.1
Carmelo Anthony	26.3	46.1	36.2
Chris Bosh	18.7	49.6	36.3
Elton Brand	15	51.2	34.7
Kobe Bryant	25.3	45.1	33.9
Darren Collison	13.2	45.7	29.9
Mike Conley	13.7	44.4	35.5
Jamaal Crawford	14.2	42.1	30.2
Luol Deng	17.4	46	39.1
Tim Duncan	13.4	50	28.4
Kevin Durant	27.7	46.2	38.9
Danilo Gallinari	14.7	41.2	30.9
Kevin Garnett	14.9	52.8	31.3
Marc Gasol	11.7	52.7	31.9
Pau Gasol	18.8	52.9	37
Manu Ginobili	17.4	43.3	30.3
Danny Granger	20.5	42.5	35
Tyler Hansbrough	11	46.5	21.9
Roy Hibbert	12.7	46.1	27.7
Jrue Holiday	14	44.6	35.4
Al Horford	15.3	55.7	35.1
Dwight Howard	22.9	59.3	37.6
Andre Iguodala	14.1	44.5	36.9
LeBron James	26.7	51	38.8
Richard Jefferson	11	47.4	30.4
Joe Johnson	18.2	44.3	35.5
Jason Kidd	7.9	36.1	33.2
Ty Lawson	11.7	50.3	26.3
O.J. Mayo	11.3	40.7	26.3
Andre Miller	12.7	46	32.7
Jameer Nelson	13.1	44.6	30.5
Nenê	14.5	61.5	30.5
Dirk Nowitski	23	51.7	34.3
Tony Parker	17.5	51.9	32.4
Chris Paul	15.8	46.3	36
Paul Pierce	18.9	49.7	34.7
Zach Randolph	20.1	50.3	36.3
Jason Richardson	13.9	43.3	34.9
Rajon Rondo	10.6	47.5	37.2
Derrick Rose	25	44.5	37.4
Josh Smith	16.5	47.7	34.4
Amare Stoudamire	25.3	50.2	36.8
Jason Terry	15.8	45.1	31.3
Hedo Turkoglu	11.4	44.8	34.1
Dwayne Wade	25.5	50	37.1
Gerald Wallace	15.8	49.8	35.7
Russell Westbrook	21.9	44.2	34.7