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Betting Practices among Players in Portuguese Championships: from Cultural to Illegal Behaviours

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Abstract

The growth of the online sports betting market has generated new risk areas and threats to sport integrity, such as match-fixing. In recent years, institutional concern to fight against the phenomenon has been intensified and a set of countermeasures has been adopted. One of the most widely implemented measures to protect integrity in sport is to ban athletes and sports players from betting on the competitions in which they are involved. In some countries, such as Portugal, this practice has become a crime under the new legislation. Despite the legal and sporting restrictions and the prevention programmes carried out for sport institutions to explain the gambling rules, there are many athletes who are putting bets on their own competitions and even in their own games. Through interviews with key informant actors and ethnographic fieldwork, this article describes betting patterns among sports actors in Portugal and explains the perceptions and incentives that lead them to bet in their own sports, competitions and games. The results show different conceptions of integrity between the normative discourse on legal and sport governance institutions and sports actors' opinion, essentially, the premise that suggest a direct link between betting on one's own games and manipulation of these games. In some cases, betting in one's own games helps to strengthen fair play values. However, the spreading of online betting, together with the perception of inefficient controls in the implementation of sporting and legal regulations, creates opportunity structures for fixing matches and taking financial profit through gambling activities.

Keywords

Match-fixing – crime – sport betting – Portugal – illegal practices – cultural practices

Introduction

The sport betting market has radically changed due to the development of new technologies and the creation of new betting possibilities, as those related with live betting. The current conditions make it possible for a person in Asia to put instant bets on a game between an African team and a Latin-American team while it is playing in Australia through an online betting operator based in Malta (Moriconi & Almeida 2019). The complexity of this new framework has generated structures of opportunity for organized crime to infiltrate the sport (Europol 2017; Hill 2008; Interpol and IOC 2015, IOC and UNDOC 2013; Gokhale 2009) with the aim of manipulating results and obtaining profits in the betting market. In consequence, betting-related corruption¹ has emerged as one of the major threats to contemporary sport competitions (Lastra et. al. 2018; Carpenter 2012; Tak 2017; Hill 2015).

In response to this phenomenon, international and national sports and political organisations, (from FIFA to the International Olympic Committee, from the Council of Europe to UNODC) have adopted a range of countermeasures (Tak et. al. 2017), such as educative prevention campaigns, the implementation of new codes of ethics, suggestions of new legal frameworks and definitions of integrity good-practice patterns, and the implementation of a multi-stakeholder's forum to cooperatively fight against the phenomenon (Council of Europe 2014; UNODC-ICSS 2016; Chappelet 2015).

In the set of normative measures, one of the norms that has proliferated, both in sporting and penal regulations, is the prohibition for sports actors to bet on the games and competitions in which they participate (Moriconi & Almeida 2019). In some cases, the prohibitions are broader and forbid betting on the own sport in general, or, to directly bet on any type of sporting event. In Portugal, for instance, according to the new legal framework, betting in one's own competition is a crime².

Despite these sporting and legal restrictions, and the constant prevention programmes carried out for sport institutions to explain the gambling rules, there are many athletes who are putting bets on sports and even on their own competitions and games³.

Through interviews with key informant actors and ethnographic fieldwork, this article describes betting patterns among sports actors in Portugal and explains the perceptions and incentives that lead them to bet on their own sport, competitions and games. Our evidence shows different conceptions of integrity between the normative discourse on legal and sporting governance institutions and sports actors'

¹ Betting-motivated corruption includes three practices linked to the intentional manipulation of competitions, results or aspects of a match (Boniface et al., 2012): 1) match-fixing (manipulation of the outcome of a match to support a bet), 2) spot-fixing (staging a certain aspect of a sporting contest to support a bet), and 3) the misuse of insider information (intentional misuse of insider information to gain advantage in the betting market). For further explanations see Gorse and Chadwick 2011; Anderson 2011 and Palmer, 2014.

² See art. 4 do Decreto Lei N.º 66/2015 e do Decreto Lei N.º 67/2015

³ These issues have been verified with evidence collected in two previous projects funded by the European Commission through its programme Erasmus + Sport: Anti Match-Fixing Top Training (AMATT, 2017-2019) and Training for Protected Reporting System in Professional and Grassroots Sport (T-PREG, 2018-2020).

opinion, essentially, the premise that suggests a direct link between betting on one's own games and manipulation of these games. In some cases, as will be shown, betting on one's own games helps to strengthen fair play values. However, the spreading of online betting market and the perception of inefficient and inexistent controls in the implementation of sporting and legal regulations creates opportunity structures for fixing matches and taking financial profit through gambling activities.

While some evidence and scientific data about betting patterns and addiction among sports actors is already available (Forrest & Simmons 2003; Şeker & Şahin 2018; Lim, et al. 2017; Lastra et al. 2018; Jensen et. al. 2018), this article is a pioneer in showing how, when and under which conditions players engage in illegal practices and put bets on their own games and competitions. Considering the lack of first source empirical data on these issues (Spapens & Olfers 2015; Moriconi 2018a) and the demands of the European Council Convention (2014: Article 5.1) about the need to “identify, analyse and evaluate the risks associated with the manipulation of sport competitions”, this paper is of particular relevance for those studies' focus on integrity in sports and for researchers interested in understanding meaning, ideas, attitudes, and perceptions of collectives (in this case athletes) that lead to deviant behaviours and unfulfillment of formal norms.

The article is divided in five sections. The first part presents the regulatory framework and prevention campaigns developed by sporting governing bodies, Governments, International Political Organizations and law enforcement institutions. The second explains the new Portuguese legal framework and describes the integrity programmes and campaigns developed by sporting bodies, such as the National Olympic Committee, the Portuguese Football Federation, the Professional Football League and the Players Union. These educative programmes and interventions, focused on raising awareness about the dangers of match-fixing and presenting the new legal norms, include, in all cases, information about betting prohibitions. In the third section, the methodology is explained. Then, the results on betting practices among sports actors in Portugal are presented. The final part is dedicated to discussing the theoretical and practical implications of the results and promoting some research lines for the future.

International framework and prevention campaigns

In line with the provisions of article 7 of the Council of Europe Convention (2014), various sports institutions and governmental institutions have adopted rules prohibiting competition stakeholders from betting on sports competitions in which they are involved (Moriconi & Almeida 2019, 83-86; IOC & UNDOC 2013; UNODC & IOC-ICSS 2016, Interpol & IOC 2015). The IOC'S Code of Ethics includes two articles (A5 and A6) on this regard. In fact, the IOC first introduced betting ban rules at the 2008 Beijing Olympics (Chappelet, 2015). In this event, all athletes were prohibited from betting on any competition of the Olympic Games. The institutions also launched an eLearning platform to raise awareness about the phenomenon of match-fixing. According to the IOC's educational tool, “sport betting is not wrong” but, since “sport bets are offered on anything” from the result of a competition to

any other part of an event, corruptors might target athletes “to make money through sport betting”. In consequence, “as competition is often linked to sport betting”, it is prohibited to bet on any event that an athlete is involved in (IOC eLearning module 2018).

SportAccord, the umbrella organisation for all international sports federations, have been created several educative materials and documents under its Global Programme to Stop Match-fixing. One of these documents is the Code of Conduct on Sports Betting Integrity for athletes and officials. The code is based on 5 principles:

1. Be Smart: know the rules
2. Be Safe: never bet on your sport
3. Be Careful: never share sensitive information
4. Be Clean: never fix an event
5. Be Open: tell someone if you are approached

These premises became key elements in the training on match-fixing prevention developed by international sports organizations in cooperation with law enforcement institutions (see IOC eLearning 2017; ATP Tour 2019; Interpol & IOC 2015; IOC & UNDOC 2013).

After some years, and also some critics (see for instance Moriconi 2018a), the training model was simplified in the form of the 3Rs scheme that urges the athletes to Recognize (the phenomenon of match-fixing); Resist (to the temptations, never give inside information nether bet), and Report (every approach or attempts of fixing a match).

All the existing educative programmes on fighting against match-fixing and eLearning training in this issue include the 3Rs scheme. In short, there is a proactive institutional awareness to inform the sports actors about the existence of betting prohibitions and several permanent educative campaigns seeking to convey this message and the danger and punishment that betting in one’s own game entails⁴.

Finally, it should be noted that the Council of Europe Convention includes a chapter on Criminal Law. In this chapter, it is stated that each partaking country must ensure that its domestic law permits the application of a criminal sanction to the handling of sporting competitions where it entails coercion, fraud or corruption. In the case of Portugal, the legal framework on this topic has been substantially modified since the launch of the Convention.

⁴ See for instance: SportAccord eLearning (<https://www.ifmamuaythai.org/ifma-initiatives/integrity-sportaccord-e-learning-program/>); Fix the Fixing educational tools (<https://fixthefixing.eu/ftftool/>); IOC Integrity eLearning platform (<https://www.olympic.org/integrityelearning/>); INTERPOL eLearning program (<https://www.interpol.int/ipsgapp/integrityinsport/elearning/module01/index.htm?l=en&iid=welcome>). For a critical analysis of the hegemonic anti-match-fixing narrative, see Moriconi 2018a.

Portuguese Legal, Ethical and Educative Framework

Online gambling was regulated in Portugal in 2015⁵, the same year in which the country ratified the Macolin Convention⁶. Since then, the gambling market made a transition from a monopoly to a license-based model. Before 2015, and given the lack of regulation, online gambling operators operated illegally in the national market.

As Moriconi and Almeida (2019: 89) points out, “national authorities started to pave the way to the new online gambling licensing regime soon after the legislation entered into force” and the gambling regulator (SRIJ) assumed that “once this regime entered into force, on June 28 2015, operators that continued with their activities in Portugal could face criminal penalties”.

The new regulatory framework is formed by Decree Law No. 66/2015, which establishes an online gambling local licensing regime, and Decree Law No. 67/2015, which introduces regulations for land-based fixed-odds sport betting, granting a monopoly to SCM (Moriconi & Almeida 2019). Both norms impose prohibition for sports actors’ betting practices. Specifically, the laws establish that sports actors (among other agents), amateurs or professionals, are prohibited from practicing online gambling and betting, and from practicing land-based fixed-odds sport betting, by them directly or through an intermediary, when, directly or indirectly, they have or may have any intervention in the outcome of the events (article 4 of Decree Law No. 66/2015 and Decree Law No. 67/2015).

Later, Law 13/2017 added Article 11-A to Law no. 50/2007 that establish criminal responsibility to sports actors who bets on incidents or outcomes of games, events or competitions in which they are involved. The punishment may be up to 3 years imprisonment, or a fine of up to 600 days. Article 4 of Law 13/2017 also determines penalties regarding a ban from sport competitions, deprivation of the right to receive public subsidies or financing and, in case of sport managers, prohibition of the exercise of a profession, function or activity, public or private, for a period of 1 to 5 years.

In a few words, in Portugal, an athlete betting on an event he participates in, even though a third person, is a crime.

Sports actors in Portugal should also respect the principles of the "Code of Conduct on Integrity in Sports Betting" which provides all sports organizations and their members with a harmonized set of rules to prevent match-fixing risks (Olympic Committee, 2016). According to the Code, sports agents must follow the 3Rs' premises. If not, they can be sanctioned by sport authorities and receive from a minimum punishment of a warning up to the ban from all sporting activity. In this sense, in sporting

⁵ Law 73/2014.

⁶ Portugal was 1 of the first 3 countries in ratified the Council of Europe Convention. For more information, see Moriconi & Almeida 2019.

terms, it is a serious fault not only to put bets on one's own matches and competitions, but also to know that these practices exist and to not denounce them.

Lastly, it should be noted that, in order to ensure that sports actors are aware of their obligations and of the sanctions to which they are subject, both the Olympic Committee of Portugal (COP) or the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) (together with the Portuguese Professional Football League - LPFP- and the Players Union -SJFP-) have been developing training programmes and prevention campaigns for athletes, and sports actors in general, in which these contents are included.

The integrity programme implemented by the COP seeks to train sports agents (athletes, coaches, referees / judges, managers) in the prevention, recognition and fighting against match-fixing. Based on the 3Rs scheme and the IOC's Zero Tolerance policy, the programme consists of training and coaching sessions that have been regularly developed in recent years and have targeted athletes, coaches and referees from the various federations covered by the COP. Between 2016 and 2018, 1232 actors of table tennis, cycling, rugby, basketball, canoeing, badminton, karate, handball, athletics, judo, skating, hockey, and volleyball were trained in the 36 sessions implemented⁷. The prohibition of sports betting is included in the topics, being one of the most emphasized points.⁸

On the other hand, the FPF, SJFP and LPFP have been undertaking obligatory training actions. According to the highest body of Portuguese football, 78 training sessions were developed during the season 2017/2018 and more than 3,200 sports actors were taught about the scourge of manipulation of results. The trained actors include all the teams that take part in the Liga NOS (Football Premier League), Ledman LigaPro (Football 2nd Division) and Liga Sport Zone (Futsal Premier League). The national teams of all the categories were also trained, as well as referees and football and futsal officials. The FPF has also noted that, during August 2018, awareness raising activities were carried out for the clubs participating in the Liga Revelação (Under 23 Football League) and in the Portuguese Championship (Football 3rd Division).

This prevention campaign also includes the launch of an online reporting platform that allows anonymous denouncing of match-fixing.

Thus, we can conclude that football and futsal players who are playing in Portuguese leagues have received training sessions on the characteristics and danger of manipulation of sport competitions, on the new national legal framework to fight against the phenomenon, and have also been institutionally informed about the prohibitions of putting bets on their own games and about the legal, civil and

⁷ Information offer by the Integrity Department of the Olympic Committee of Portugal.

⁸ Information gathered through non-participant and participant intervention in COP's integrity training developed in 2017 and 2018.

sporting consequences of committing this crime. Then, why do players bet on their own competitions and games?

Methodology

A multimethod approach (Schmidt, 2006) including a) ethnographic methods, b) contextualisation and document analysis; and c) semi-structured interviews with key informant gathered using snowball technique was implemented.

First evidence about betting practices among football players in Portugal was revealed through ethnography (including participant and non-participant observation). For one season, one of the authors accompanied as a delegation member one of the most important national men's futsal team. During this period, he had direct contact with the object of the study developing information and data collection on events, attitudes, practices, and perceptions (Da Costa 1986; Woods 1987; Haghette 1990). At the same time, he established personal contacts with informants that were important for developing the second stage of the field work, mainly, for the selection of interviewers. The ethnography process continued with the participation of the authors in some sessions of the Olympic Committee of Portugal integrity programme. This activity allowed to verify that athletes' sports betting practices are present in various sports. Many athletes claimed that they did so because they were not aware of the legal or sporting prohibitions, others because no real controls were perceived. However, this recurrent practice does not necessarily imply betting on matches or competition in which the athletes participates.

The next step of the research involved, on one hand, contextualisation of the phenomenon and document analysis and, on the other, semi-structured interviews with key informants (Moriconi 2011) gathered using snowball technique (Bleich & Pekkanen 2013: 96).

The first task was fundamental to become familiar with the world of sports betting and to understand current opportunity structures for deviant behaviours in the chosen case study. The legal framework, both criminal and sporting, was studied and the existing prevention campaigns carried out by sports institutions were systematized. Through the analysis of newspapers, an historical account of historical cases about athletes who recognized that they were betting on their own matches was developed. These tasks generated substantial knowledge on tendencies, narratives and normative frameworks that were significant for constructing a preliminary guide for interviews.

Finally, interviews with key informants were carried out. Most of them were recorded and lasted between one and two hours. In some cases, for those who accepted to be recorded, the interviewee asked to stop the recording to tell substantial confidential information. The validity of the qualitative research was increased by data and methodological triangulation (Denzin 1970). Multi-sited collection of data helped to explore common patterns of betting among players and compare historical cases with those cases reported by our informants.

Interviews were divided in two groups: a) 12 institutional actors (including high positions of betting regulators, sport federations and sport governance bodies, journalists, governmental actors, and members of law enforcement institutions and civil society organizations) and b) 34 sports actors (including players/athletes, referees, managers, and retired players and referees). The most representative disciplines were football (8), futsal (6), basketball (6) and handball (6). Only 2 sports actors never played in the main division. Some of the informants have played in several countries and in top leagues.

Interviews were carried out in Portuguese language and all the quotes used along the text are translated to English by the authors.

Since criminal issues are involved, any disclosure of sensitive information could have negative impacts on the jobs, careers and the security of the research participants, therefore, a high level of anonymity had to be guaranteed (Tolish 2004; Numerato 2016), also considering the “need to establish trust and rapport with participants” (Bahn and Weatherill 2003: 21). In consequence, we do not specify the names nor clubs of the informants.

Betting in Portuguese sports: practices and incentives

The evidence collected over these years allows the systematization of the betting practices of sports players in a series of typologies. Each typology has its own incentives and motivations, and determines specific types of bets that, depending on the opportunity structures, are placed on the regulated or unregulated market, by the sports players themselves or by third parties. While all typologies are considered a crime by formal regulations, most of the bets placed by players and athletes on their own games and competitions are not related to the manipulation of results and, in some cases, even serve to strengthen the sportive spirit and values of fair play.

1. Gambling not related with manipulation of sports competitions

1.1. Gambling as recreation and cultural practice:

Several works have referred to the propensity of athletes to gamble and to the greater likelihood that athletes suffer pathologies and addictions linked to gambling (Stillman *et al.* 2016; Lim *et. al.* 2017). During the research, it was possible to verify that sports betting is recognized by sports agents as a culturally rooted practice, based on recreational purposes, which is not intended to influence sporting integrity. On the contrary, it may even promote internal competitiveness and the ethics of sport. Bets for recreation include internal rivalry between teammates who bet on opposed results to compete and define who "knows more about sport". This type of practice seeks emotional outcomes, prestige within the group.

Many recreative bets occur due to the lack of knowledge of the legal and sporting norms. In the participant and non-participant observation that took place within the framework of the integrity programme of the Olympic Committee, it was possible to observe a deep lack of knowledge by athletes, especially of non-professional modalities, regarding the prohibition of betting on their sport. A large group of athletes recognized their habit, and the habit of their inner circle, of betting on sporting events as a recreational practice to earn some money because they were not informed about the existing prohibitions. Some have been concerned about the potential consequences, because they have been placing bets on the regulated market with their own tax numbers. While this evidence shows the importance of the implementation of prevention campaigns, it also serves to confirm little overview and lack of controls from the betting regulators.

In general, this gambling practice refers to bets on their own sport, but on foreign competitions, and in the regulated market. For example, several members of national basketball teams assured that they usually place bets on NBA games.

However, even knowing the regulations and prohibitions, gambling is a well-known, recurring and defended practice by the sports collective. A futsal manager (Key Informant 1) considers that an "institutionalization" of sports betting exists within sport. According to the interviewee, the players bet mostly in other modalities, although there are cases of players who bet in their own modality and on their own game.

A futsal coach (KI2) agrees with the existence of the culture of betting and confirms that players bet on their own sport: "Our players bet on games from other teams and the other teams bet on our games". However, he does not think that this situation can leave to manipulations because, if there were any attempts, "players, mainly those in a better economic and professional situation, would talk to me".

Sports betting, according these two informants and many others, is seen merely as an act of recreation. The evidence gathered agrees with the denunciation of the historic British footballer Joey Barton, who assured that the culture of sports betting is "culturally rooted" and this does not necessarily imply manipulation of games. Barton was suspended by the FA for 18 months (penalty reduced to 13 months after appealing) in 2017 after being accused of betting on around 1,260 football matches between 2006 and 2016. Barton admitted having placed bets on more than 1,000 matches. According to the player, if the rules applied to all defaulters, then half of the Premier League players would be suspended⁹.

An interviewee (KI3) considered that most of the players bet:

"I believe that 90% of the players bet on their own games. But they bet small amounts on multiple bets, based on their perception, and not with the intention of fixing results. There is no

⁹ "Barton Claims 50% Of Footballers Are Betting on Matches", Sabotage Times, 2018, <https://sabotagetimes.com>.

interference in the game. Personally, I place bets every week on futsal at *Ixbet*. I bet from 40 to 50 euros per week, in multiples, including my matches and other games. If I win, the profit is around 500 euros. I never made a bet above 100 euros".

In this statement it is possible to identify strategies implemented by sports actors in order to not be discovered, since placing bets in their modality, or in their game, is illegal. By using an illegal operator (*Ixbet*) they guarantee their anonymity: since *Ixbet* is illegal in Portugal, it will never send information to the national authorities. There are still other ways to not be discovered: "I can always ask a friend or girlfriend to bet on me, in an online betting operator, or even in *Placard*¹⁰, for example" (KI4).

On the other hand, the fact of betting little money (between 10 and 100 euros) does not raise alarm for the bookmaker. In general, interviewees have the perception that investigations and potential punishment are linked to the amount of the profit. According to KI4, for example, only if you made a lot of money, then bookmakers would investigate.

The interviewee betting regulators (KI5; KI6) recognize that all active monitoring and control mechanisms are related to abnormal behaviours and amounts. In simple words, only bets that can economically put the system at risk are investigated. In this sense, the perception of athletes that betting low amounts, despite being a violation of legal and sporting regulations, will not be discovered is, in practice, valid and realistic.

It is also important to highlight how the quoted statement distinguishes the mere act of placing bets from the fact of fixing matches. Barton himself, when sanctioned, accepted the charges against him but emphasized that there was no illicit motivation (related with match fixing) for his behaviour.¹¹

In fact, sports integrity and fair-play would be guaranteed even when the bet is against the bettor's own team. When Barton was sanctioned in England, it was shown that many of his bets were for the defeat of his team. The British footballer defends himself by stating that he only bet on the defeat of his team in games in which he was not called up: "it was an expression of my anger and frustration for not being chosen."

During the data collection, a player admitted that:

"I already bet my team was going to lose, but it did not interfere with my performance. For example, I bet to lose against one of the best teams in the championship. The odd was 1.80 and many of our players had physical problems. We thought we had no hypothesis for a positive result. But once on the court, I did not remember the bet. In fact, I scored, and we started

¹⁰ Official sport bets of the National Lottery.

¹¹ Jake Lambourne, "Barton's Ban Reduced", The Sun, 2017, www.thesun.co.uk.

winning the game. It was only when I got home that I remembered. Since it was a multiple bet, winning that game by itself was not enough, I should have hit the other results as well". (KI7).

KI7 still refers to another game in which almost the whole team bet to lose but the result was different:

"When we went to play the second playoff game against a good team, most of the players bet we would lose. The odd was good and, according to the logic, we would lose. Although most of the players bet that we were going to lose, we won the game, and we moved on to the next stage of the championship. That means it did not influence our performance".

1.2. Gambling as a source of collective motivation:

Some informants questioned the norm that prohibits players from placing bets in favour of themselves. According to a basketball player (KI8), this rule is totally contradictory if one takes into account the fact that all professional sports have naturalized the offers of incentives, such as prizes or bonuses, for winning. In this sense, the athlete understands that if the sports market makes him a target of bets so that, depending on his performance as a worker, other people can earn money, and that mercantile demand requires him to perform in the best possible way, it does not make sense that he cannot bet on his work as well (and earn money as others do) if he fulfils his labour duties and ethical obligations. In his opinion, if players are prohibited from betting that they are going to do things the way they should do it, at least they should have the institutional opportunity of refuse being a target of bets.

According to this perception, betting on your own victory is the same as accepting a prize for having fulfilled your work obligations and achieving a satisfactory result. It is worth noting that none of the interviewed athletes were in favour of match-fixing, and most even considered that betting on any other result that does not constitute the win is, in fact, ethically reprehensible.

In this case, the bet is simply another source of motivation for fulfilling the ethical mandate of *performing the best way possible*. Moreover, one of the Football Coaches interviewed (KI9) considers that "all players from all teams bet" thus "it makes no sense to impose rules that players will not obey". Given this scenario, KI9 adopted an open stance with the team and used betting as a means of motivation:

"As our odds were too high, I started telling the players that we were devalued in the betting market. Then, bets worked as a motivating factor. I used to tell them: *if I were you, I would bet*. What started out as a joke became an effective strategy and I started to use it more often".

The coach also states that, from a sporting point of view, betting helped in promoting team fair play and competitiveness.

A football coach of the second and third Portuguese league (KI10) confirmed the usefulness and effectiveness of this method. In his case, he realized by surprise that his players were betting on their

own games. First, he complained, then he understood the motivational logic, based on the high odds in favour of his team. The result was "an amazing campaign" in which the permanence in the category, the initial objective of the club, "was never at risk". In addition, the performance of some players was so outstanding that they received important offers for their future. At no time did the betting negatively affect team performance or created opportunity structures and incentives to manipulate any situation or outcome.

Several players of different sport agreed that they would place bets in their games for motivational objectives if the whole team decided together in doing it. In this sense, following human resources management theories, a Handball Coach (KI11) emphasises that "people react positively to external stimuli. Intrinsic motivation (wanting to win) together with extrinsic motivation (earning money) can catapult the player's sports performance".

A former professional footballer (KI12) is also in favour of monetary incentives to win, regardless of whether they result from sports betting, or come from third-party clubs¹²:

"If they can choose, all players would accept money to win. (...) I think it has to be legal. For me it is not corruption. It's totally different from paying to lose, what should be punished with prison. The world of Football has its own particularities: you only have 10 years to make money".

However, KI2 warns about some dangers when using this strategy in cases where players are not protected.

"Imagine that a player with an overdue wage decides to bet on his game to win. If the game starts to go badly, or a player has a bad day and does not perform to the best, this can generate conflicts in the dressing room".

For this reason, for KI1, as well as several athletes and trainers interviewed, sports betting only makes sense in professional leagues where there are no risk situations (such as low wages, delay in the payment of salaries, etc.) and there are no situations of financial needs on the part of the participants.

While gambling for collective motivation in victories or defeats on own games does not affect sport integrity, gambling for the same reason in special events of the game, such as the amount of goals, can affect the performance of players. In this sense, KI4 explains that:

"I was playing in one of the best teams in the country and we were playing against one of the weakest clubs. Almost the entire team placed bets that there would be more than x goals. The

¹² In Portugal, this practice is called the suitcase game (o jogo da mala). Club X offers a financial incentive to Club A if it beat or draw Club B, who is, in fact, the direct competition of Club X (for the championship, title, promotion and/or relegation).

only goal we celebrated was the last one, which allowed us to win the bet. By chance we scored it, but we had already told our goalkeeper that if we did not score, he should let the ball get in during the last minutes of the match. Even the coach did not realize what was happening. Even with a comfortable lead on the scoreboard we do not slow down. We knew we still needed to score one more goal. At that time, Bet and Win realized the situation and cancelled everyone's account. But nobody in the environment knew about the situation".

Although the bet was based on a collective motivation, without intentions of manipulating the score, KI4 recognizes that, if necessary, the team would suffer a goal for the purpose to win the bet. Thus, several external bettors who bet on the number of goals in that game would be cheated, as well as the betting operator.

1.3. Gambling as a guaranteed economic incentive:

In certain cases, sports betting may be based on a logical financial reasoning that allows the player to make money under any circumstances. As was explained before, different internal logics of monetary motivation, such as prizes for individual performances, for winning, or for reaching the next phase of a tournament, have become natural in the world of professional sport.

In this sense, sport bets generate the possibility of securing extra money regardless of the outcome of a match. One of our interviewees (KI3) explains how he use to take advantage of this situation while playing in an international league. The club offered the team prizes for winning or drawing, thus, our informant and some of his teammates placed bet that they would lose:

“Imagine that the prize to win was 200 euros and to tie was 100, then we bet 50 euros in our defeat. In such a condition, we already knew that, if we lost, we would win money from the bet and, if we tied or won, we would win the prize of the club”.

Despite this situation, the player assures that their performance was never affected: they have always played with the objective of winning and their behaviour was only a strategy for assured monetary profit in any situation.

Another informant (KI7) agrees with that and points out that "the fact that a player bets against his own team does not necessarily imply that he loses on purpose. It does not change the player's performance”.

1.4. Pathologic gambling:

Although gambling is seen as a recreational practice, it can sometimes become an addiction. Some authors have claimed that pathologic gambling is more visible in athletes than in the general population (Stillman et. Al. 2016). The stories of Dominic Matteo, Michael Chopra and Michael Etherington are some examples of players that have lost control, developed a gambling addiction and lost millions of euros. High salaries, free time and betting as a usual leisure activity are the main reasons for this

phenomenon (Lim, et al., 2017). Matteo has confirmed this premise and assured that the number of players betting and losing big amounts of money is huge (The Guardian, 2011).

For its part, Chopra warns about the risks of the institutionalization of gambling for young players. In his case, he started betting since his debut in the first division because he wanted to participate in the activities carried out by the most experienced players¹³.

Table 1: Types of betting on own games not related with match-fixing

	<i>Gambling as recreation and cultural practice</i>			<i>Gambling as collective motivation</i>		<i>Gambling as economic incentive</i>	<i>Gambling addiction</i>
Bet on own games	Yes (Win)	Yes (all results)	Yes (Lose)	Yes (win)	Yes (goals)	Yes (lose)	Yes (all results)
Type of bet	1x2	Multiple	1x2	1x2	Goals amount	1x2	All types
Incentives	Cultural practice Prestige within the group, group internal cohesion Earning money	Cultural practice Prestige within the group, group internal cohesion Earning money	Frustration Earn money	Collective motivation Taking advantage of high odds Earning money	Collective motivation Earning money	Economic profit Guaranteed prizes	Pathological behaviour Non-rational incentive
Integrity protected	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	In risk	Yes	In risk
Auto-Protection strategies	Bet in non-regulated operators Bet by third person Bet low amounts	Ibidem	Ibidem	Ibidem	Ibidem	Ibidem	Ibidem
Players betting in legal system	Yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

Source: Own elaboration following the evidence collected.

During the ethnographic work with the futsal team, this phenomenon could be verified. The bets were a recurrent and collective activity. During trips to play abroad, for example, card games including money were common in the bus and hotels. While the amounts betted were low, a player came to lose 10% of his salary on a trip.

Although no sports actor manifested pathological behaviors of their own during the ethnographic work or the interviews, one player (KI13) alerts about the risk that an addicted player can create in the team. While playing in a foreign league, he was teammates with a player who showed pathological behaviors

¹³ “Michael Chopra reveals football’s gambling problem”, Independent, 2013, www.independent.co.uk.

and was recurrently losing money in betting. This generated instability in the dressing room, because the player even bet that they would lose when they faced stronger rivals. In his opinion, addiction can easily predispose players to manipulate results to recover lost money.

2. Gambling related with manipulation of sports competitions

Sports actors recognize that there are intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can promote situations of betting-related match-fixing (Table 2). The new online betting market accentuates the risk areas, thus, the entire coaches and managers interviewed look at this market with some suspicion. Opinion are worst in actors from sport modalities that are not totally professional or where players do not receive high salaries.

Table 2: Betting-related match-fixing risk factors

Intrinsic factors	Necessity	Personal factors	Economic problems, addictions, excessive luxuries or problems that imply extra expenses (for example those related with health, fines, etc.)
		Institutional factors	Delay in salaries payment or even breach of contracts
	Greed	Individual initiative	A sports actor decides to engage in match-fixing for personal gains
		Collective initiative	More than one sports actor decides to engage in match-fixing for personal gains
		Coercion by institutional actors	Presidents, managers or agents force sports actors to get engage in match-fixing
Extrinsic factors	Pact between external actors and internal sports actors (players, coaches and referees)	Outside-inside sport perspective	External agents (may have criminal interest or being member of organized crime syndicates) bribe one or more players to manipulate a game, or a specific event of the game, in exchange for financial amounts.
	Pact between internal sports actors (players, coaches and referees) and external actors	Inside-outside sport perspective	Players (or sports actors) fix matches and look for investors/bettors ready to share their profit.
Hybrid cases	Institutional schemes created to manipulate results	Institutional and sports actors willing to fix matches	Investors acquire a club with objective of fixing matches and taking profit from the betting market. The team is built with a coach and players predisposed to be engaged in fixings or even player with match-fixing experience

Source: Own elaboration following the evidence collected.

Several informants referred the existence of strange results in their championships since on line betting became popular (KI11; KI2). In handball, for instance, there have been an abnormal number of draws

(K11, K14; K15; K16) (see Table 3). Strange results in handball include, according the informants, team winning by a big goals difference at half-time and losing by only 1 goal at the end (KI14).

"Last year, there have been a lot of draws. The probability of drawing in handball is small (so the odds are higher). I have heard that some players where fixing results among themselves and betting. Once, a goalkeeper told me to bet because *they were going to lose*" (KI15).

Intrinsic factors for promoting betting-related match-fixing are necessity or greed. Fixing motivated by necessity is usually associated with a player's financial difficulties or needs. Difficulties can arise from personal factors, such as addictions, excessive luxuries, or problems that imply extra expenses (for example those related with health, fines, etc.). It can also be related with institutional factors, such as those resulting from delays in salaries payment or even breaches of contracts. The players need money to solve critical situations and decide to manipulate one or more results to overcome their problems or take justice into their own hands to earn what they are owed.

Table 3: Tied games in Portuguese Handball Championship

Year	Regular season		Final Stage Group A ¹⁴		Final Stage Group B	
	Games	Tied games	Games	Tied games	Games	Tied games
2017-2018	182	13	30	2	56	11
2016-2017	182	14	30	5	56	4
2015-2016	132	3	Final Stage through playoff			
2014-2015	132	10	Final Stage through playoff			
2013-2014	132	4	30	3	30	3
2012-2013	132	6	30	0	30	1

Source: Portuguese Handball Federation.

The current betting market accentuates the risks of sports corruption. In this sense, K14 questions that bets are allowed in sports and games where some teams are not professionals and players, instead of salary, receive a sandwich and a beer per game. In these cases, the manipulation of some results in a year can generate a significant economic profit for the athletes. In this sense, many athletes of semi-professional leagues recognized during the interviews that they would accept to manipulate a match that does not have much importance for the championship.

"If we had the final position in the championship already defined and someone offered us money to lose the game, and we needed this money, we would consider accepting the proposal.

¹⁴ All stages were playing through Round Robin System (all-play-all tournament). In the Final Stage Group A the best team of the regular season play for the championship. Final Stage Group B is composed by the worst team of the Regular Season.

We don't have professional contract and certain amounts of money can really change our lives" (KI15).

Faced with this reality, KI3 argues that there should not be bets on amateur modalities. A futsal player goes further and considers that allowing bets in sports where salaries are low, or in some cases even do not exist, or where there are severe delays in paying the salaries, is "a crime". For him, is like if the betting operators "are pushing those people to fix games". As one player pointed out: "It is not a matter of sport ethics, but of betting market perversity".

Another focus of conflict are the bets in championships where teams of the first level face teams of inferior leagues, like the National Cups in soccer. A football player informs that there is a lot of fixing "in the Portuguese Cup" when "a team of the 2nd or 3rd division plays against a Premier League club". According to the informant, different actors of the clubs bet and "make money to pay salaries, travels and everything: what goal can a 3rd Division team have in a cup of Portugal?".

In 2018, *Placard* has extended the list of modalities available for betting in Portugal and roller hockey was included. Both a hockey manager and a coach showed concern and emphasized that they do not "understand the logic of the decision". Now, according to their opinion, there are more incentives for fixing matches, and fixing matches can be very easy with a little bit of imagination.

Fixing motivated by greed emerges from the individual initiative of one player, or the collective initiative of members of the team, who decide to manipulate a game to illicitly make money. In some cases, players can engage in fixing by coercion by institutional actors. This is the case denounced by a first division footballer, who reported that after losing the first category of a European league 4 games before the end of the season, the president of the club forced the team to fix the remaining matches. "We get relegated, now is the time to make money," was the order of the president according to the player interviewed in Lisbon. Some informants have admitted that players, managers or agents can also become a source of coercion for getting engaged in betting-related match-fixing.

Betting related match-fixing driven by extrinsic factors is a consequence of the external approach of agents who see sports betting as an opportunity to earn and/or launder money. This type of betting-related match-fixing, which includes the potential participation of organized crime syndicates or agents with criminal interest, have been the most reported by scholars (Hill 2008, 2010; Moriconi & Teixeira-Diniz 2016; Carpenter 2012; Haberfeld & Sheehan 2013; Aquilina & Chetcuti 2014). The mainstream narrative considers that those criminal actors bribe one or more players to manipulate the game, or a specific event of the game, in exchange for financial amounts (Hill 2009; 2015; Moriconi 2018a). However, this literature does not pay attention to the fact that bribed players can also inform their teammates, and sometimes colleagues from other teams, and they all bet on the predetermined result. In this context, fixers have a double income: the bribe and the bet.

Different actors have expressed suspicion of this type of situation. However, none acknowledges having enough evidence to corroborate the suspicions. The most repeated case was about some players of a top futsal team that would have accepted bribes of around 7,000 euros to lose. In the match in question, the active corruptors would have been people linked to Asian groups. A player recognizes that he received calls asking him "what was happening that there were Chinese betting up to 5 thousand euros on the game". But although it is clear that "something strange happened", the perception of the actors is that, in practice, afterwards it is very complicated to prove that the low performance of a team or player was due to corruption.

Although focusing mainly on the interests of organized crime in the betting profit, the literature has reported this type of sports corruption from an outside-inside sport perspective and evidence in our research shows that this fraud can be generated in the opposite direction. According futsal informants, while playing in a league in southern Europe, they were informed that, for financial reasons, their club would go bankrupt at the end of the season. With an uncertain future and with the certainty of not having a club for the next season nor a guaranteed job, players understood that the best option was to fix some results and take economic advantage in the betting market. In consequence, they decided to ask some colleagues about bookmakers where they could bet high amounts to manipulate the next game. This led them to establish contacts with Asian syndicates dedicated to fixing matches. However, none of those interviewed who participated in this scheme describe the investors as organized criminals. In the corrupt pact, there was no violence nor threats.

The economic reality of some sports creates incentives for fixing matches with an inside-outside sport perspective. Since the reality of some collective sports, such as futsal, handball or roller hockey, is very different from the economics of professional football, the players might not have big amounts to invest in gambling. Therefore, although the result may be combined, the profit would not be high. This situation can lead the players to look for investors who, being able to bet higher amounts of money, offered part of the profit to them.

The previous story also serves to dismantle a premise of the match-fixing preventive traditional discourse: the one that considers that match-fixing destroys the uncertainty of a final result. Even when someone knows that the game is fixed, he cannot be certain that the result will be as stipulated. The previous story led a player who was in Portugal, and who had been previously informed of the arrangements, to contact a Chinese citizen who assured him that, if he assured him that the match was combined, he would give him 3,000 euros after winning the bet. But the player did not dare to assure what had been announced:

How could I be sure? Even if the match was fixed, something could go wrong. I was afraid of the consequences if things did not go as planned. Finally, I opted to bet 60 euros on my own. By chance the result happened, and I won".

Finally, it is possible to find hybrid cases: those in which the external actors, professional fixers dedicated to defrauding the betting market, institutionally enters in the sports world. In the case of Portugal, the case of Atlético Clube de Portugal¹⁵ showed how investors can acquire a club not for sporting purposes, but for the commercial purpose of manipulating results and win bets, and build a team with some players predisposed to be engaged in fixing matches or even players with match-fixing experience.

Discussion and conclusions

The collected evidence shows that prevention campaigns implemented by sports governance institutions to raise awareness about the dangers of match-fixing and to explain the regulatory frameworks put in place to fight against the phenomenon are ineffective and do not generate behavioural changes in the sports collective in relation to the cultural practice of gambling. This situation is due to shortcomings of form and content in the policy-making process and in the conception of the codes of ethics.

Regarding questions of forms, the elaboration of legal frameworks to regulate sports integrity, much in the same way as the policies regarding the regulation of the sports betting market and the processes of creating sports disciplinary codes, is produced in a top-down perspective in which the sports actors whose behaviours can be influenced (players, athletes, referees, coaches, etc.) do not participate. Those sports actors, for example, are not consulted about the influence of different types of bets on their work, whether they wish to become target of betting or not, or even what sports ethics mean to them.

The policy-making process, as well as the creation of sport disciplinary codes, is developed under a technical perspective where the mere criminalization of an act seems to have a performative connotation or, in other words, to be enough to change attitudes, practices and behaviours (in this case, the end of athletes' and players' cultural tradition of gambling). Thus, codes of conduct and laws are enunciated according to what Ramírez (2002: 39-40) has called *paternalistic technical discourses*: technicians, policy-makers and SGB officials are presented as agents that are not only able to determine what is good and fair for athletes, players and coaches, but also as actors trained to decide what is good and fair for those sports actors, even better than those actors themselves (Ramírez 2002: 41; Moriconi 2013: 189).

Regarding the contents of policies, this method of creating norms generates dislocations between the technical diagnoses of those who design public policies with the aim of modifying behaviours of athletes and players, and the ideas, perceptions and cultural practices of the collectives targeted by the policies. In this case, for instance, for sports governance institutions and policymakers, betting on an own game or competition has become a matter of lack of integrity and risk of manipulation. For athletes and

¹⁵ <https://tribunaexpresso.pt/football-leaks/2018-11-20-Como-Mao-enredou-o-Atletico-na-teia-dos-jogos-combinados>

players, this is a senseless and incoherent simplification. Senseless because there is no direct relationship between betting on one's own match and manipulation. Incoherent because there are other practices within the sport to promote the ethical premise of “performing to the best of one’s ability”, such as extra prizes or payments, which follow the same motivational logic (that a player can find in betting on his or her own winning) and, however, are allowed and naturalized.

Moriconi and Almeida (2019b: 220) have alerted about the paradox that a) players and athletes are converted into engines of the multi-million betting market; b) ethics and sports integrity are demanded so that the betting market based on their work is legitimate, transparent and sustainable; c) a series of business initiatives are opened so that, through that market that reifies sportsmen as betting players, a crowd can earn money thanks to the result of the work that these human beings do; d) but those human beings are denied the possibility of earning more money for fulfilling the obligation that is demanded of them, which is to “perform to their best” to win their competitions. In clearer words, the ethical paradox does not lie in the prohibition of the act of gambling, but in prohibiting sports actors from betting on their triumph, which is what the integrity of the market is demanding of them. It would be unethical, and dangerous, for a team or player to bet against their duty to win, but never to bet on their triumph (or “performing to their best” to achieve this result that is the ethical imperative that the betting market demands).

Including sports actors in the discussion and creation of legal and disciplinary frameworks that, subsequently, directly affect the context in which they develop their work can be a way to legitimize those regulatory frameworks and guarantee their compliance. In this way, different conceptions of sports ethics can be discussed and accepted and, thus, the policy-making process and the countermeasures to combat match-fixing can be improved. For instance, this can be used to create incentives for guaranteed *integrity* and to protect the betting market in cases where the salaries of the “athletes who are the target of betting” are low or, directly, if they have not been paid, as it happens with certain frequency. In fact, according to the literature (FIFPro 2012; Moriconi & Teixeira 2016: 149; Hill 2010), the non-payment or the delay in the payment of athletes’ salaries are one of the greatest motivations to engage in match-fixing. The possibility of betting on one’s own triumph and getting (extra) profits from a good performance generates incentives to fulfil the duties of fair play and sports integrity in situations in which the context might impose psychic, emotional and/or financial obstacles to performing to the best of one’s ability.

In the same way, different conceptions about gambling ethics could reform the betting market, limiting risk areas. The interests of the betting market, always in search of new products, creates structures of opportunity for sports corruption. Promoting bets in sports that are not totally professional or, in other words, converting sportspeople whose economic situation may be precarious, is understood as a call to

manipulation. As Tak et. al. (2018) has warned, the phenomenon is predetermined to some extent by the design of the betting market and institutional arrangement around sports actors.

Finally, there is a matter of content related to the understanding of the legal framework as an end. The law is a means, not an end, and the successful combat of criminal phenomena is not generated by the creation of good legal frameworks, but by the implementation of good policies and norms. In the Portuguese case, the different stakeholders recognize there is an excellent formal legal framework to combat the manipulation of results, but there is a lack of human and technological resources to put it into practice¹⁶. This reality delegitimizes preventive and legal discourses and, in the case of sports actors, naturalizes cultural elements that go against the law (gambling traditions within sport) and legitimizes the shared perception that no effective controls are available. This last factor is composed by a set of questions. First, the lack of economic, human and technological resources to control the practice of betting or, at least, all the existing possibilities so that players or their inner circles can bet using third persons. Second, and more complex and important, is the impossibility of controlling the unregulated market, which because it is an illegal space allows for structures of opportunity for criminal practices with little risk of being discovered. Finally, and considering that professional players might play in different countries along their careers and/or have fiscal residences in third countries, the possibilities to have bank accounts abroad and to bet through operators available in other countries is another point of conflict.

For this reason, the institutional preaching is perceived as dislocated from reality: the actors recognize that they are aware of the prohibitions, but they are also aware of the dysfunctions and deficiencies in the control systems. In this sense, the incentives to continue a practice that is recognized as historical and rooted are greater than the possibilities of being discovered and punished for illegal behaviour, both from the sports and from the judicial institutions.

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¹⁶ Despite all institutional sectors interviewees agreeing that Portugal have one of the best legal frameworks for fighting against corruption (Moriconi & Almeida 2019), many empathize the lack of means to effectively put it in practice. The district attorney general of Lisbon, Amadeu Guerra, has publicly warned that there is a lack of magistrates and technological resources to investigate (Lusa 2019).

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