CIES
INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR SPORTS STUDIES

FIFA MASTER
by CIES Education

INTERNATIONAL MASTER
IN MANAGEMENT, LAW AND HUMANITIES OF SPORT

Executive Summaries

PRESENTATION OF DISSERTATIONS CLASS OF 2022-2023

In partnership with

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY LEICESTER

SDA Bocconi SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

unine· Université de Neuchâtel

Programme

13:00 – 13:15   *Welcome* - Prof. Denis Oswald, CIES Director

13:15 – 13:45   *Looking Forward: An Investigation into the Sustainability and Legacies of Football Development Projects* - Jules-Antoine Bidé (Benin & Canada), Béatrice Caliani (Brazil & France), Jai Ganatra (India), Mikkel Haugan (Norway)

13:45 – 14:15   *What is the Climate Impact of Fan Mobility in Football? A Study of the Carbon Footprint in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Women's Champions League for the 2022-2023 Season* - Alex Auvray (Brazil & France), Veronic Malack (The Gambia), Changmin (Jacob) Oh (South Korea), Adel Ratansi (Canada & United Kingdom)

14:15 – 14:45   *Enter the Lottery or Place a SafeBet: 'A Study on the Importance of Education In Academy-Level Football'* - David Goldberg (Costa Rica), Jaeyun Lee (South Korea), Renae Camille Samuel (Grenada)

14:45 – 15:00   *Coffee Break*

15:00 – 15:30   *Overcoming Challenges: A Comparative Analysis of Professionalization in Women's Football Leagues among Top Nations* - Farid Abbasov (Azerbaijan), WanXin Chen (Singapore), Nícolas Finkielsztejn (Brazil & Poland), Okenna Onwuzurumba (France & Nigeria)

15:30 – 16:00   *Slicing the Onion: Evaluating the Significance of Ethical Codes regarding Integrity Violations and their Growing Relevance in the Field of Sports* - Amobi Ezeaku (Nigeria), Altaf Gohar (Pakistan), Youjin Lee (South Korea), Mario Pagano (Italy & Switzerland)

16:00 – 16:15   *Coffee Break*

16:15 – 16:45   *More than Simply Entertainment: An Explorative Study on the Impact of Docuseries by Professional Football Clubs in the UK and Analyzing their Potential as a Viable Marketing Tool* - Tuale Charles Ajuyah (Nigeria), Nihan Cabbaroglu (Turkey), Ahmed Gobran (Egypt), Byrom Mee (United Kingdom)

16:45 – 17:15   *Beyond the Console: What Learnings can be Extracted from the Players' Associations that Have Emerged so far in the Esports Landscape?* - Vansh Bahal (India), Buhlebethu Shane Dumbu (South Africa), Mateo Peyrouzet García-Siñeriz (France & Spain)

17:15 – 17:30   *Closing remarks -* Prof. Denis Oswald, CIES Director

Looking Forward: An investigation into the sustainability and legacies of football development projects.

Jules-Antoine Bɪᴅᴇ́ (Benin & Canada), Béatrice Cᴀʟɪᴀɴɪ (Brazil & France), Jai Gᴀɴᴀᴛʀᴀ (India),
Mikkel Hᴀᴜɢᴀɴ (Norway)

Executive Summary

Development is a key global objective that aims to raise the standard of living around the world. It is equally relevant and applicable in the world of sports, with numerous international sporting federations emphasising its significance for raising the level of competition in their respective sports while also creating opportunities for all stakeholders involved.

The *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA), despite being a not-for-profit organisation, has developed into a commercial giant with the aim of making football truly global. FIFA views development as essential to the organization's existence and as essential to sustaining its expansion. Today, FIFA operates for the benefit of its members and their football activities, through the ambitious development programme, FIFA Forward. While FIFA's function and internal dynamics have changed, it has nonetheless accepted 211 members with various levels and developmental requirements.

Football's continued worldwide growth depends on development projects. However, in order to do this, it is essential to conduct a thorough examination of the core elements that contribute to project management and sustainability. This is because increased funding does not automatically ensure project success and sustained football development. And so, it is essential to conduct research regarding the systems that exist within the Member Associations in order to optimise future FIFA investments.

This research paper addresses the need for comprehensive analysis and evaluation of development projects in football to ensure their successful implementation and sustained impact.

Currently, under the leadership of Gianni Infantino, the FIFA Forward Programme exemplifies how FIFA contributes to the development of international football with USD$2.3 billion going to Member Associations, regional confederations and zonal/regional associations during the 2023-2026 period. But despite the significant financial investments made in such projects, sustained success cannot be guaranteed solely based on funding.

Today, the FIFA Forward programme has approved 1722 projects implemented by its 211 Member Associations within five different programme areas.[1] In that context, one cannot ignore the potential challenges related to expectations, assumptions, culture, managerial procedures, and capacity the international context poses for certain Member Associations and their football development projects.[2] Moreover, development project implementation is complex as Member Associations must interact with copious stakeholders. This includes: FIFA, Confederations, governments, foreign development agencies, educational institutions, external operators, not-for-profit organisations, local community, private investors, among others.

Given the complexity of this scenario and the variety of projects, mixed with the cultural, structural, and economic disparities between Member Associations, this research study asks the question - **To what extent are FIFA Forward development projects implemented sustainably?** Drawing on definitions beyond the sporting realm, sustainability is here defined as "the capacity to maintain or improve the state and availability of desirable materials or conditions over the long term"[3] considering the dimensions of social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

This dissertation provides an interdisciplinary investigation into football development, focusing on the structures within Member Associations and their experiences with FIFA Forward. By analysing Member Associations' lived experiences of FIFA Forward development projects and combining international development, governance, project management, legacy, and Social Return on Investment concepts, this study addresses two main gaps within existing literature and constructs a holistic assessment framework for project sustainability.

The study aims to answer three key questions: (i) How do Member Associations select and manage development projects? (ii) What external stakeholders do Member Associations rely on to deliver projects, and how are they managed? (iii) How are legacy and sustainability incorporated by Member Associations into projects? The research adopts a case study approach, employing semi-structured interviews and secondary data collection methods. The selected case studies include Ghana, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, India, Mexico, and Argentina. Through this approach, the dissertation aims to identify various opportunities, challenges, and lessons learned for future development projects.

While the FIFA Forward Programme provides substantial financial support to Member Associations, the success of development projects depends on various internal and external factors unique to each country.

---

1 FIFA. "Inside FIFA: FIFA Forward Impact Map". (2023). https://www.fifa.com/football-development/fifa-forward/impact-map.

2 Khang, Do Ba, and Tun Lin Moe. "Success criteria and factors for international development projects: A lifecycle-based framework." Project management journal 39, no. 1 (2008): 72-84.

3 Harrington, Lisa M. Butler. "Sustainability theory and conceptual considerations: a review of key ideas for sustainability, and the rural context." Papers in Applied Geography 2, no. 4 (2016): 365-382.

The findings highlight the importance of having a long-term strategy for the success of development projects. Equally, the type of project chosen by Member Associations is greatly influenced by FIFA Forward regulations. Moreover, findings suggest that Member Associations heavily rely on various external stakeholders such as governments, other football ecosystem actors (regional associations, clubs, academies, other Member Associations), private providers or other operators, local communities, sponsors, and broadcasters to deliver projects. Such potential reliance can be based on financial assistance, political backing and access, resource provisions, knowledge sharing, and capacity-building. Lastly, the study also emphasises the need for greater consideration of the type of legacy the project aims to achieve and how it can sustain its operations and impact, while determining effective measurement of its impact to favourably influence future football development projects.

This research expands current football literature by providing a comprehensive assessment of FIFA's development projects, integrating multiple disciplines and stakeholder perspectives. It is important because FIFA oversees a vast number of Member Associations and grants approvals to numerous projects throughout its four-year development cycles. For instance, FF 1.0 approved 941 projects worldwide that cost $270.3 million[4]. However, very few studies investigate the reasons behind the investment decisions made by Member Associations and the concrete difference these projects make to their strategic objectives. Moreover, most football development research fails to consider learnings from international development beyond sporting realms. As such, the interdisciplinary investigation into football development provided by this dissertation allows the identification of significant lessons that should be considered in future projects to maximise resources and improve outcomes.

By giving "voice" to Member Associations, the study sheds light on their project approaches and offers valuable insights for future development initiatives. The findings emphasise the importance of strategic planning, stakeholder management, and incorporating sustainability and legacy considerations into project planning. Moving forward, it is crucial for football development projects to consider these key concepts to maximise their impact and ensure long-term success in advancing football globally.

---

4   FIFA. FIFA Forward 1.0 Summary Report 2016-2018, (2019).

What is the Climate Impact of Fan Mobility in Football?

A Study of the Carbon Footprint in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Women's Champions League for the 2022-2023 Season

Alex Auvray (Brazil & France), Veronic Malack (The Gambia), Changmin (Jacob) Oh (South Korea), Adel Ratansi (Canada & United Kingdom)

The world is currently facing a critical climate crisis, and the sports industry, including prestigious tournaments like the UEFA Champions League (UCL) and UEFA Women's Champions League (UWCL), must take responsibility for mitigating climate change. The sports industry not only contributes significantly to the climate crisis but is also highly vulnerable to the environmental risks associated with global warming. The carbon impact of fan mobility, a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions during sporting events, needs to be understood and addressed urgently, particularly in the UCL and UWCL.

This study aims to quantify the potential carbon impact resulting from fan mobility in the UCL and UWCL during the 2022-2023 season while examining fans' travel behavior. It also seeks to identify effective strategies for football clubs and event organizers to mitigate and reduce the carbon footprint associated with fan travel. The research aligns with UEFA's sustainability objectives and provides a comprehensive assessment of the carbon footprint of fan mobility across all 48 participating clubs in the competition.

Acknowledging the interdisciplinary nature of sustainability in football, the study incorporates insights from humanities, management, and law. It delves into the historical context of sustainability in football, aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and United Nations Sports for Climate Action Framework, explores club management strategies for sustainability, and considers the legal and regulatory frameworks. This comprehensive approach offers a profound understanding of the social, economic, and legal dimensions involved in sustainable fan travel. It recognizes the need for improvement in various areas to achieve sustainability, including social awareness, business models, and regulations.

The study employs a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods to support its key findings. The quantitative aspect of our research involves the collection of data

pertaining to fan attendance across all matches played in the UCL and UWCL, geographical distances between home and away cities, and the proximity of the stadium to the nearest airport and public transport hub, and transportation methods. Secondary research data on fan transportation methods to domestic football matches in England and Germany are utilized

to estimate potential greenhouse gas emissions. Qualitative research includes interviews with sustainability experts from international federations (UEFA), football leagues (K-League), football clubs (Arsenal F.C.), non-profit organizations (Sport Positive, 17 Sport), and fan groups (Arsenal Supporters Trust). The study also analyzes case studies of sustainable practices in other industries, such as music festivals (We Love Green) and religious events (Environmental Impact of Hajj), providing valuable insights into the sustainable football ecosystem and beyond.

The study reveals that fan travel in the UCL and UWCL contributes significantly to the carbon footprint, accounting for approximately 75% of emissions associated with major sporting events. The findings emphasize the urgent need for proactive collaboration among UEFA, clubs, and fans to implement sustainable practices.

Football clubs play a crucial role in promoting alternative modes of transportation, such as public transit and carpooling, to reduce the carbon footprint of fan travel. Establishing dedicated sustainability teams within clubs is crucial to drive innovative solutions and ensure continuous progress in sustainable mobility initiatives. Additionally, educating fans about the environmental impact of their transportation choices is vital, encouraging them to adopt greener travel options and holding them accountable for their actions. Incentives for environmentally conscious behavior can further motivate fans to make sustainable choices.

UEFA should prioritize environmental considerations during the competition's design phase, taking into account the aim of minimizing travel between venues for teams, staff, and fans. This includes considering the competition format and implementing sustainability requirements for participating clubs, similar to initiatives by Ligue Professionnel de Football (LFP) in France and Deutsche Fußball Liga (DFL) in Germany. By embedding sustainability from the foundation of the sport, UEFA can lead the way in establishing industry-wide standards and fostering transformative change throughout the football industry.

Moreover, the study recognizes the significance of fan engagement and emphasizes the active support of fans for sustainable practices. Fans have the power to influence clubs and push for more environmentally friendly strategies. By advocating for green travel options, fans can drive positive change within football and create a collective movement toward sustainable mobility. Engaging with fan organizations and creating platforms for feedback can enhance collaboration and facilitate the adoption of sustainable practices.

While this study draws on various frameworks from international organizations and businesses, it acknowledges certain limitations. The field of sustainability, particularly regarding fan mobility in football, is still relatively new, resulting in limited diversity of information. This is evident in academic papers, where a small group of individuals authors a significant proportion of the literature review. Additionally, limited comprehensive data on fan transportation choices across all participating countries, reliance on assumptions, and the challenge of accurately representing carbon emissions resulting from fan travel due to variability in attendance and travel behavior are notable limitations.

Further research and analysis are necessary to explore the travel methods and environmental consciousness of fans at each individual club. This involves examining the evolving demographics of fan personas and identifying disparities in environmental awareness among UCL and UWCL

fan groups. Additionally, finding the optimal balance between sustainability and maintaining a competitive environment in sports warrants further investigation. Future research will provide comprehensive insights into the climate impact of fan mobility and guide the development of targeted strategies for sustainable practices in football.

Our final project highlights that addressing the carbon impact of fan mobility in football is essential for the long-term sustainability of the sports industry. By implementing sustainable practices, promoting alternative transportation options, and raising awareness among fans, football can set an example for other sports and inspire positive change worldwide. Collaboration between sporting entities, fans, and transportation sectors is key to developing innovative solutions and striking a balance between the enjoyment of attending sporting events and the urgent need to combat climate change. Through collective action, the football community can play a crucial role in mitigating its carbon footprint and contributing to a more sustainable future.

To expand on the topic, further research can delve into the role of technology in reducing the carbon footprint of fan mobility. Technological advancements, such as virtual reality and live streaming platforms, offer alternatives to physical attendance at matches, reducing the need for extensive travel. Exploring the adoption and effectiveness of these technologies among fans can provide valuable insights into their potential for sustainable fan engagement.

Additionally, the study can investigate the impact of COVID-19 on fan mobility and its implications for future sustainability efforts. The pandemic has disrupted sporting events and forced changes in fan behavior, such as limited attendance and increased reliance on digital platforms. Analyzing these changes and their environmental consequences can inform strategies for a more sustainable recovery and future-proofing the sports industry against similar crises.

Furthermore, examining the economic aspects of sustainable fan mobility can be beneficial. Assessing the costs and benefits of implementing sustainable practices, such as investing in public transportation infrastructure or incentivizing eco-friendly travel options, can provide insights into the financial viability of these initiatives. Understanding the economic implications and potential revenue streams can help clubs and event organizers make informed decisions regarding sustainability investments.

Finally, extending the research to other sports and tournaments can broaden the scope of the study. Exploring the carbon impact of fan mobility in various sports and leagues globally can highlight common challenges and opportunities for sustainable practices across the industry. Comparing different sporting events can also reveal best practices and lessons learned that can be shared and implemented to promote sustainable fan mobility universally.

In summary, while this study provides valuable insights into the carbon impact of fan mobility in football and proposes strategies for mitigation, further research can explore technological solutions, the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic aspects, and the application of findings to other sports. By continuously advancing knowledge in this field and implementing sustainable practices, the sports industry can lead the way in mitigating its environmental impact and fostering a more sustainable future for all.

Enter the Lottery or Place a SafeBet: 'A Study on the Importance of Education In Academy-Level Football'

David Goldberg (Costa Rica), Jaeyun Lee (South Korea), Renae Camille Samuel (Grenada)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary provides an overview of a comprehensive research project focused on how to increase awareness of the importance of education in academy-level footballers, considering that data states that less than 1% of academy-level players will reach professionalism and more than 99% will be discarded before they can reach the top, after also sacrificing time, money, energy and, what matters the most to our investigation, sometimes even education.

As a general objective, the study aimed to understand the reality of the football industry regarding education among young players. The researchers can confidently express that they successfully achieved the aforementioned general objective by diligently examining multiple facets related to education in academy-level football from different stakeholders' points of view. At the same time, this task was attained by, intrinsically, accomplishing three specific objectives. The first one aimed to identify how awareness of the importance of education for academy-level footballers could be increased. The second one sought to explore why education is a crucial factor for footballers at the academy level and the third one aimed to identify the stakeholders with the most responsibility within the educational process of footballers at the academy level.

This was designed with the hypothesis in mind that the football industry as a whole does not have the integral development of academy-level players (in which education is a top asset) as a priority, but major stakeholders are showing relative interest. Also, it was designed with the desire that, at the end of the process, we would be able to develop a set of recommendations that can act as a future framework for the major football organizing bodies, namely FIFA, and National Associations to ease the compliance of, at least, high school education in academy-level players.

The research methodology was based on a mixed-methods approach that incorporated both qualitative and quantitative techniques. On one hand, 16 in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives from various stakeholders within the football ecosystem, including high-end executives, coaches, former players, and others; also, extensive bibliographical

investigation and analysis were realized. On the other hand, a survey was also distributed to all 211 FIFA Member Associations to gather even more understanding of the global perception regarding education in academy-level football. Success in the response rate was 49,3%, which translates to 104 responses from the Members Associations coming from the six FIFA confederations: AFC, UEFA, CONMEBOL, CONCAF, OFC, and CAF.

The research models employed were exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory, which provided a broader analysis of the topic at hand.

After almost six months of active fieldwork, a series of good practices were identified within multiple Football Associations, Clubs, and Player's Unions, which allowed them to address the issue of young footballers abandoning or neglecting their education locally, nationally, and sometimes regionally. Some of them were the German Football Association, Villarreal CF (Spain), and the PFA (England & Wales).

The results of the research project highlighted the discrepancy between the low probability of young players reaching the professional level and the lack of attention given to their education. While the industry acknowledges this issue, there is a need for unity and accountability among stakeholders to create lasting and impactful change. In addition, the research revealed a growing interest among stakeholders to address the importance of education, but a lack of a homogenous strategy and implementation monitoring.

Cultural differences in the national perception of education among footballers were also perceived, and played an important role in the construction of a strategy to promote that younger people stay in school. In addition, a massive gap between some Associations regarding resources, structure, and development was recognized, making a possible "one-size-fits-all" strategy inefficient and limited.

Moreover, one key finding was the overwhelming support for a global guideline promoting education in football academies. In the survey conducted with FIFA Member Associations, 99% responded positively to the implementation of such a guideline. This highlighted the need for a coordinated effort among stakeholders to prioritize education alongside sporting pursuits.

Based on the findings, a set of recommendations were formulated to increase awareness of the importance of education in academy-level footballers. The recommendations included the utilization of existing FIFA tools such as FIFA Forward, FIFA Connect, and the Club Licensing system. These tools can incentivize and promote the implementation of educational initiatives within football academies. Additionally, specific recommendations were provided, such as the development of a database to track players' educational status, vocational workshops, collaboration with academic institutions, the appointment of national ambassadors and player development managers, and the provision of E-learning platforms.

The successful implementation of these recommendations, along with the proposed strategy, has the potential to enhance awareness and prioritize education in academy-level footballers. By working collectively and fostering a holistic approach to development, the

industry can provide young players with valuable skills and opportunities for a successful future beyond football. The findings and recommendations of this research project contribute to the ongoing discourse on the importance of education in academy-level football and provide a foundation for positive change within the industry.

In conclusion, the matter of education in academy-level football is a complex matter to address and whether education should be mandatory is relevant, as indicated in the findings of the research. However, a call to action for the importance of education and explore ways to increase awareness within the football ecosystem is needed. It is vitally important to shift the perspective of viewing players solely as commodities and instead adopt a broader social responsibility within the football framework. Therefore, it becomes imperative to consider the contextual differences that exist when developing strategies and initiatives pertaining to education in academy-level football. Recognizing the diverse educational contexts and the varying definitions of academy-level football, the involvement and contributions of different key stakeholders become an essential matter. It is through their collective efforts that the appropriate development of academy-level footballers can be fostered. By promoting the importance of education, raising awareness, and implementing targeted initiatives, the industry can work towards empowering all players, regardless of their professional prospects, to achieve fulfilling lives both on and off the football pitch.

Overcoming Challenges: A Comparative Analysis of Professionalization in Women's Football Leagues among Top Nations.

Farid ABBASOV (Azerbaijan), WanXin CHEN (Singapore), Nícolas FINKIELSZTEJN (Brazil & Poland), Okenna ONWUZURUMBA (France & Nigeria)

Purpose

The paper is based on a comparative analysis of women's football leagues in six different countries: England, Japan, Nigeria, Brazil, New Zealand, and the United States. We explore the factors that have contributed to the professionalization of women's football leagues in these countries and regions. The study identifies the key challenges that have hindered the progress of the women's game. The paper will also discuss the impact of national team success on the development of women's football leagues and propose strategies for advancing the professionalization of women's football leagues.

Methods

The study adopted a mixed-methods four-stage data collection and analysis process. The first stage was to determine which nations to conduct the study on. The researchers selected one nation from each of the six confederations based on the following criteria: a) Nations with leagues that have been analysed in FIFA's Setting the Pace reports, b) Sustained regional success by the national team and c) recent noteworthy first division league development.

The second stage was desk research, where the researchers gathered data from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, reports, and news articles. The third stage was to identify and conduct interviews with key actors who have influence over the professionalization of women's football leagues in the selected nations. The researchers interviewed a total of 20 people, including representatives from government agencies, football federations, leagues, clubs, sponsors, and media outlets. The fourth and final stage of the process was to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data from the previous steps and draw conclusions.

The researchers faced several challenges and limitations during the research process. These included difficulty in contacting certain actors, such as sponsors, language barriers, a lack of accessible, accurate, and consistent data, inconsistent publication and presentation of information and data, and reliance on secondary and qualitative data.

We acknowledge these challenges and limitations and highlight the need for further efforts to enhance accurate data collection and accessibility and address language barriers to facilitate more comprehensive research in the field of women's football.

Results

Cultural and social factors have played a significant role in the development of women's football. This section discusses how bans on women's football still impact its professionalization. Though they have been lifted in many countries, challenges still remain. More interestingly, each country was impacted in different ways. However this does not come as the only cultural factor, especially that the ban was not universal. Consequently, the outcomes also revealed the cultural and societal specificities of each country and the specific actions taken to combat them. Even top-ranked countries face cultural and social challenges that need to be addressed in order to enhance the professionalization of women's football. This theme has also allowed us to establish a connection between the professionalization of women's football and the gender gap index, aiming to provide a different perspective of understanding. Recognizing the cultural, social, and historical factors hindering the professional is quintessential and requires the collaboration of each stakeholder and tailored strategies to each nation's unique characteristics.

Institutions bear significant responsibility in shaping the narrative, perception, and public attitudes surrounding women's football, considering its evolution within a complex and gendered environment. Historically opposed to the women's game, it seems that football institutions have more recently transitioned to becoming supporters of women's football development and professionalisation. In order to do so, the necessity for a complete paradigm shift is key. Stakeholders such as FIFPRO, the ECA, and others now wield a stronger voice in the decision-making process, signalling a more bottom-up approach. Overall, the section underscores the importance of collaboration and consideration among various institutional stakeholders in driving the professionalization of women's football leagues. It acknowledges the progress made by these stakeholders but also points out areas that require further examination and improvement, such as the recognition of player contracts and the development of an international regulatory framework.

The professionalization of women's football also hinges on commercial growth and visibility. Analyzing commercial factors has allowed us to dive into different trends. The central point in this is the development of the most effective strategy to create and leverage the unique product that is women's football. It is also important to consider the specificities of each market in order to understand the commercial potential of leagues and clubs. Additionally, the digital aspect is a powerful tool that can be further utilized, particularly in certain regions. Overall, the research highlights the different operating models, commercial partnerships, and digital engagement strategies of women's football clubs in the analyzed countries. Our findings underscore the varying levels of professionalization and opportunities for growth in the women's game across different regions. They equally highlight the importance of having dedicated individuals committed to the elaboration and implementation of a women's football commercial and visibility strategy.

Conclusions and recommendations

The paper concludes that the development and professionalization of women's football leagues require a multifaceted approach that considers social, cultural, and institutional factors. This paper highlights the need for collaboration and a balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches in the professionalization of women's football leagues. Collaboration between all actors is crucial to addressing societal issues and overcoming challenges specific to each country.

The paper recommends that FIFA and confederations foster greater consolidation, alignment, and collaboration among them to maximize effectiveness and efficiency. Actors lower in the football pyramid should also adopt the approaches taken by the above mentioned governing bodies. The creation of a clear and long-term strategic plan involving all key actors is crucial, along with considerations for social, cultural, institutional, and commercial factors. Also, the uniqueness of each league and club must be considered, so as to tailor support to accelerate growth, especially in underdeveloped actors. Furthermore, tools such as the creation of competition, club licensing regulations, and area-specific funding mechanisms can incentivize actors to invest in the desired areas. And finally, regular data collection for benchmarking reports in women's football can help address the widespread issue of inconsistent or inaccurate data, and inform strategic decisions.

Slicing the Onion: Evaluating the Significance of Ethical Codes regarding Integrity Violations and Their Growing Relevance in the Field of Sports

Amobi Ezeaku (Nigeria), Altaf Gohar (Pakistan), Youjin Lee (South Korea),
Mario Pagano (Italy & Switzerland)

Introduction

Our project, *Slicing the Onion: Evaluating the Significance of Ethical Codes regarding Integrity Violations and Their Growing Relevance in the Field of Sports* explore the role and effectiveness of ethical codes in sports organizations by examining the different layers of ethical codes.

Sports organizations have faced dangers of losing public trust due to numerous instances of unethical behavior directed towards athletes. These incidents have eroded the credibility and integrity of sports organizations, damaging their reputation in the eyes of the public. Cases of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse within the gymnastics and swimming communities, as well as revelations of systemic doping programs in athletics, have shocked and outraged fans around the world.

Such unethical behaviors not only betray the trust of athletes who rely on sports organizations for their safety and well-being but also undermine the fundamental principles of fairness, respect, and equal opportunity that sports should uphold. The breach of this trust has led to widespread skepticism and a demand for increased transparency, accountability, and ethical reform within sports organizations. One major part of reform strategies are revising one's ethical codes and the increasing adoption of ethical codes by almost every federation highlights their growing relevance.

However, their efficacy remains uncertain, necessitating an examination of their purpose and measurement. Ethical codes are often times criticized as mere window dressing tools; however, our research has revealed potential loopholes and provided valuable insights on how to effectively address them.

Despite potential failures and the possibility of an ethical code being established as a superficial facade, it is imperative not to dismiss it outright or engage in blame-shifting; rather, efforts should be directed towards navigating pathways to enhance its effectiveness and rectify its shortcomings.

Methodology

This project delves into the status of ethical codes in sports, employing a comprehensive approach that includes theory analysis, case studies, interviews with ethics industry experts, and analysis of primary information from 37 International Olympic Committee recognized International Federation ethical codes.

An ethical code typically has the following four layers that determine its effectiveness: code creation, code content, code implementation and code enforcement. Based on this, the group also studied different efficacy approaches such as the Shared Perception Approach, Ethical Climate Index, and Content Analysis. Four scandalous athlete integrity violations cases were also scrutinized under the light of ethical codes.

Key Findings

The findings indicate that the ethical code itself cannot function in isolation, emphasizing the significance of other influential factors. As such, this paper aims to shed light on the complex realm of sports ethics, underscoring the need for greater attention, interest, and education in this critical area.

Below are some key findings that further strengthen an ethical code.

1. One of the principal conclusions drawn from our research paper is the significant importance of including an ethical code in the framework or codifying it explicitly. While acknowledging that an ethical code cannot eliminate or penalize every ethical transgression committed against athletes, the mere presence of a well-defined code facilitates the establishment of accountability for one's actions. This notion is effectively exemplified by the case of the 2012 London Olympic badminton match fixing incident.

2. Among the five interviewees who currently hold prominent positions within sports organizations and are directly involved in the enforcement of ethical codes, a unanimous consensus emerged, emphasizing the paramount significance of the "code implementation" phase as the most crucial determinant of code effectiveness among the four identified determinants. Notably, within the implementation stage, all interviewees uniformly stressed the criticality of fostering ongoing dialogue concerning ethical matters, educating stakeholders, and ensuring transparent communication regarding the actions undertaken.

3. Furthermore, in addition to the aforementioned factors, the significance of ethical leadership was consistently highlighted as paramount. This implies that the presence of an ethical code alone is insufficient if leaders are exempt from its provisions or fail to exemplify best practices. Consequently, it becomes evident that revisions and reforms should extend beyond the content of an ethical code, encompassing the establishment of an ethical climate and the cultivation of ethical leadership within sports organizations.

4. It has become evident that instances of athlete integrity violations extend beyond the realms of match fixing and doping. Historical emphasis on the prevention of competition manipulation within ethical codes has shifted towards prioritizing athlete safeguarding. Particularly, the shocking case of Larry Nassar's sexual abuse has not only deeply impacted the international sports community and sports fans but has also shed light on the vulnerabilities faced by athletes in relation to various crimes.

Throughout our research, we observed a notable absence of an international convention specifically addressing athlete safeguarding, akin to conventions such as the Macolin Convention or WADA Convention. Experts in the field of safeguarding have highlighted that certain cases extend beyond the jurisdiction of sports and should be treated as criminal offenses, necessitating more active intervention from state authorities.

Hence, the imperative for greater involvement of external stakeholders in tackling athlete integrity violations has emerged as a crucial call to action. In other words, addressing athlete integrity violations goes beyond the purview of sports specific ethical codes.

5. It is crucial to acknowledge that there exists no universal benchmark or flawless ethical code applicable to all sports disciplines. Each sport has its unique characteristics and specific vulnerabilities that necessitate tailored approaches. For example, athletics may face higher rates of and susceptibility to doping, while gymnastics, with its younger starting age, may be more vulnerable to crimes related to child abuse or grooming. Additionally, individual sports often exhibit increased vulnerability to sexual or physical abuse. Consequently, it falls upon sports organizations to identify their specific areas of vulnerability and adapt accordingly, rather than simply adopting a generic ethical code that may appear appealing on the surface.

Conclusion

The theme of ethics often appears abstract, distant, and challenging to grasp. In extensive scholarly research, it becomes evident that scholars frequently highlight the dearth of comprehensive studies on ethical codes and their effectiveness. This knowledge gap emphasizes the need for increased interest and attention in this area. Acknowledging the complexity involved, it is crucial to recognize that unraveling the intricacies of ethical codes and their impact may be a time-consuming endeavor. Nevertheless, progress can be made by systematically dissecting the layers one by one, thereby incrementally advancing our understanding of this important field.

More than Simply Entertainment: An Explorative Study on the Impact of Docuseries by Professional Football Clubs in the UK and Analysing their Potential as a Viable Marketing Tool

Tuale Charles Ajuyah (Nigeria), Nihan Cabbaroglu (Turkey), Ahmed Gobran (Egypt), Byrom Mee (United Kingdom)

Introduction

This Final Project will explore in-depth the impact of docuseries by professional football clubs in the UK and analyse their potential as a viable marketing tool.

In recent years, an increasing number of clubs in the UK have decided to open their doors to the cameras and tell their story to millions of people from around the world. As a result, viewers are offered a fresh perspective that includes not only the playing field and competition but also the stories that are not visible in real time. The clubs which have taken this step have not solely been mega-clubs such as Arsenal FC with global fan bases, trophy laden histories, and elite players and managers. Lesser-known clubs, such as Wrexham AFC, have done the same too. Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms, including Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+, have provided a home for this type of content.

With the overwhelming success of sports docuseries seen through productions like 'Formula 1: Drive to Survive', this study aims to explore what football clubs stand to gain from docuseries. A focus is placed on a club's marketing and how a club can use docuseries on OTT platforms to harness and promote fan engagement, brand image, and brand awareness among other things. Furthermore, an inter-disciplinary approach is taken which considers the humanities, management, and legal side of the topic. In addition to the perceived benefits for clubs, this study also scrutinises the possible drawbacks of taking part in a docuseries to provide balance to the project.

This study used several methods to obtain primary and secondary research data. One method used was a survey, which was shared with the public to assess the awareness levels of docuseries and the impact it had on the person if they'd watched them. The data collected through the survey was then analysed using statistical techniques, including descriptive analysis and inferential analysis, to examine patterns, trends, and relationships within the dataset. In terms of primary research, another key area of our study was interviews with stakeholders from football clubs, league bodies, production companies and other areas of the sports and entertainment industries related to our topic. In addition to this, the analysing

of secondary research on our topic came in the form of peer-reviewed literature. Although this was scarce due to docuseries on OTT platforms being a fairly recent phenomenon, the literature found supplemented the primary research collected well.

One of the key findings of this research is that we found that fan behaviour after watching a docuseries was impacted by the docuseries, as we can see in the numbers: 65% of viewers reported a greater emotional connection with the club, 62% displayed heightened interest in club activities, and 25% engaged more actively with the club's social media channels. Furthermore, respondents who watched the docuseries recorded positive changes in perception towards the football clubs, with the highest score attributed to the clubs' brand image (4.05/5). Also, to emphasise the broad reach of this kind of content, a significant number of respondents (83.5%) were aware of football docuseries, and their primary source of awareness was social media platforms (80.2%).

In the case of 'All or Nothing: Arsenal', one of our case studies in the project, most of the people who watched it felt more inclined towards purchasing club merchandise or supporting club sponsors. However, whilst this was a significant benefit to the club, it is evident from research that the club used a docuseries for purposes other than marketing and increasing fan engagement. They used it as a communication platform to convey certain messages to the fans in a way that would not come across as the club imposing its ideas and views on the audience but would be more convincing as a story. For example, the docuseries follows Granit Xhaka, a controversial figure among some Arsenal fans, and the viewer hears of his struggles in life and with cyberbullying. Stories like these in the docuseries humanise players and makes viewers feel more sympathy towards them. When it comes to 'Welcome to Wrexham', another case study in our project, the commercial impact is clearly present. This is evident by considering jersey sales and match attendance following the release of the docuseries. Moreover, the docuseries exceeded the impact on the club and impacted the city itself, which became a tourist attraction for people from around the world.

As far as the OTT platforms are concerned, they discovered they can attract sports audiences to their platforms by using this type of content, which does not require owning any live broadcast rights. This is far more cost-effective for them.

In conclusion, the findings of our research provide valuable evidence that football clubs can indeed profit from documentaries as valuable marketing tools. From our findings, we have established that docuseries have the capability to generate a more profound emotional connection between the club and its fans, prompting increased fan engagement, sharpening interest in the club's social activities, increasing chances of sponsorship and better broadcasting deals and an enhanced sense of brand image. Docuseries have a broad influence with many of our respondents being aware of them through social media, signifying the widespread exposure and audience engagement and highlighting the influence of media on sports. Furthermore, docuseries can have a significant commercial impact on a club (Wrexham AFC) and act as an effective communication tool to tell the club's story (Arsenal FC).

Additionally, OTT platforms have realized the value associated with docuseries as they can gain a new generation of sporting fans without the need for live broadcasting rights which can be extremely costly.

Overall, our research shows how docuseries can have a transformative effect on the football and media industry, extending beyond the typical goals of commercial strategies of football clubs (such as, fan engagement, improving brand image, and getting better sponsorship deals) to changing the image and lives of entire cities. As the marriage of football and entertainment continues to evolve through OTT platforms, clubs, and stakeholders, should identify the enormous potential of docuseries as a strategic marketing tool. By harnessing the storytelling abilities of docuseries, clubs can produce compelling narratives, foster fan loyalty, and drive commercial success in an ever-changing sports landscape.

From our research and findings of the project, the following recommendations are put forward for football clubs looking to produce a docuseries:

Leverage the Power of Storytelling

The aim of creating a docuseries in the first place is to create an immersive form of sports consumption for fan engagement. This would not be possible without a captivating and compelling storyline that fans can resonate with. It is essential that, if an investment is to be made in a documentary, the club invests in creative writers who can help tell the stories they want to portray. The impact of a well-crafted story can be seen through the success of 'Welcome to Wrexham'.

Embrace Authenticity and Transparency

We also recommend that authenticity and transparency in the storyline be essential. The fans are aware of what a corporate ploy is, therefore repeating the same information they get from other channels of communication from the club would naturally lose fan interest. For authenticity and transparency to be portrayed, a certain level of access must be granted. This can always be guarded with consent forms. The case of 'Sunderland 'Til I Die' perfectly portrays this point.

Establish Strategic Partnerships

It is important for football clubs to establish strategic partnerships with OTT platforms and production companies with the right expertise and experience to maximize the impact and exposure of their docuseries. These factors would organically lead to more promotion and, by extension, possible revenue streams through wider visibility of the football club.

Continuously Evaluate and Adapt

There is no point in investing in such an expensive project to not get feedback from the consumers. We recommend clubs use mechanisms such as fan surveys and market research to gain feedback on the reception of storytelling strategies, understand preferences and potentially adapt their format to the content and serve to improve fan engagement.

Explore Ancillary Content Opportunities

A docuseries sets the stage for clubs to leverage and create supplementary content, such as added online videos, merchandise, or interactive fan experiences. This could have the effect of the documentary having the public notoriety of a small brand and the club can capitalize on this and create a revenue stream based on that.

Encourage Long-term Planning

Using a docuseries as a viable commercial tool would be more sustainable if a long-term approach to docuseries production and marketing is taken. Just like 'Welcome to Wrexham' and 'Sunderland 'Til I Die', investing in multiple series enables an opportunity to tell multiple stories, deepen fan engagement and maintain a sustainable brand presence. Perhaps devoting a dedicated team within the club to manage all matters relating to the docuseries would be a strong move and contribute effectively towards a club's long-term commercial strategy.

Beyond the console: What learnings can be extracted from the players' associations that have emerged so far in the esports landscape?

Vansh Bahal (India), Buhlebethu Shane Dumbu (South Africa), Mateo Peyrouzet García-Siñeriz (France & Spain)

Summary

This paper explores the player associations that have emerged recently in the esports landscape and extracts key learnings from their analysis. The objective of the paper is to provide a clearer picture of this early stage in esports player unionisation. Additional objectives are to: 1) understand labour relations between players and team owners, competition organisers, publishers; 2) contextualise unionisation and collective bargaining within esports and with reference to the broader context of athlete unionisation in sports; and 3), take away insights on the broader governance of the esports ecosystem.

This is a qualitative study based on a case study approach supported by interviews with key stakeholders. The insights provided by the interviewees are at the heart of this paper's value proposal. The case studies are centered on the League of Legends Championship Series Players' Association (LCSPA) and the Counter-Strike Professional Players' Association (CSPPA). By shedding light on player associations, this study contributes to a better understanding of the labour dynamics and governance in eSports.
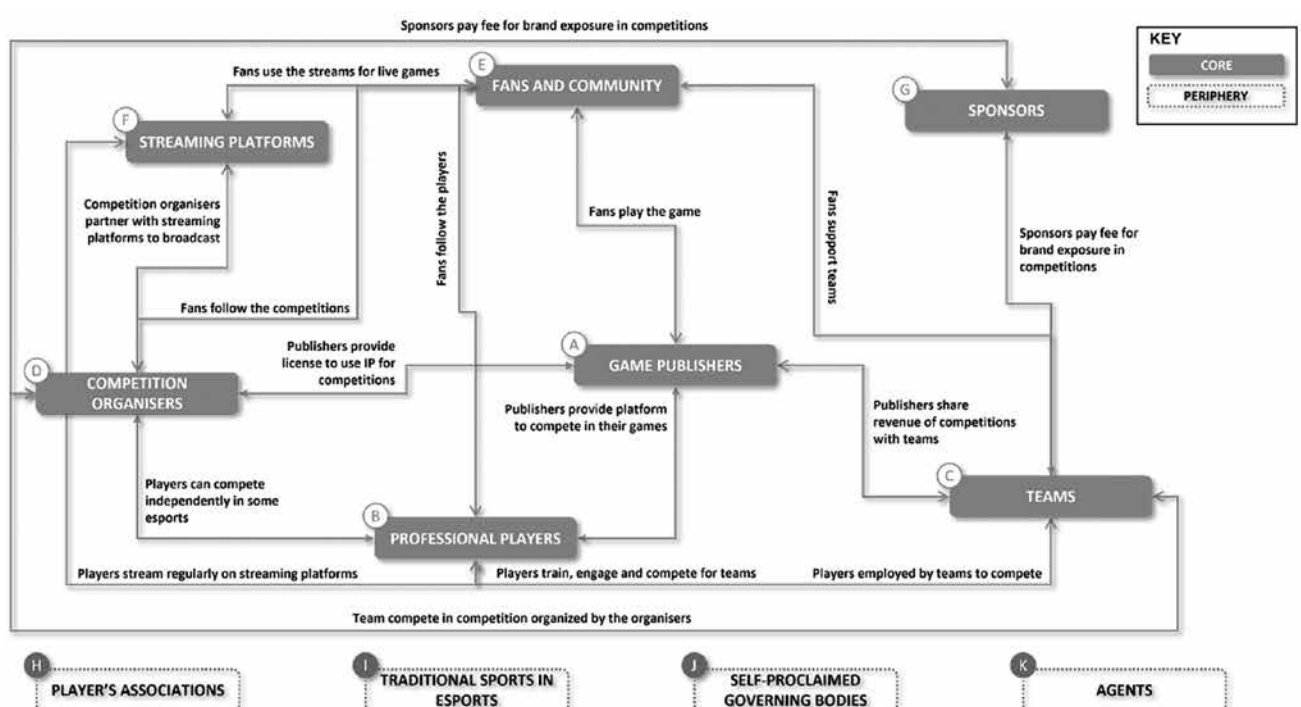
Case study setting

Exactly, how far along the road is the esports scene in terms of collective industrial action by players? To begin answering this question, the first thing to point out is that the situation differs across esports titles. There is no single context, but a constellation of competitive gaming environments organised first across different video games and second across different territories with different labour laws. Thus, some professional esports scenes exist in an environment that makes collective action more feasible than in others. Having said that, collective action is indeed possible – which doesn't mean easy – in more esports than the few where we have seen collective action take place in recent years.

The reason we know it's possible is because meaningful collective action has already been taken by players in two of the biggest esports titles, *League of Legends* and *Counter Strike: Global Offensive* (CS:GO). Both games have seen signs of unionisation in their contexts, with their own players associations emerging: the LCSPA and the CSPPA. Operating in different environments, both have made inroads in collective bargaining, in the case of the CSPPA through their brokering of the first collective bargaining agreements in esports in 2020 (including the first group licensing deals in the industry, in order to fund the association), and in the case of the LCSPA the milestone is quite recent, when the first large scale player strike occurred in May 2023. The characteristics, steps taken and limitations of both player associations are analysed in-depth in dedicated case studies.

The case studies follow the same structure: a basic context is provided, and then the ecosystem in which the player association operates is analysed referring to the key stakeholders. The interviewees' insights shine a light on different dimensions of these stakeholders, including their structure and engagement with other stakeholders. Opinions regarding the governance of the industry and the role of players associations in the ecosystem are also gathered. Finally, having set the scene through the key stakeholders, the player association is analysed.

Conclusions / key learnings

1. No 'one-size-fit-all' framework for player's associations

2. Independence of player's associations changes the game

3. Governing the 'Wild West': only publishers can do it

4. An industry in need of dispute resolution mechanisms

5. Esports is a business – but isn't the publishers' core business

1.   No 'one-size-fit-all' framework for player's associations

"I think each game should be treated differently, and I don't think you could put many player associations under one brand. I think it would get quite messy if we had one large global esports players' association."

James Watts – Esports Operations Manager, BLAST

One of the conclusions we drew was that the idea of a pan-esports players' association is not really applicable or viable. The fragmentation of the industry's governance, due to the different publishers that operate and have total power over their respective ecosystems, means that an attempt to create a players' association representing players across games owned by different publishers would be similar to a players' association representing football, tennis, and basketball players at the same time.

"I think doing it under a single developer is smart because we can look for parity between games and if another esport title comes out of Riot we'll probably look to expand there as well."

Taylor Broomall – Lead, AVPA

However, there may be a point to players' associations covering different games owned by the same publisher. As the LCSPA established its presence in League of Legends, it took the initiative in setting up a players' association (the AVPA) for VALORANT players. The AVPA was placed under the LCSPA's umbrella to benefit from organisational efficiencies and maximise what the associations can offer to the players of both games.

2.   Independence of player's associations changes the game

"We felt like to do the work you had to be able to do it separately from the developer. We've taken the opportunity to have that runway of money from Riot and use it to be able to establish ourselves independently."

Phil Aram – Executive Director, LCSPA

A key structural shift that the LCSPA went through was going independent of Riot Games after the publisher established the players' association. Going independent was indispensable for the association to defend the players' positions without fear of losing the publisher's support. After the LCS player walkout, nobody questions the association's independence and willingness to stand up to the developer. Having a publisher fund the association could be a potentially good start for an association however, it is key for associations to find ways to self-fund themselves and the progression of the LCSPA through a groups' rights program has allowed the players to collectively leverage their position with Riot Games.

3. Governing the 'Wild West': only publishers can do it

"We think that most of the publishers and third-party organisers are playing the role of confederation and international federation."

Alban Dechelotte – CEO, G2 Esports

was a common notion through the primary interviews - publishers in esports play a role equivalent to that of an international federation in traditional sports. Publishers, as owners of the IP, are the most powerful stakeholders of the space, and have the ability – some of them use it while others take a hands-off approach – to play an important role in regulating, developing leagues, and promoting the competition. All these activities are similar to what international federations do in traditional sport.

"If a professional sport ecosystem exists, which is just like any other professional sport, but it does not have an all-encompassing governing body, it either means that the self-regulatory body or publishers are doing their job or that the model for professional sport has room for innovation."

Esports Lead, emerging market – Riot Games

As mentioned by the esports lead at Riot Games, the nature of the industry is self-regulatory and has been mostly working out for all stakeholders. There is no perfect system and while esports sometimes takes lessons from traditional sports, it is important to note that there are nuances to esports that are distinct from any other industry. There is a shared view amongst our interviewees that an umbrella organisation above the publishers is simply not a feasible idea due to the unrestrained power of the publishers with regards to their games' IP.

"No one can be above publishers – impossible. Full stop."

Anne Banschbach – Director Esports, Team Vitality

4. An industry in need of dispute resolution mechanisms

"Dispute resolution is an urgent need for the industry to function properly, because there's just no sanctions for teams that don't honour their contracts with players."

CSPPA interviewee

Arbitration courts such as CAS are by no means perfect nor free of bias – however, they provide a degree of legal protection to affected parties in sport, as any actor can be held accountable by a specialised arbitration tribunal at a lower cost than an ordinary court proceeding. As long as there is no arbitration body in esports, it will be difficult to see a more balanced power dynamic between the more and less financially capable stakeholders.

"An esports court of arbitration would require the publishers to come together and agree to use this dispute resolution body, and I'm not sure I see that happening."

Alexander Inglot – Commissioner, ESL Pro League

5. Esports is a business – but isn't the publishers' core business

"Esports is a very unique space relative to the rest of the sporting world because it is not the core business of the people who you are negotiating with – it's a marketing venture for them to drive retention and player microtransaction sales and things of that nature. Compare this to bargaining in American Football – you might shut a season down for a year in order to try and leverage against each other, but at the end of the day, everybody needs to get back to running the sport because that's the core business and they're not going to walk away from a billion-dollar business. Esports just isn't the same – publishers have a bunch of different incentives."

Phil Aram – Executive Director, LCSPA

At the end of the day, any consideration regarding the position of players in the esports ecosystem has to take into account a key element that looms over the esports industry: the fact that it is not central to the business of the publishers. As illustrated in the quote, in terms of collective bargaining it is a fundamentally different situation to the one that might be found in traditional sports.

FIFA
MASTER

TM©

by CIES Education