

Corruption in Sport: Who corrupts whom, where, when, why and how?

Raja LOTFI¹ and Mohamed ESSAOUDI²

¹ Higher Normal School (ENS) - Hassan II University, 20020 - Casablanca, Morocco.

² Management Department - Training Center for Education Inspectors (CFIE), 10050 – Rabat, Morocco.

Abstract:

Introduction. Our study is exploratory, descriptive and empirical. It endeavors to uncover the characteristics of a phenomenon that's increasingly plaguing the Moroccan sports landscape: corruption.

Purpose. Our aim is threefold. It seeks to analyze the descriptive features of corruption; to identify its numerous forms in national sport; and to examine the drivers, causes and consequences of corruption at the level of national and international sports organizations.

Methodology. The methodological approach is both mixed and systemic. It's based on a total triangulation method in which three methodological approaches are crossed: diachronic and retrospective analysis of open online sources linked to mass media and sports organization databases; analysis of corruption cases recounted over the last 25 years and an empirical survey involving questionnaires and interviews. Our study mobilized 120 persons representing 14 different profiles, all acting in the national sports field.

Results. 252 cases of corruption were recorded and 12 forms of corruption were identified. The two most recurrent forms of corruption in national sport are match-fixing and illegal commissions. Also, the Moroccan sports organizations most perceived as "corrupt" are the royal federations, sports clubs and regional leagues. Football is the "king of corruption" in both frequency and scandal. In national sport, our leading are perceived as the most "corrupt". They're followed by managers, players' agents, trainers and referees. Women are generally less corrupt than men in national sports. Five causes determine corrupt practices in national sport: absence of ethical values; low income of players; lack of transparency within sports organizations (SOs); absence of internal control within SOs and poverty of sport athletes. Furthermore, the consequences of corruption in sport are numerous and affect all the country's vital sectors. These causes generate consequences which, once settled and entrenched, become causes for other consequences that are more endemic.

Conclusion. Corruption in sport is both a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. More money penetrates sport, more corruption increases and spreads. It is the result of structural, managerial and behavioral dysfunctions. It is a systemic endemic requiring systemic measures.

Keywords: Corruption, Sport, Types, Actors, Determinants, Causes, Impact.

1. INTRODUCTION

In scientific research, where objectivity [1], validity [2], fidelity [3], rigor [4] and the quest for truth [5] are the unshakeable pillars, there is a field that transcends the confines of the laboratory to explore a complex and insidious social phenomenon [6]: corruption in sport.

Where talent, discipline and effort should be the only currency, and where fair competition and integrity should reign supreme, corruption creeps in like a pernicious shadow [7], casting a suffocating pall over the sport arena. Wherever massive stakes are injected into the sport market, there is an increasing risk of corruption and moral deviancy, undermining the fundamental values of sport.

Indeed, the last Football World Cup was costing Qatar 220 billions USD in 2022, compared with just 3.7 billions USD for South Africa in 2010 and 13 billions USD for Japan during the 2020 Olympic Games. These colossal sums

certainly whet the appetites and attract the greed of predators. Behind these numbers are hidden obscure kickbacks, evil plots, ominous schemes, tacit collusions and vicious human behavior. Having spread so alarmingly, corruption is now a major international concern. As proof of this, leading institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), the FIFA, the Financial Action Group (FIAG), the G20 Anti-Corruption Task Force, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Interpol and many others are today involved in the fight against corruption. Likewise, all national and international legal organizations (the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the Administrative Sport Tribunal « TAS », Transparency International « TI », and the Penal Convention on Corruption) are constantly faced to diagnose, analyze, prevent, sanction or decide on new cases and propose new laws.

In this scientific exploration, we will attempt to delve into the mazes of sport's corruption, understand its descriptive features, identify its most devious shapes, highlight its origins and outcomes, and consider the strategies implemented to curb it, in the hope of restoring the sport's integrity and credibility, because sport rightly merits to be released from the chains of cheating.

2. PURPOSE

Our aim is threefold. It seeks to analyze corruption's definitional properties; identify its multiple forms in national sport; and examine the drivers, causes and consequences of acts of corruption in national and international sports organizations (SOs).

3. MATERIAL & METHOD

Our research is exploratory, descriptive and empirical. It adopts a systemic and mixed methodological approach [8]. It strives to surpass the shortcomings and weaknesses of indicators [9] and corruption measurement indices, deemed perverse [10], with a total triangulation process [11] in which two methodological approaches are crossed and four measurement tools are used.

A. Retrospective and documentary analysis approach

This is a diachronic and retrospective analysis [12] of open online sources from the mass media (print and visual press) and databases of national and international sports organizations (FIFA, UEFA, international olympic committee "IOC", national federations and leagues...), focusing on proven cases of corruption in national and international sport over the last twenty-five years.

a) Instrument for collecting and documenting corruption cases

In order to identify and analyze such data, we designed a tool for recording and analyzing corruption cases, using a multi-input Excel table. Vertically, the columns describe corruption cases by date of occurrence. Horizontally, rows present all selected analysis variables.

This analysis matrix aggregates the following 12 variables: (1) Year in which the bribery occurred; (2) Country of occurrence; (3) Incident references; (4) Sport category; (5) Sport type; (6) Nature of bribery; (7) Stakeholders involved in the corruption ; (8) Socio-professional profiles of those implicated; (9) Competition level (international, continental, national, federal, regional, local); (10) Brief characteristic description of the corruption case; (11) Sanction or punishment awarded; and (12) Stakes, amount or advantage involved.

B. Empirical study focusing on sports actors' perceptions regarding corruption in national sport

The aim is to analyze, through questionnaires [13] and interviews [14], the perceptions of national sports actors towards the behaviors, patterns, drivers, causes and consequences of corruption in national sport.

1) The questionnaire

Based on a focus group [15] with a group of seven ex-sports professionals (three ex-coaches, two physical education teachers, one referee and one player agent), 17 statements were generated as questionnaire items [16]. These items cover five areas: (1) Forms of sport corruption; (2) Corruption actors; (3) Causes of sport corruption; (4) Impacts of sport corruption; and (5) Means of combating sport corruption.

a) Participants

We mobilized 97 persons involved in sports: sportsmen or ex-athletes, journalists, coaches or ex-coaches, physical education teachers, sports doctors, university sports researchers, players' agents, physical trainers, storekeepers (warehousemen), managers, referees, federal officials, members of supporters' associations and Ultras...etc.

b) Social attributes

- Age: The people questioned were in the following age groups: 24-39 years: 53%; 40-55 years: 24% and 56-65 years: 23%.
- Gender: 10.28% of questionnaire respondents were women, compared with 89.72% men.
- Marital status: Our sample was made up of married (74%), divorced (01.4%) and single (24.6%) persons.
- Education and training levels: 31.5% of individuals have an education level lower than or equal to the Baccalaureate (Bac), against 33.47% with a Bac+2 years. Whereas 35.03% of our respondents have an education level equal to or higher than Bac+4 years.
- Professional profile: The following table breaks down our sample by professional status.

TABLE 1. PROFESSIONAL PROFILE OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS.

Respondent's professional profile	Numb	Respondent's professional profile	Numb
Sportsperson / Athlete	19	University researcher	07
Coach	07	Sports doctor	01
Assistant coach	04	Kinesitherapist / Nurse	03
Fitness trainer	06	Sport manager	12
Referee	06	Sports executive / Board member	08
Athlete's agent	01	Journalist	04
Physical education teacher	13	Ultra association member	06

2) The interview

We opted for the semi-structured and semi-directive interview type [17] owing to the fact that our interviewees are all senior sports professionals. They are deemed to be "ressource persons " [18] ; and it would have been too schoolish to impose on them a directive interview as is done with novices [19].

This format has been strongly endorsed in the methodological literature by authors such as Van Der Maren [11], Kaufmann [20] and Silverman [21]. This semi-structured interview is built using the nominal group technique (TGN) [22, 23], validated with three university professors, and conducted according to a purpose-designed guide.

a) Interview participants

Our interview respondents (n = 23) are all considered to be "resource persons" in terms of their commitment in the sporting field, their current or past responsibilities, their professional profile and their qualifications and skills.

b) Socio-professional characteristics

- Gender: The male proportion of interviewees is 91.34%. Women represent only 08.66%.
- Marital status: The sample interviewed consisted mainly of married people (93.3%), and widows/divorcees (06.7%).
- Academic qualifications and professional profile of interviewees: Most of our interviewees have a university degree (minimum 4 years of higher education). Their distribution and professional status are outlined in the following table.

TABLE 2 PROFESSIONAL PROFILE OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS

Professional status	N	Professional status	N
Journalist	02	Manager	03
Sportsman/ Athlete	04	Ultra member	02
FIFA player agent	01	University researcher	02
Coach	03	Doctor / Physiotherapist / Nurse	01
Referee	02	Executive manager	03

3) Data processing methods and tools

The quantitative data generated by the questionnaire were first entered into Excel, then processed by dynamic cross-analysis to constitute a filtered corpus for each variable. We then used cross-tabulations to combine variables in terms of frequency (N) and percentage (%). Finally, they were statistically processed using SPSS Version 24 software.

Qualitative data from the retrospective analysis and the interview were analyzed by thematic content analysis [24, 25].

4. RESULTS

A. Findings from retrospective and documentary analysis of corruption cases

A total of 252 cases of corruption were identified over the last twenty-five years. They were drawn from 157 national and international press articles representing 58 countries, 09 audiovisual documents and 17 websites of national and international sporting institutions and organizations.

a) Corruption characteristics in international sport

The table below summarizes the main corruption acts recorded worldwide and grouped into homogeneous categories.

TABLE 3. CORRUPTION CATEGORIES IN INTERNATIONAL SPORT

Corruption Categories	N	%
Match fixing	123	48.81%
Doping	36	14.29%
Law and management procedure violations	20	7.94%
Illegal commissions (kickbacks)	13	5.16%
Ethical code breaches	13	5.16%
Embezzlement (Fund detour)	12	4.76%
Bet tampering	09	3.57%
Fraud	12	4.76%
Falsification	06	2.38%
Referee cheating	04	1.59%
Vote purchasing	02	0.79%
Scam (swindling)	02	0.79%
Total	252	100.00%

These corruption cases can be grouped into 12 distinct categories. The most important and recurrent of which is match-fixing, with a rate of 48.81% of cases. The two other categories of corruption, " purchasing vote " and " scam ", are the least numerous, with a rate of 0.79% for each.

b) Sport categories and types affected by corruption

The following table reveals that team sports are the most affected by this scourge, with 78.57% of cases, compared to 15.06% for individual sports.

TABLE 4. SPORT CATEGORIES AND TYPES AFFECTED BY CORRUPTION.

Sport categories	Sport types	Total	%
Team Sports	Foot-ball	176	69.84%
	Handball	09	3.57%
	Cricket	07	2.78%
	Hockey	02	0.79%
	Basket-ball	02	0.79%
	Volley-ball	01	0.40%
	Baseball	01	0.40%
	Total	198	78.57%
Individual Sports	Athletics	18	7.14%
	Martial arts	05	1.98%
	Motor sports	05	1.98%
	Equestrian sports	02	0.79%
	Various sports	02	0.79%
	Water sports	02	0.79%
	Nautical sports	01	0.40%
	Body expressive sports	01	0.40%
	Total	38	15.06%
Referral sports	_____	12	4.76%
Other sports	_____	04	1.59%
	Total	252	100.00%

Among team sports, the Football recorded the vast majority of corruption cases (69.84%). Athletics events (7.14%) nearly equalled all other individual sports combined (7.92%). Lastly, referral sports (Return sports: Tennis, Volleyball, Badminton, Squatch...) are the category least affected by corruption, at 4.76%.

c) *Actors involved in corruptive acts in sport*

TABLE 5. CATEGORIES OF ACTORS MOST INVOLVED IN SPORT CORRUPTION.

Actor categories	Corruption categories	%
Sportmen /Athletes	<i>Match-fixing</i>	28.17
	<i>Doping</i>	14.29
	<i>Violations of ethical code</i>	2.38
	<i>Transgressions of laws and management procedures</i>	1.59
	<i>Bet tampering</i>	1.19
	<i>Fraud</i>	1.19
	<i>Illegal commissions</i>	0.79
	<i>Swindling (scams)</i>	0.40
	<i>Forgery (Falsification)</i>	0.40
Total Sportsmen		50.40
Manager(s) of sports structures (Clubs, Leagues, Federations, Olympic Committees, UEFA, FIFA, CAF...)	<i>Match-fixing</i>	9.92
	<i>Transgressions of laws and management procedures</i>	5.95
	<i>Embezzlement of funds</i>	4.76
	<i>Illegal commissions</i>	3.57
	<i>Fraud</i>	3.18
	<i>Violations of ethical code</i>	2.77
	<i>Falsification (Forgery)</i>	1.98
	<i>Purchasing of votes</i>	1.19
	<i>Scam</i>	0.40
<i>Fixed bet</i>	0.40	
Total managers		34.13
Several actors	<i>Match-fixing</i>	9.52
	<i>Violations of ethical code</i>	1.59
	<i>Betting scam</i>	1.19
	<i>Illegal commissions</i>	0.40
Total multi-stakeholders		12.70
Sports betting operators	<i>Competition or Match-fixing</i>	1.59
	<i>Fixed bet</i>	0.79
Total Sports betting operators		2.38
Others	<i>Transgressions of laws and management procedures</i>	0.40
Overall total		100 %

The above table presents the categories of sports stakeholders deemed to be most involved in international sports corruption. The top two stakeholders linked to corruption cases are sportsmen (athletes), with a rate of 50.40%, including 28.17% for match-fixing and 14.29% for doping. Next, the managers of sports organizations (clubs, leagues, federations, etc.) with a rate of 34.13%, comprising 9.92% for match-fixing, 5.95% for Law and management procedure violations and 4.76% for Embezzlement ("misappropriation of funds").

d) *Sports organizations most affected by corruption*

The top four sports organizations most affected by corruption are sports clubs (45.24%), national sports federations (26.98%), international federations (11.90%) and professional leagues (8.33%). In contrast, other

disparate sporting entities account for 7.54% of sports organizations involved in corruption. These include coaches' associations, professional players' associations, referees' associations, fans' associations and Ultrasports associations (table 6).

TABLE 6. INVOLVEMENT LEVELS OF SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS IN CORRUPTION.

Categories of sporting entities implicated	n	%
Club	114	45.24%
National Federation	68	26.98%
International Federation	30	11.90%
Professional League	21	8.33%
Other	19	7.54%
Total	252	100.00%

e) *Disciplinary procedures and decisions in the face of corruption*

The table below lists all the actions and sanctions taken against fraudsters in sport. These coercive decisions include both judicial sanctions handed down by the courts (imprisonment, monetary fines), and disciplinary and administrative decisions taken by the relevant sporting organizations.

TABLE 7. SANCTIONS APPLIED ON PERPETRATORS OF CORRUPT PRACTICES.

Sanction categories	Total	%
Lifetime ban from all sporting activities	111	44.05%
Firm imprisonment	74	29.37%
Degradation or relegation	34	13.49%
Temporary suspension from sporting activities	09	3.57%
Imprisonment and fine	09	3.57%
Fine	07	2.77%
Disciplinary proceedings (administrative, warning, expulsion, etc.)	06	2.38%
No sanction (impunity)	02	0.79%
Total	252	100.00%

Seven major sanctions are applied to sports offenders. The three most frequent are life suspension from all sports-related activities (44.05%), firm imprisonment (29.37%) and relegation to a lower division (13.49%). The most frequent sanctions were for match-fixing (22.22%), doping (12.70%) and betting scams (1.98%).

B. *Findings from analysis of questionnaire data*

1) *Sporting stakeholders' perception of sport corruption*

a) *National sports organizations most concerned by corruption*

With regard to Moroccan sports organizations, the royal federations, sports clubs and regional leagues are successively perceived as the most corrupt by our study sample.

TABLE 8. MOROCCAN SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS PERCEIVED TO BE AFFECTED BY CORRUPTION.

Sport organizations	Not corrupt at all	Slightly corrupt	Corrupt	Quite corrupt	Highly corrupted
National Olympic Committee	2.1% (2)	32.3% (31)	22.9% (22)	11.5% (11)	8.3% (8)
Royal Federations	1 % (1)	8.2% (8)	27.8% (27)	40.2% (39)	16.5% (16)
Regional Leagues	1 % (1)	7.3% (7)	26% (25)	31.3% (30)	20.8% (20)
Sports Clubs	5.2% (5)	22.7% (22)	21.6% (21)	38.9% (37)	16.5% (16)
Ultras associations	12.4% (12)	33% (32)	20.6% (20)	17.5% (17)	2.1% (2)
Sports media	1.1% (1)	28.9% (28)	9.5% (9)	35.8% (34)	9.5% (9)

In parallel, the assessment of anti-corruption strategies in national sport oscillates between fairly ineffective (35.4%), very ineffective (29.2%) and moderately effective (26.0%).

b) Sporting actors most involved in corruption

According to their professional and sporting experience, 77.1% of our study respondents said they had experienced or witnessed some kind of corruption. These corrupt acts were either in the form of illegal commissions (44.7%), match-fixing (20%) or bribes (18.8%).

TABLE 9. PERCEIVED MOST CORRUPT ACTORS IN NATIONAL SPORT.

Actors	Not at all corrupt	Slightly corrupt	Corrupt	Quite corrupt	Extremely corrupt
Sportman / Athlete	18.5% (17)	27.2% (25)	25.0% (19)	20.7% (23)	5.4% (5)
Coach and Assistant coach	11.7% (11)	29.8% (28)	17.0% (15)	16.0% (16)	14.9% (14)
Physical trainers	35.4% (34)	12.1% (11)	9.9% (9)	2.2% (2)	2.2% (2)
Medical Staff	60.9% (56)	10.9% (10)	1.1% (1)	2.2% (2)	3.3% (3)
Sport Managers	4.3% (4)	14.1% (13)	16.3% (15)	34.8% (32)	26.1% (24)
Sport Leaders and Directors	13.6% (13)	9.4% (9)	4.2% (4)	61.5% (56)	33.3% (32)
Journalists	1% (1)	41.3% (38)	19.8% (19)	8.3% (8)	8.3% (8)
Sport and athlete Agents	3.3% (3)	2.2% (2)	59.4% (57)	28.3% (26)	15.2% (14)
Referees	3.1% (3)	13.5% (13)	57.3% (55)	21.9% (21)	2.1% (2)

Our respondents consider our national sports leaders to be extremely corrupt (33.3%) and fairly corrupt (61.5%). They're followed by managers, with 26.1% and 34.8% extremely and fairly corrupt respectively. Sports agents and

referees rank third and fourth successively, with 59.4% and 57.3% being corrupt. In contrast, the medical staff (sport doctor, physiotherapist and nurse) is perceived as being the most honest in Moroccan sport, with 60.9% not corrupt at all. The table below shows the variation of our participants' perceptions.

c) Vulnerable periods of the sporting season when corrupt practices occurred

In a standard sporting season, the end of season period is the most exposed to corrupt practices with 67.7%, followed by the winter market period (mid-season) where corruption is frequent (37.1%) and infrequent (43.3%).

TABLE 10. CORRUPTION PERIODS AND FREQUENCY.

Periods	Not frequent	Infrequent	Frequent
Summer or preparation period	39.6% (38)	21.9% (21)	34.4% (33)
Early season	37.5% (36)	21.9% (21)	29.2% (28)
Mid-season or winter market	12.4% (12)	43.3% (42)	37.1% (36)
Season end (off season)	18.8% (18)	13.5% (13)	67.7% (65)

d) Awareness of legal provisions

66% of our respondents are informed about anti-corruption legislation. For 47.4% of them, corruption is a crime. Whereas 37.1% consider it a misdemeanor (delict). Likewise, 43.2% believe that the current legal arsenal is not effective in fighting corruption in sport. Furthermore, they point out that sentences handed down in national or international sport corruption cases are very low and lenient (49.5%).

e) Drivers of corrupt practices in sport

Specifically, the determinants of corruption in sport vary according to respondents' profiles.

For athletes, the top two drivers of corruption are the absence of ethical values in sport (67.0%) and the impunity of fraudsters (23.0%). For managers, the top three corruption factors are successively: lack of internal control within sports organizations (53.2%); low income of sport actors (45.7%) and the absence of internal democracy within sport organizations (clubs, leagues, federations...) (42.2%). For referees, three causes feed sport corruption: lack of transparency within sport organizations (60.7%); poverty (55.7%) and the low income of sport actors (53.5%).

However, according to journalists, low income (56.5%), lack of internal control (51.6%) and absence of ethical values in sport (48.9%) are the three key factors favoring corruption. Among Ultras members, low income (61.8%), lack of internal control within these associations (59.3%) and poverty (57.3%) are the three markers affecting corruption in national sport.

C. Findings from data analysis collected through interviews

1) Sport actors' perceptions regarding corruption in Moroccan national sport

a) Most widespread corruption forms in national sport

The figure below summarizes the prevalence of eight corruption types perceived by the sport actors interviewed. Of those, "illegal commissions"; "match-fixing"; and "Sportsmen Transgressions of laws and management procedures" are the top three in term of frequency.

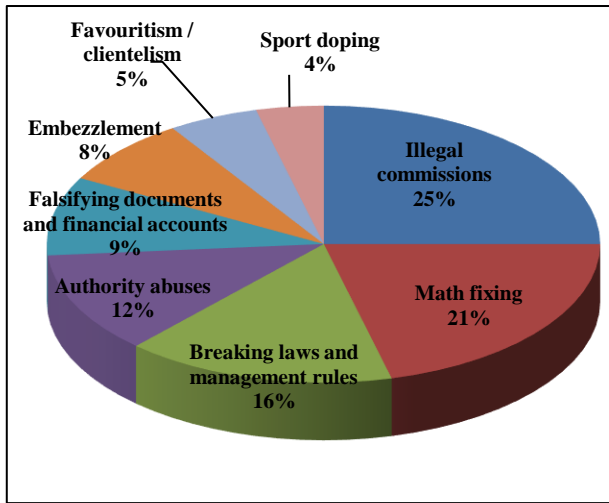


Figure 1. Common forms of corruption in national sport.

b) Gender and actors implied in corruption acts in national sport

➤ Kinds of actors involved in corruption

According to the persons interviewed, the three main actors most implicated in corruption are sport managers (38.16%), athletes (17.11%) and coaches (14.47%). While sport equipment suppliers and referees are perceived as the least corrupt, with rates of 1.32% and 6.58% respectively.

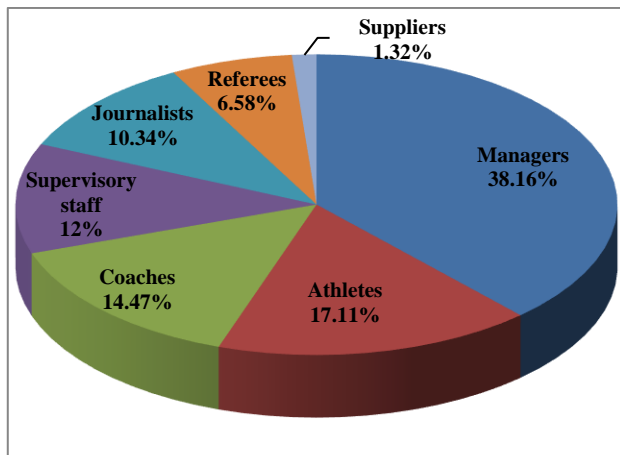


Figure 2. Actors involved in national sport corruption.

➤ Gender and corruption in national sport : Is corruption gendered ?

Our respondents consider that the women are less corrupt than the men. They take fewer risks than men. The greater the stake in corruption, the less the woman is involved in sport corruption.

c) Sport categories and types exposed to corruption

➤ Categories of most corrupt sports

Team sports are potentially the most corruptible. This is justified by the fact that they're the most widely practiced sports in the world, attract the most media coverage and generate the most revenue.

➤ Sport types most affected by corruption

Among team sports, Football is the "king of corruption". Most of the corruption cases reported by the sports press over the last 25 years have been in Football. In second place comes athletics as an individual sport.

d) Corruption causes

The corruption drivers in sport vary according to our respondents' profiles. For ex-sportsmen and women, the two main corruption drivers are the absence of ethical values (37.7%) and the lack of internal controls in the sport sector (29.4%). For executives and managers, the top three corruption factors are: lack of control within sport organizations (31%), low income of sport actors (25.7%) and absence of internal democracy and transparency within sport organizations (19.4%). For referees, two causes fuel sport corruption at national level: the lack of transparency, equity and democracy within sport organizations, especially within the refereeing commission (30.7%); and the low income of sport actors coupled with high living costs (21.5%). For journalists, conversely, low income (41.3%), lack of internal control and audit (23.6%) and absence of ethical values (19.7%) are the three key factors favoring corruption. Whereas among ultras members, unemployment (38.4%), low income (21.8%) and poverty (47.3%) are the three markers that greatly affect corruption in national sport.

e) Corruption's impact on Moroccan sport

According to our interviewees, the consequences of sports corruption in Morocco are numerous, affecting all State sectors. At the economic level, corruption would drive away local capital invested in sport and foreign investment injected into the national sport economy (21.87%). Corruption would also discourage sponsors from supporting sports club development (17.7%).

At the social level, ethical and moral standards in sport would be diminished (15.62%), giving way to moral and civic debauchery (06.25%) and the merchandization of sporting values that underpin Olympic principles. Meanwhile, stars and skilled human resources are leaving the Moroccan leagues (12.5%).

At the political level, corruption would take over political institutions (parties, parliament, labor unions, organizations...) and "trap" the State: only laws serving and covering the corrupt and corrupted would be enacted. This would have a negative impact on the image of national sport at both regional and worldwide events (06.25%); and would generate sporting underperformance (19.79%).

f) Measures and strategies to combat corruption in sport

From 82 proposals collected from our interviewees, we were able to pinpoint seven categories of suggestions listed below.

TABLE 11. MEASURES RECOMMENDED BY OUR INTERVIEWEES.

Measures	Type of recommendation suggested
M1	Reform current legal regulation and enact genuinely repressive and coercive legislative procedures.
M2	Set up anti-corruption audit and control structures.
M3	Develop campaigns to raise awareness, educate and popularize civil rights and ethical values in the practice of sport.
M4	Promote and develop a culture of transparency, democracy, responsibility and accountability in national sports organizations.
M5	Involve the various sports stakeholders in sports management and in the fight against sports corruption.
M6	Set up mechanisms for denouncing corrupt acts in sport, and ensure the safety of whistle-blowers (alerters).
M7	Improve conditions for sport practice, and enhance the salary situation of the various actors in the sport sector.

5. DISCUSSION

The discussion of our results will be cross-sectional, i.e. taking into consideration all the findings from the retrospective analysis, the questionnaire and the interview.

We believe that, faced with such a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon, whose forms, causes and consequences are multiple and subtle, it would be wise to confront our results in a systemic way, along seven distinct axes.

A. Types and forms of sport corruption

The two most recurrent corruption forms in national sport are match-fixing and illegal commissions. They're becoming the norm in national sports. These two forms echo the findings established by Caneppele et al [26], Chappelet [27] and Masters [28], in their work on corruption.

If on a worldwide level, grand corruption is rampant in major sports clubs (Barça, Real, Bayern, Milan,

Manchester Unites, Chelsea...) [29] and in international sports federations (FIFA, NBA, IAAF, UEFA...) that manage billions [30]; whereas on a national level, petty corruption is spreading endemically to the point of becoming a system of power in sport [31], a nepotism system [32], a clientelism network [33] and a crowd management tool [34].

B. Sport categories and types affected by corruption

Team sports are the sporting category most affected by corruption, with Football claiming the title of "king of corruption" in terms of frequency and scandals. This is justified by the fact that it is the most practiced sport in the world and the one with the most media coverage [35].

Consequently, it drains financial funds that are a source of covetousness and corruptive acts. As Eduardo Galeano [36] had already demonstrated, with statistics to back it up, when he asserted that "in Football, cheating pays", and Conn [37] and Gill et al. [38] later confirmed this by focusing on the FIFA scandals.

C. Actors most involved in corrupt acts within national and world sport

The categories of sport actors deemed to be most involved in corruption are, successively, the leaders of sports organizations (clubs, leagues, federations), then athletes, sport organizations' managers, athletes' agents, coaches and referees. This result is partly corroborated by Andreff [30], Moriconi & De Cima [39]; and globally confirmed by Nezelek et al. [40].

Generally speaking, women seem less corruptible than men in national sports. Women take fewer risks than men [41]. The higher the corruption stakes, the less women are involved in corruption in national sport, and vice versa [42].

In this respect, a study commissioned in 2007 by the « Women's Forum for the Economy & Society » concluded that "women are perceived to be both less likely to initiate and more likely to resist corrupt acts than men". As early as 2006, researchers at Rice University examined the topic of "gender and corruption". They concluded that countries where more women are involved in high public office, in parliament or government, are less affected by corruption. So, should we feminize our sports leaders to curb corruption? Should we adopt a gender-based approach toward corruption?

Mexico City has successfully done just that, appointing only women to control road traffic: five months after this initiative, not one woman had been accused of asking for or accepting bribes.

Similarly, in Peru, the police force in the capital Lima had the same idea. A significant drop in corruption was observed after the recruitment of women into the police force [43].

In contrast, the most recent literature suggests mitigated results regarding corruption and gender. Thus, various

researches claim that there is an initial reduction in corruption when more women occupy positions of high responsibility, especially in the legislative authority [41]. But this decrease gradually diminishes over time [44]. Once they are integrated into elite networks and socialized into the pre-existing political structure, gender no longer makes a difference, and corrupt affairs resume as usual.

In our opinion, these assertions need to be weighed up and re-checked on a wider population where women would be much better represented in sport. Indeed, it is urgently important to point out that the Moroccan sports scene is largely dominated by men at all levels. In fact, the sample of women we interviewed represents only 08.66% of the total. This means that any sexist conclusions must be qualified and put into perspective.

D. Awareness of legal provisions

The current national legal arsenal, however extensive, is considered ineffective in the fight against corruption in sport. Penalties handed down in cases of sport corruption on a national or international level remain light and inadequate in comparison with the harmful effects they cause. They do not dissuade fraudsters sufficiently, given the positive gap between the gains to be made from corruption and the risk of being caught [45].

Indeed, the Moroccan seems to have no legal sense. His history and behavior are not sufficiently marked by the law. This confronts legislators with the following dilemma: how to legislate laws that are both repressive, dissuasive and non-discursive [46] and also righteous, equitable and not excessive? [47].

Furthermore, punitive measures taken against fraudsters are not enough to eradicate corruption, as they do not tackle the roots of the problem. These measures can be circumvented by corruptors and corrupted, who find ways to conceal their illegal activity [48].

In sum, it is useful to adopt an integrative approach to combating corruption in sport, combining repressive and preventive measures [49]. Repressive measures are needed to punish the corrupt and deter others from engaging in illegal activities. Whereas preventive measures are required to reduce opportunities for corruption, raise awareness among sports actors of its harmful consequences and reinforce probity, ethics, transparency and accountability principles in sport [50].

E. Sports organizations most affected by corruption

Worldwide, the top three sporting entities most affected by the phenomenon of corruption are sports clubs, national sports federations and international federations such as the international federation of Football associations (FIFA) and the international association of athletics federations (IAAF).

Indeed, the big European clubs, which ostentatiously buy the services of the best stars every season, cannot

normally do so without resorting to dubious forms of financing, tax evasion and hidden commissions for intermediaries and agents [51, 52]. In this respect, Ouédraogo [53] had pointed out the financial drifts of major sports clubs that corrupt the values of sporting Olympism and fuel the supremacy of money over sport.

F. Factors encouraging corrupt practices in sport

Overall, for all our respondents, five causes fuel corrupt practices in national sport: (1) Absence of ethical values rooted in the sporting environment; (2) Low income of actors involved in sport; (3) Lack of transparency, fairness and democracy within sports organizations; (4) Absence of internal control and audit within sports organizations and (5) Poverty of sports actors. The priority order of these causes differs according to the respondent actors' profile.

For the second and fifth causes ("actors' low income" and "sports actors' poverty"), these two factors have already been asserted separately by Treisman [54], and then by Tanzi [55]. They give corruption purely economic origins. On the surface, poverty and corruption are two notions that don't go together. But in fact, they feed each other in a vicious circle [56]. Income is negatively correlated with corruption, with statistical significance [57]. Moreover, Dreyfus [58] theoretically suggests that when salary or income is low, the temptation to want to compensate or supplement it illicitly becomes quite "logical".

However, the more recent Nordic literature on corruption categorically refutes this thesis. For Wickberg [59], corruption in sport is a protean phenomenon fuelled by various inter-acting causes: economic [48], social [58], political [60] and juridical [61]. To study it solely through economic variables is to confine oneself to a reductionist, piecemeal approach. Hence the need for an integrative approach [47].

At the social and legal levels, Elieth Eyebiyi [62] has argued that the more a culture of impunity reigns in an environment and law enforcement is flouted, the more corruption takes hold and increases. Huang & Yuan [63] and Li et al. [64] also share the same conclusion. They establish a negative and significant correlation, cause and effect, between juridical efficiency and corruption. The more coercive and effective the legal texts, the more corruption in sport tends to decrease.

With regard to the first cause of corruption generated by our study (lack of ethical values), several authors agree on the effect of moral values on the devolvement of corruption in sport [65, 66]. None contest the social and educational virtues of deontological values in moralizing the sport environment [67]. Hence the importance of ethical leadership in sport [68].

The third cause of corruption in sport is the lack of transparency and democracy within sports organizations. At present, the sport sector has apparently developed a culture of "disparity" [69] backed by a monopolization

of decision power: (tendency to cooptation, resistance to control and accountability...).

Finally, the fourth factor, "lack of control and internal audit within sports organizations", is much more a question of managerial dysfunction than anything else [70]. Thus, the sport organization (club, league or federation) is an economic agent like a company. It should obey the same principles of good governance, including the implementation of management control structures [71], internal control and even internal audit [72].

G. Eventual consequences of corruption in sport

The repercussions of corruption are numerous and affect all sectors of the state. This deduction is well shared in both the French and English literature reviews. Almost all the authors consulted and the majority of studies analyzed attribute harmful effects to all forms of corruption [30], [73], [59].

At the economic stage, corruption in sport allows the emergence of an informal economy [74], propagates a rent and clientelism culture [33], and drives away local capital and foreign investment injected into the sports market [75]. Corruption also discourages sponsors from supporting the development of sports organizations [76].

At the social level, no society is entirely free of corruption. But when corruption in sport reaches such proportions as to lose all trust and legitimacy in sport institutions, then it leads to the erosion of social cohesion [77], accentuates social disparities [78], fosters the emergence of civil dissensions [79], generates colossal and collateral social costs [29] and threatens social peace [80].

At the political sphere, corruption invests political institutions and "captures" the State [81]: only laws that serve and protect the corruptors and corrupted will be enacted. This will have a negative impact on the image of sport nationally, regionally and worldwide, and will lead to mediocre sport performance.

By the end of this transversal discussion of the findings, we realize that when it comes to corruption in sport, the causes and consequences of corrupt acts interact in a vicious circle. Causes give rise to consequences, which once established and entrenched, become causes for new, more endemic consequences, and so on. Corruption in sport is therefore more than a phenomenon, it is a visceral dysfunction that is both cause and consequence.

6. CONCLUSION

To conclude, we can state that in national sport, the two most recurrent corruption forms are match-fixing and illegal commissions. Also, the Moroccan sports organizations most perceived as "corrupt" are respectively the royal federations, sports clubs and regional leagues. Naturally, professional sport is more exposed to corruption than leisure sport, given the economic and political stakes involved. Team sports are the sport category most affected by corruption, with Football claiming the title of

"corruption king" in terms of frequency and corruption scandals.

What's more, in a normal sport season, the end-of-season period is the most exposed to corrupt practices, followed by the winter market period (mid-season). This suggests a certain seasonality in corrupt practices. In national sport, our sport leaders are the most "perceived" as corrupt. They are followed by managers, agents, coaches and referees. Generally speaking, women are less corrupt than men in national sport.

Regarding legal and disciplinary measures, the first three sanctions taken against offenders in sport are, successively, lifelong suspension from all sport-related activities, firm imprisonment and downgrading to a lower level. The current juridical arsenal governing corruption in sport is deemed ineffective. Moreover, the sentences handed down in cases of sport corruption at national and international levels are light, and do not deter fraudsters.

On another note, the top five drivers of corrupt practices in national sport are: the absence of ethical values; the low income of sport actors; the lack of transparency within sport organizations; the absence of internal control and audit within sport organizations; and the poverty of sport actors. Furthermore, the consequences of corruption in sport on the country are numerous and affect practically all sectors of the state.

At the end of our research, we see corruption in sport not as a sport disease, but as a complex, multidimensional phenomenon. It is the result of a series of structural, managerial and psychological dysfunctions. It is a systemic endemic requiring systemic treatment.

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