

Development of Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS)

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eISSN: 2957-8493

pISSN:2957-8507

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.36755/themind.v3i1.100>

Received:19-01-2025

Accepted:20-04-2025

Online:22-05-2025



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ABSTRACT

The present research work focuses on the development and validation of the Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS) for athletes. Jean Piaget and Albert Bandura theory of morality was the guideline for theoretical framework. Initially the pools of items were generated through in depth and rigorous interviews and literature studies. Ten qualitative interviews were conducted from various sports athletes in different disciplines. The scale was administered to a sample size of N=282 athletes to establish its psychometric properties and validation. The reliability and consistency of the IPSS were found to be satisfactory and acceptable i.e. .79. Sphericity test of Bartlett's was also considered to determine even minute relationship between variables. For holding the factors Kaiser's criterion is the accurate measure when the number of variables is $>.30$ and the resulting commonalities (after extraction) are all larger than .70. Kaiser's criterion is also precise when the sample size surpasses 250 and the average commonality is larger than or equal to .60. The scree plot and its elbow shape indicated the presence of four distinct factors, which were further confirmed through EFA and CFA. The first factor, "Cheating Factors," consisted of 11 items. The second factor, "Foul Motivation," included 5 items. The third factor, "Foul Justification," comprised 7 items, and the fourth factor, "Righteousness," included 4 items. Through Varimax rotation and Principal Component Analysis (PCA), the four components were labeled as Foul Justification, Cheating Factors, Foul Motivation, and Righteousness. The final version of the IPSS consists of 27 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). One item (Item 22) was removed due to low factor loading. The development of the IPSS was carried out with careful consideration of contextual values, societal norms, and cultural standards, ensuring its relevance and applicability.

KEYWORDS: *Immoral Practices, Sports, Cheating Factors, Foul Motivation, Foul Justification, Righteousness, Contextual Values.*

Introduction

Sports have always been an integral part of human society, promoting physical fitness, social interaction, and competition. However, the quest for victory and success in sports has also led to the rise of unethical and immoral practices. These practices not only undermine the spirit of sportsmanship but also pose a significant threat to the integrity of sports. In the contemporary ages, there has been a swelling concern about prevalence of the immoral practices into the sports, ranging from doping to match-fixing. This research paper aims to provide an overview of these immoral practices in sports, their impact on athletes and sports organizations, and the measures taken to combat them.

Sportsmanship is the moral quality, practice or specific athlete skills. It is a behavior associated with fairness, generosity, accepting defeat with grace and jolly manner fair play, respect opponent and courteous behavior. Sportsmanship' is an aspiration or ethos that a sport or activity will be enjoyed for its own sake, with proper consideration for fairness, ethics, respect, and a sense of fellowship with one's competitors (Keating, 2021).

Roberts et al. (2007) point out that based on all interpretations, the fair play has been introduced as the standpoint that sports should be used to educate positive social values and also to shape the intellectual content based on the selected values because in the competitive environment of sports, concern about others particularly the opponents might be damaged due to athletes' attention towards competition and its results and also to the encouragement of unacceptable and non-sportive acts (Sezen & Yildiran, 2018).

The idea of sport as a social union takes account of but goes beyond an agreement to willingly abide and play by the rules in the interests of what is fair. It is concerned, in addition, with the preservation of its best traditions, customs and conventions so that the community which makes up the social union can not only cooperatively participate in sport but also successfully relate to one another as persons, through an understood, shared and appreciated mode of proceeding (Arnold, 2023).

Among all the forms of immoral practice in sports, foul justification is the most prominent one. It is characterized by improving or enhancing performance through the use of drugs or other illegal or prohibited substances. The comprehensive effects of the

steroids and performance enhancing drugs in sports has been an established issue, with several eminent incidents where sportsmen caught red-handed for consuming banned substances. Use of PEDs (Performance Enhancing Drugs) not only violates the rules and regulations of sports organizations but also poses significant health risks to athletes (Kazlauskas et al., 2016). Despite the efforts of sports organizations to combat doping, the use of PEDs remains prevalent in many sports, highlighting the need for more effective anti-doping measures.

Match-fixing refers to the manipulation of sporting events to achieve a predetermined outcome. This immoral practice involves a wide range of actors, including athletes, coaches, referees, and even criminal organizations. Match-fixing not only undermines the credibility of sports but also poses a significant threat to the safety of athletes and the integrity of sports organizations (Lucero, 2021). The use of technology and social media has made it easier for match-fixers to coordinate their activities, making it increasingly challenging for sports organizations to detect and prevent match-fixing.

There are several other immoral practices in sports, including bribery, violence, and sexual harassment. Bribery involves offering or accepting money or other benefits to influence the outcome of a sporting event. Violence, on the other hand, refers to the use of physical force or aggression against other athletes, officials, or spectators. Sexual harassment involves unwanted sexual advances, comments, or gestures directed toward athletes or other members of the sporting community (Smith et al., 2020). These immoral practices not only violate the rules and regulations of sports organizations but also pose significant ethical and legal issues (Smith et al., 2020).

Sports organizations have implemented several measures to combat immoral practices in sports, including the establishment of anti-doping agencies, the use of technology to detect match-fixing, and the adoption of codes of conduct to address other immoral practices. However, the effectiveness of these measures has been limited by several factors, including the lack of resources and expertise, the complexity of the issues involved, and the resistance of some athletes and organizations to change (Giulianotti & Numerato, 2018). To address these challenges, there is a need for greater collaboration among sports organizations, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders to promote transparency, accountability, and ethical behavior in sports.

Sport has a dark side. Coaches can be mean and sometimes their behavior is beyond the pale, but if they win games, their idiocy will be overlooked. There's mindless violence being glorified in the media. Some athletes take drugs. So many athletes cheat to get a competitive advantage. Athletes get taken advantage of by their teams. The prevailing view, among many others, is that these issues arise from bad actors and are a product of a morally compromised sports world -- one where the value of winning eclipses everything else; where moral principles have been conflated with a financial bottom line. (Arnold, 2018).

In sport, young men learned physical and mental strength, and loyalty to their team and school. Good sportsmanship was considered less as a formal rule following and more a personal fare. Contestants ought to strive for the essence, not just the form, of these rules and play in style (Liponski 1988; McIntosh 1979; Mangan 1981). In most sports, rule breaking becomes standard practice and no longer counts as cheating to those who compete or watch—you know what it is: convention. But the fact that traditional cheating is rampant does not make it ethical. Simon (2003) explained "Conventions are regarded as what is considered right." accepted practice.

Theoretical Framework

Piaget Theory of Morality: - Concurring to Jean Piaget's distinctive noting, kids how fall under the age frame of five to ten years tries to see the world through the focal point of a "heteronomous" (other-directed) ethical quality. These ethical standards and guidelines provided them by the immediate ones like guardians, instructors, relatives and sometime government officials appointed for that kind of a special task. Fundamentally, youngster's tries to accept that expert figures have celestial supremacies, so that authority can make rules and regulations until the end of time and these guidelines must not be taken for granted and alter later. Teenagers' thinking with respect to why these rules ought to be taken after is for the most part based authoritatively upon their obligation of results related to breaking the rules. The mainstream of kids monitor these directions to evade being disallowed because violation of these directions stereotypically consequences in undesirable individual effects (Piaget, 1997).

Youngsters' appreciation of ethical qualities becomes extra autonomous & fewer gloomy, white and confirmed as the development of the capability to placed

themselves in another person's shoes. This extended indebtedness was referred to by Piaget as a profound feature of involvement. Commencement at nearly at the time of ten or eleven years while continuing through youth, youngsters will eventually start seeing these ethical boundaries and values as a societal requirement. Youngsters who adhere to these frame of orientation continue to believe these following rules essential, despite the fact that these rules are viewed as complicated and in some ways contentious recommendations that are intended to advance everybody's exists. Most of the youngsters got the sound the making choice in the life is a hard choice as it seems so they ought the responsibility and must take some courage to overcome these fears and negative thoughts. Everyone is affected by choices, and they can either benefit or harm everyone (Piaget, 1997).

Sports interests can contribute to the advancement of social abilities and self-esteem. Don is approximately the honorable interest of victory. It isn't close to playing by the rules; it is additionally approximately playing inside the soul of the rules. It requires sportsmanship, reasonable play, playing clean, and regard. Sportsmanship is showing behaviors that are based on such crucial values as regard, decency, civility, trustworthiness, and duty. Reasonable play is damaged when competitors lock-in in destitute donning behavior such as annoying and utilizing hostile dialect or by losing self-control through fits, bragging, bullying, utilizing execution-improving drugs, or locking in excessively forceful play. Reasonable play moreover is transgressed through narrow-minded play (e.g., ball-hogging or interest in one's headway over that of the group. Piaget's hypothesis of ethical quality can be related to the corrupt activities that happen in sports. In sports, there are regular rules and controls that must be taken to guarantee reasonable play and sportsmanship. In any case, a few people or groups may lock in corrupt hones such as cheating or doping to pick up an out-of-line advantage (Piaget, 1997).

In terms of Piaget's hypothesis, those who lock in such corrupt hones may still be working beneath the heteronomous ethical quality organized. They see rules as outright and unchangeable and accept that breaking the rules is continuously off-base. Be that as it may, they may legitimize their corrupt activities by centering on the conclusion objective of winning, instead of the implies utilized to realize that objective.

On the other hand, those who follow reasonable play and sportsmanship may have advanced to the independent ethical quality organization. They get that rules can be changed through transaction and assertion, and they recognize the significance of playing fairly and inside the rules for the good thing about all members. Generally, Piaget's hypothesis of ethical quality highlights the significance of understanding the underlying cognitive improvement of people and how it relates to their ethical thinking and decision-making. Within the setting of sports, this could offer assistance to advance reasonable play and debilitate shameless hones (Piaget, 1997). Hence it is essential to develop an indigenous scale on immoral practices in sports to address the culturally unique immoral practices.

Rationale

The present study aims to develop a scale of immoral practices in sports athletes. Being in the profession of psychology it is our responsibility to observe the phenomenon which affect sports person's performance or other dimension of sports. Now a day's moral issues in sports are growing day by day as it has been seen at national and international level that many players involved in unethical practices like doping, drug usage etc. so, it has become a major and very important phenomenon to be studied.

Participation in any kind of a sports can contribute to the development of healthy self-esteem and social skills. Pursuing sports for the sake of victory is a honorable perspective. Its not only playing by rules, it's all about playing it by the spirit of the rules and sportsmanship. Which required playing clean, playing with respect and showing the true spirit of the game. Sportsmanship means showing the behaviors that are based on the basic fundamental values as respect, fairness, civility, integrity and responsibility. Fairness of the game is violated when athletes use to involved in bad sportsmanship such as sledging and using abusive words or by losing self-control at the moment of heat. Bullying and using performance enhancing drugs or engaging in overly aggressive play also includes in these domains.

Many coaches just want to win the game at any cost and also enforce the athletes to do so. Sports not only entitled respect for the rules of the game but also means to showing respect fo the opponents view point as well, equal and every opportunity for the opponent's teams to perform as well. These elements seem to be constructive for sports and sportsmanship.

Method

Immoral practices in sports scale were developed in the Urdu language i.e. National language of Pakistan. Overall, the process followed different steps during its development, i.e.

- (i) Construct Conceptualization
- (ii) In-depth Interviews
- (iii) Generation of Item Pool
- (iv) Psychometric Validation

Construct Conceptualization

Immoral practices in sports are increasing nowadays due to a high sense of competitiveness and no such tool developed in Pakistan or even in Western countries so far. In the first step construct was conceptualized in the light of theoretical perspective and literature review and the main idea was grasped from interviews with the participants.

Conducting Interviews

After a thorough conceptualization of the construct researcher aimed to gather possible answers that the athletes hold regarding immoral practices and ethics in sports. An interview guide was prepared.

Sample Characteristics (Qualitative Interviews)

The purposive sampling technique was used to select 10 (males=6, females =4) sports athletes. The age range of the participants was 20-24 years. Convenience / snowball sampling strategy was used to recruit the participants.

Procedure

Participants were approached on the ground for interviews. Participants were initially told about the nature of the study in the signed informed consent form, and they were ensured the confidentiality of their data. Participants responded to the open-ended questions, and they were thoroughly probed further with questions. The responses of the participants were tape-recorded and then transcribed. Each interview lasted for 20-25 minutes. At the end of the discussion, members were acknowledged for their contribution and assistance.

Sample Characteristics (Psychometric Validation)

The sample size for psychometric validation was determined $N: q$ rule given by Jackson (2020). It explains the size of sample by taking in the ratio of cases (N) to number of items that require statistical estimates (q). 10:1 is an ideal sample size to parameter ratio. For the current study the ideal minimum sample size for a total of $q = 10$ per item parameters that require statistical estimate, would be 28×10 or $N = 280$. But the actual sample size was $N = 282$ because different views have been proposed and it is a common suggestion that more the ratio of $N: q$ the more trustworthy the results would be (Kline, 2021). The response rate was found to be 91% as calculated by following the definition of American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR, 2016).

The sample comprised of 282 sports persons (162= males, 120= females) of different sports from university of the Punjab, Lahore. The age range was 17-27 years. Non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to collect data. Only those sports persons were included who had minimum experience of two year in professional sports.

Demographic Details

Descriptive, Frequency and Percentages of Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N=282)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age			22.17	2.89
Recent most semester GPA			3.20	.45
Overall CGPA			3.15	.41
Participated in University tournaments			6.47	6.28
Monthly family income			69585.80	92589.69
Gender of participant				
Men	162	60		
Women	120	40		
Current educational year				

First year	169	65.6		
Second year	83	29.7		
Third year	22	3.0		
Fourth year	10	2.8		
Residence of participants				
Hostelied	171	68		
Day scholar	111	32		
Program in which participant study				
BS	164	72		
MSc	116	26		
M.phil	4	2		
Department in which study				
Sports Sciences	62	28.8		
Engineering	54	19.95		
Physical education	44	16.9		
Biological Sciences	31	13.0		
Computer and Business administration	30	17.44		
Social Science	61	27.44		

Results

These recordings of interviews were then transcribed carefully by the researcher. All the statements were carefully listened to, and meaningful statements were processed to make items for the scale. After transcribing the items, an initial pool of 28 items was completed.

All these items were formulated in the Urdu language. 7 point rating scale of Likert-type was used as a scoring measure (01 = strongly disagree, 02 = disagree, 03 = disagree to some extent, 04 = neutral, 05=agree to some extent, 06 = agree, 07 = strongly agree).

Scoring and Interpretation

Scoring and interpretation of immoral practices in the Sports Scale (IPSS) were as follows: The score range on this scale is from 28-196. A high score on

this scale means that the sportsman has a high tendency towards immoral practices in sports and a low score indicates a low tendency towards immoral practices.

Factor Structure and Reliability Analysis

Phase two is comprised of two steps: factor analysis and reliability analysis. In order to regulate the factor construction of these items in final scale, factor analysis was carried out. Internal consistency was assessed through reliability analysis. For this purpose, Principal Component Analysis, followed by Varimax Rotation on the N=282 responses of the participants on 28 items was carried out.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The main objective of Phase II was to confirm the factor structure after CFA.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS).

Confirmatory factor analysis for the Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS) was run and model fit indices of the tested model is presented in the table.

Table. 1

Fit Indices of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS).

Model	χ^2	Df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	GFI	RMSEA
Model Fit	341.23	79	2.73	.97	.97	.94	.08

Note. N = 282, All changes in chi-square values were computed to model, Chi-square

> .05, CFI = Comparative fit indices, GFI = Goodness of fit indices, RMSEA = RootMean Square of approximation

Results of confirmatory factor analysis for the as demonstrated in table value χ^2 (341.23) = 3.64, $p > .05$ was absolute fit. After drawing the covariance, the RMSEA for the model fit was .08 whereas, the GFI value was .94 and the CFI value was .97. The fit indices were as per the given cut of scores (Hair, Gabriel, M., & Patel, 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Sphericity test of Bartlett's was also considered to determine even minute relationship between variables. For holding the factors Kaiser's criterion is the accurate measure when the number of variables is >.30 and the resulting commonalities

(after extraction) are all larger than .70. Kaiser’s criterion is also precise when the sample size surpasses 250 and the average commonality is larger than or equal to .60. In any other kind of conditions it is recommended to practice a scree plot (Harrell, 2000). So, the option was to go with a scree plot option.

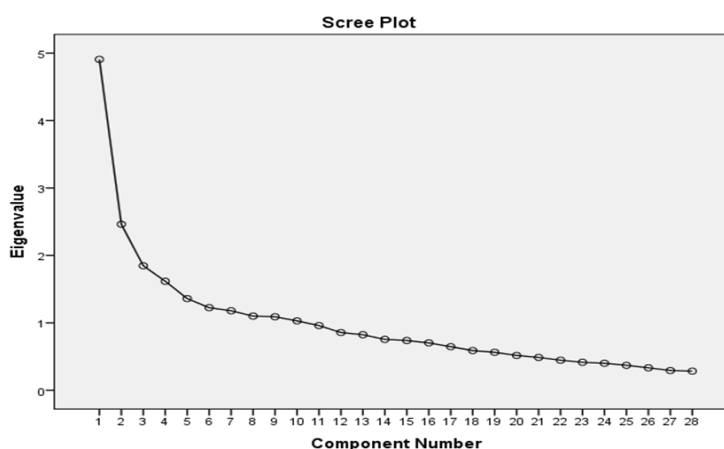
Table. 2

Eigen--Values and Percentage of Variances Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS). (N=282)

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Eigen—Values</i>	<i>PercentageofVariances</i>	<i>CumulativePercentages</i>
1	4.90	17.52	17.52
2	2.64	8.75	26.32
3	1.84	6.59	32.91
4	1.61	5.77	38.68
5	1.36	4.85	43.54
6	1.22	4.37	47.92
7	1.17	4.21	52.13
8	1.10	3.93	56.06
9	1.09	3.89	59.95
10	1.03	3.67	63.63

Figure 1

Scree Plot Showing the Extraction of Factors for Immoral Practices in Sports (IPSS)



The extraction of factors is shown in Figure. Four factors were shown in the Scree plot. Therefore, Principal Component Analysis with four factors was carried out. Items for the sub-scales were selected on the criteria of having factor loadings of .30 and above (Harrell, 2000). The factor loadings of 28 items of the IMPS on four factors are given below in Table 3.

Table. 3

Factor loading for the EFA with the Varimax Rotation of Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS).

<i>Item No</i>	<i>Cheating factors</i>	<i>Foul motivation</i>	<i>Foul justification</i>	<i>Righteousness</i>
1				.69
2				.83
3	-			.69
4	.33	-	-	-
5			.66	
6	-		.47	
7	-			.48
8			.57	-
9			.62	-
10	.53			
11	.54			
12	.48			-
13	.59			-
14	-		.47	
15		.49		-
16	.36	-	-	-
17	.59			-

18	.64			
19	.36	-	-	-
20	.49			
21			.57	-
22	-	-	-	-
23	.46	-	-	-
24	-		.43	
25	-	.65		
26		.66		
27		.72		
28		.65		

27 items were retained in the final scale. It is a seven-point rating scale and four factors were extracted. Following are the four factors; Cheating Factors, Foul Motivation, Foul Justification, and Righteous. The number of items for each factor is 11 items, 5 items, 7 items, and 4 items respectively. Item number 22 was deleted because of its low factor loading. Reliability analysis was done again. The Cronbach alpha value was .79 indicating appropriate reliability. The Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (IPSS) has four subscales. The scoring and interpretation of these subscales are as follows: Cheating factors (11 items), the score range on this scale is from 11 (minimum) to 77 (maximum) Foul Motivation (5 items), the score range from 5(minimum) to 35, foul justification (7 items), the score ranged from 7(minimum) to 49(maximum) and righteous (4 items), the score on this subscale ranged from 4(minimum) to 28(maximum).

Table. 4

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis for Immoral Practices in Sports Scale (N=282)

<i>Scales</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
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			Potential	Actual		
Immoral Practices in Sports	.79	27	27-189	50-164	107.37	19.71
Cheating factors	.73	11	11-77	11-77	45.28	10.66
Foul motivation	.69	5	5-35	5-32	18.68	6.39
Foul justification	.69	7	7-49	7-43	23.12	7.55
Righteousness	.65	4	4-28	4-28	20.37	5.09

Note: α = reliability coefficient, k= no. of items, M= mean, SD= standard deviation

Discussion

Immoral practices in sports have never been discussed in Pakistan and they have always been an ignorant part of the game, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship of personality traits and immoral practices in athletes. This chapter includes discussion in the light of previous literature review and relevant researchers. Moreover, conclusion, limitations about the current research, suggestions for the future researchers and implications of current research are given in the end of this chapter.

The Immoral Practices in sports scale (IPSS) developed in this study measures different factors in sports. Factor Analysis was administered to make factors of the current self-structured scale. Based on the outcomes, four factors developed. The first factor included cheating factors comprised of 11 items. The second factor included 5 items that deal with foul motivation, the third factor named foul justification comprised 7 items, and the fourth factor named righteous comprised 4 items. Nowadays, sports people are using different ways of cheating in sports and adopted different unethical ways of winning games. Significant factor for being a respectable and upright sportsperson is to have the potential and aptitude to embrace the emotional and psychological features of the sports. Further studies can be directed to endorse these four factors, how they extracted from this study by simply increasing the sample size or considering different other immoral practices.

Cheating, foul justification, righteous motivation, and foul motivation are some of the key factors that contribute to immoral practices in sports. These factors not only undermine the spirit of sportsmanship but also pose significant ethical and legal issues.

Cheating is a pervasive problem in sports, involving the use of deceptive or illegal tactics to gain an unfair advantage over opponents. Cheating can take many forms, including doping, match-fixing, and other forms of misconduct. Cheating not only violates the rules and regulations of sports organizations but also undermines the integrity of sports and the trust of fans (Barkoukis et al., 2021).

Foul justification refers to the tendency of athletes to justify their actions on the field, even if they violate the rules and ethics of sports. This may involve rationalizing aggressive or violent behavior as necessary to win or to defend oneself against opponents. Foul justification not only promotes unsportsmanlike conduct but also increases the risk of injury to athletes and undermines the fairness of sports competitions (Shields et al., 2018). To combat foul justification, sports organizations should promote ethical behavior and emphasize the importance of fair play and respect for opponents. Righteous motivation refers to the belief that an athlete's actions are justified by a higher moral purpose, such as the desire to win for their team or to honor their country. While righteous motivation may be seen as a positive attribute, it can also lead to unethical behavior, such as the use of PEDs or other forms of cheating (Sagar & Lavalley, 2010).

Limitations and Suggestions

The tool was developed and tested within the cultural context of Pakistan, which may restrict its generalizability to other populations. Researchers are encouraged to replicate the study across different cultural contexts to assess the tool's applicability and relevance in diverse populations. Future research can be conducted on people belonging to different cultures to expand the findings. Expanding the sample to include participants from diverse cultural, educational, and socio-economic backgrounds would provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the tool's robustness and relevance across various contexts.

Implications

One of the primary implications of the development of immoral practices in sports is the negative impact on the health and safety of athletes. The use of performance-enhancing drugs, violence, and other forms of unsportsmanlike conduct pose significant health risks to athletes, including the risk of long-term health

consequences and even death. To address this issue, sports organizations must prioritize the health and safety of athletes by enforcing rules and regulations to prevent and punish unethical behavior, implementing effective anti-doping measures, and promoting a culture of fair play and respect for opponents. The development of immoral practices in sports has implications for the engagement and trust of fans. Fans expect sports competitions to be fair, transparent, and conducted with integrity. The development of immoral practices in sports can lead to a loss of trust and engagement among fans, which can have significant financial and reputational consequences for sports organizations. To address this issue, sports organizations must prioritize the needs and expectations of fans by building strong relationships based on transparency, accountability, and fair play.

Conclusion

Cheating, foul justification, righteous motivation, and foul motivation are some of the key factors that contribute to immoral practices in sports. These factors not only undermine the spirit of sportsmanship but also pose significant ethical and legal issues. To combat these factors, sports organizations should promote a culture of fair play, emphasize the importance of opponents' respect and the rules of the game, and enforce rules and regulations to prevent and punish unethical behavior in sports.

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