

# A Theory of Sport Organizational Stakeholders' Suffering and Dealing with Corruption

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# Sport Corruption

- **Global issue**
- **International Olympic Committee, cricket, football, boxing, and intercollegiate athletics** (Maennig, 2005; Mason, Thibault, & Misener, 2006; Thelin, 1994).
- **Instances of match fixing, bribery, fraud, acceptance of improper gifts, and illegal betting** (Maennig, 2005).

# Conception of Corruption

- **A taxonomy of corrupt practices (Luo, 2004):**
  - **Intensity—quantity and gravity of corrupt activities;**
  - **Hierarchical scale—the number of hierarchical levels involved in the corrupt acts.**
- **The respective type, form, and extent of corrupt activities influences the impact on organizations and its organizational stakeholders (Baucus & Baucus, 1997), thus making comparisons difficult when examining the consequences of specific corrupt acts on respective stakeholders (Glaser & Saks, 2006).**

# Impact of Corruption

- **Macro perspective-organizations affected through receiving sanctions, a negative reputation, loss of public confidence, and decreased financial resources (Caidini, Petrova, & Goldstein, 2004; Maennig, 2005).**
- **Micro perspective-organizational stakeholders who are not involved in malfeasant activities but continue to work within the organization experience various types of harm. For example, mistrust, loss of work, and tainted resumes (Miller, Roberts, & Spence, 2005; Zahra, Priem, & Rasheed, 2006).**



# Presentation Purpose ...

- To theorize how a coaching staff and athletes within a sport program are affected by the numerous consequences of fraud during the post-corruption period.

# Contextualizing the case

## University of Minnesota- Men's Basketball Program (1994-1998)

- “significant cases of academic corruption” in the history of intercollegiate athletics (NCAA Infractions Committee, 2000; Wertheim & Yaeger, 1999).
- Academic fraud- conceived of and supported by:
  - The Head Men's Basketball Coach, his staff, and the athletic academic secretary (NCAA Infractions Committee, 2000).
  - The former academic secretary:
    - Completed over 400 assignments (homework, preparing take-home exams, typing, and composing theme papers) for 18 players (NCAA Infractions Committee, 2000).

# Contextualizing the Case (Cont.)

## OUTCOME:

- **Sanctions:**
  - Decreased number of scholarships
  - Restricted recruiting practices
  - Loss of records
  - Ban on post season competition
  - Financial repayment from awards (NCAA Infractions Committee, 2000).
- **Personnel—dismissed or forced to resign:**
  - Four players
  - Numerous University employees (including head coach, assistant coaches, academic secretary, academic advisor, associate athletic director of men's sports, and compliance director).

# Methodology

- **Research design:**
  - Grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and case study (Yin, 1994) approaches were used to develop a theory of coaches' and players' suffering and dealing with academic corruption.
- **Data collection:**
  - Theoretical sampling (Strauss & Corbin, 1998)
  - Semi-structured face-to-face or phone interviews were conducted with 19 participants (MBB coaches, former MBB players, athletic department and University administrators, academic counseling services for intercollegiate athletics staff, and faculty);
  - Secondary data-participant observations and documents.
- **Data analysis:**
  - Constant comparison method in developing categories that led to toward theory generation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

# A theory of coaches' and players' suffering and dealing with academic corruption

- The environment where corruption occurs, along with the type of corruption displayed, produces certain consequences for organizational stakeholders not involved in malfeasant activities (LUO, 2004).
- In particular, in the context of intercollegiate athletics and the occurrence of extreme academic fraud team personnel (i.e., athletes & coaches) are subjected to and endure enormous and assorted forms of suffering.

# A theory of coaches' and players' suffering and dealing with academic corruption

- Suffering is defined as the pain afflicted on team members due to harmful effects created by the specific consequences and related harmful outcomes of the corruption.

# ACADEMIC CORRUPTION

## Coaching staff

### Harmful outcomes

- Negative reputation
- Recruiting challenges:
  - Negative recruiting
  - Being behind the eight ball
  - Altered philosophy
  - Conservative recruiting practices
  - The virus

### Sanctions

- Unknown
- Recruiting

### Harmful outcomes

- Stress
- Distrust
- Anger
- Conflict
- Dysfunctional team dynamics
- Non-complaint

### Stakeholder separation

- Team
- University Units

### Harmful outcomes

- Associative guilt
- Distrust
- Micromanagement
- Stress
- Anger
- Insular behaviors

### Reform policies

- University restructuring & increased oversight
- Increased & revised policies

### Harmful outcomes

- Stress
- Distrust
- Insular behaviors

### Managing multiply role:

- Publicly dealing with issue
- Meeting academic & athletic expectations
- Long-term effects
- Media & public scrutiny

## Athletes

### Sources of negative treatment

- University & athletic administrators
- University faculty
- Student body
- Media

### Negative treatment

- Associative guilt
- Lack of communication
- Lack of support
- Public criticism & humiliation
  - Racism

### Harmful outcomes

- Anger
- Distrust
- Dysfunctional relationships
- Embarrassment
- Feeling uncomfortable
- Ostracism

### Harmful outcomes

- Dual consciousness of corruption
  - Resiliency
  - Empowerment

### Sanctions

- Loss of records
- Ban on post season competition

### Harmful outcomes

- Anger
- Disrespect
- Distrust
- Disappointment
- Devastation
- Hurt

### Loss

- Step father syndrome
- Team
- Reputation

### Harmful outcomes

- Affected team dynamic
- Anger
- Distrust
- Conflict
- Pain
- Stress

# Implications for Sport Administrators & Policy Makers

- **Sanctions:**
  - Appropriate retributive justice and the suffering innocent.
- **Administrative support:**
  - **Coaches:** long term contracts; publicly demonstrate their support;
  - **Players:** provide support in protecting them from media, emotional support-how are you doing; being open and honest about investigative process and hiring.
- **Reform policies:**
  - Balance between reform policies and or revised infrastructure and providing a coaching staff with sufficient independence to successfully perform their job.

# Conclusion & Recommendations for Future Research

Empirical investigations that examine how different types of corruption affect sport organizational stakeholders as well as how specific forms of corruption affect individuals working in various sport programs.

**Thank you.**



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