

## Sociological Explanation of the Role of Counseling and Cultural Centers in Iranian Young Athletes' Unprofessional Behaviors and Lawlessness

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The primary objective of the current research was to carry out a sociological analysis regarding the level of adherence to professional sports ethics within Iranian society.

**Methods:** The research methodology entailed conducting investigations in nine cities and across seven sports disciplines, with a sample size of 1765 players in the year 2019. Additionally, fifty exploratory interviews were conducted with experts in the field.

**Results:** The findings of the research indicate that the nonexistence of political programs, coupled with deficiencies in the implementation, supervision, and monitoring within the structures and systems of club ownership, serve as the underlying cause for the noncompliance of young athletes with rules, regulations, and professional standards. Moreover, the inefficiency in the field of education, as well as the lack of knowledge and awareness pertaining to professional and ethical charters and regulations, are among the prominent factors contributing to the lawlessness exhibited by young athletes. As part of the solutions, expediting the process of privatization, mandating the teaching of ethical codes in all fields, formulating and consolidating rules and regulations for the legal control and supervision of sports publications, issuing fan cards, enforcing stringent regulations, and implementing bans in cases of abnormality can all contribute to the enhancement of the sporting environment and the promotion of lawfulness within sports. The research data demonstrate a direct correlation between seeking counseling services and the incidence of unprofessional and illicit conduct.

**Conclusions:** The findings generally show that counseling centers can play a decisive role in preventing unprofessional and illegal behaviors of athletes.

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## Introduction

Sport is a part of the structural and macro social system, which together with other social institutions, has an effective and beneficial function in maintaining social order and stability, and this is why the policymakers of the social system consider sports as one of the important policy tools. Social and cultural benefits in age and gender groups.

On the other hand, today, sports, as a strong and important instrumental element, has a great role in the cultural and social development of societies, and its continuation is very important in improving the material and spiritual cultural level of the society and guarantees the physical and mental health of the society. Sports in various forms is a reflection of society as a whole and in other words, it introduces a miniature of human interactions at the level of society.

In today's world, sports serve as a multi-faceted tool with significant structural impacts. They contribute to economic development, promote healthy leisure practices, and foster education and training, particularly among youth. Sports also enable international relations, prevent social harm, and facilitate cultural management and planning".Attending counseling and cultural centers strengthens mental abilities including self-awareness, ability to learn, ability to develop skills, adaptability, physical and mental performance, commitment, and emotional control.

In the contemporary world, sports, as an efficient and powerful tool, have received special attention from governments and socio-political systems, and for their economic, social and cultural growth, they need to pay attention to many issues in various fields of sports (Naimo, 2014).

Professional ethics deals with issues and questions as well as ethical principles and values of a professional system and monitors the voluntary actions of professionals in the field of their professional activity. Professional ethics are very important in all jobs; But it seems that this importance in sports has a double value, because from the point of view of experts, the reflection of the social health of any society can be seen in the professional and ethical sports behaviors of athletes, and the sports system of that society (Milanovic, al et, 2021, Campbell, 2021, Cheragh Birkandi, K., & Khaje, S. H).

In addition to this, sport is felt as a field of social action and a space for individual and collective action with greater intensity. On the other hand, sports is the most popular form of public culture in terms of public, intergenerational and population attractions, which provides more cultural,

instrumental and emotional and fully recognizable forms for receiving and expressing identity and cultural leveling and social integration. It creates a suitable format (Zakaei, 1391, 145). In the field of social and cultural studies of sports, there are various theoretical frameworks for analyzing the fields of attention and its pathology. The theories of psychology and psychoanalysis emphasize on motivations and self-confidence and gaining a new identity, and structuralist theories see it as a social text, and modern sociological theories also refer to social discourses and issues such as legitimacy, power and Purification of emotions and self-control are important (ibid, 148).

Most of the international sports institutions and organizations have their own professional code of ethics and the athletes are obliged to comply with the professional ethics related to it. For example, FIFA has determined eleven basic principles for action and behavior: honesty and moral behavior; respect for others; not tolerating discrimination and harassment; fair play; Compliance with the law, rules and regulations; preventing conflict of interest; Transparency and obedience; social and environmental responsibilities; fight against drugs and doping; Intolerance of bribery and corruption; Prohibition of betting and manipulation of results.

Ford (2007) describes "risky behavior" as "any behavior that increases negative health-related outcomes for the participant". Unprofessional behaviors are often risk-taking behaviors for athletes that can hinder growth and development. They went in different fields. Risky behaviors are behaviors that a person performs voluntarily and leaves involuntary consequences that are harmful to a person's health (Hogarth, 2013: 90). Therefore, unprofessional behaviors, which are often illegal, endanger the physical, psychological and social health and well-being of athletes. and has a short-term and long-term negative effect on the physical and mental well-being of people. The broad concept of risky behavior includes a series of behaviors that not only cause serious harm to the person involved in this behavior and the important people in his life, but also cause harm. Unintentionally, it also affects other innocent people.

The spread of high-risk behaviors among different age groups, especially among teenagers and young athletes in Iran, especially in the last 10 years, has grown significantly and has become a social issue and concern for social policy makers and sports managers, and is one of the important problems of sports in society. It is Iran and it has caused many concerns for Iranian families at different levels of Boise society, and on the other hand, not much research has been done in this field; Therefore, considering the generality and increasing trend of teenagers and young people

towards professional and public sports, and the desire of families towards sports and the special position of professional athletes in the reference groups of teenagers and young people, paying attention to the issue of non-professional behaviors of athletes is important. It is special.

Therefore, considering the importance of the issue and the need to expand the knowledge of the university system regarding this issue, in this research, the attempt is to investigate the current situation of the level of compliance with professional ethics and sports norms among athletes in various sports fields in Iranian society. and analyze the sociological factors affecting it and it explains the effect of cultural and counseling centers on the emergence of professional and legalistic behaviors.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Sports is an institutionalized physical competition that takes place in a formal, organized or collective structure" (Nixon Waferi, 3:1996). This definition is important from a sociological point of view in several aspects: First, the term "institutionalized" implies that sport has an established structure of norms, dignities, roles and regulated and relatively stable social relations. This structure includes formal and informal rules governing social interaction in the field of sports activities, whose main function is to regulate the rules of social interaction in the field of sports performance and monitor the existing situations in the sports organizational structure and specific rights and duties related to it. Second, the physical competition that monitors the conventional type and form of interaction in sports activities. In other words, sports include the activities of individuals and groups. Third, the official structure of the organization, which includes components such as transparent administrative rules, official support from the regulatory bodies of sports activities, hierarchy and administrative organization. In fact, sports activities operate within the framework of the rules governing the bureaucratic organization. That is, a type of official organization with a certain division of work, a hierarchy of tasks and responsibilities, accounting and rational efficiency in order to follow the tasks and goals of an organization that operates based on rational and legitimate authority.

Today, in modern sports, money and capital are the infrastructure and ethics, and only professional ethics, which is a standard for determining the behavior of individuals and groups, is relevant. The

main focus of liberalism "let him do whatever he wants" eventually leads to a point in professional sports where athletes use all their illegitimate tricks to reach the top of the championship.

According to Bourdieu's theory, sport as a field of social action is affected by the elements and factors that occur in its arena and environment. The actions and reactions of activists are a function of what happens in this field of social action (Mehrban, 2018, 56). In this field of social action, conformity with official values and norms is a function of the level and capabilities of formal and informal social control tools.

From the point of view of Norbert Elias (1897-1990), sports allow people to experience the full thrill of risk-free struggle. Therefore, sports become openings for feelings that cannot be purified in any other way in the habitual aspects of social life.

(Nixon Waferi, 1996) considering the different dimensions of sports and its various applications in the new era, they have emphasized four factors of physical conditions, physical skills, symbolic and competitive aspects, and the stimulation of people's participation in the definition of sports.

In their research, Salimi and Mousavi (2008) classified the results of barriers to the development of professional ethics in Iran's premier football league players into 4 groups of managerial and organizational, cultural and social, human and economic barriers. Based on the results of this research, among managerial and organizational obstacles, the lack of a comprehensive and ethical system for monitoring the performance of players and the lack of professional behavior in the entire body of championship sports; Among the cultural and social obstacles, replacing the secondary goals of sports instead of the primary goals and the physical and psychological obstacles of the competition environment; Among the obstacles related to human resources, the lack of a strategic attitude towards professional ethics by managers and the lack of motivation in players to comply with the principles of professional ethics, and among the economic obstacles, the presence of stray and huge financial capital in sports were prioritized. According to the results of the research of Talebian Nia, Mozafari and Mortezaei (2007), the state of professional behavior in Iran's championship sports is average, however, the subject group including champions, coaches, sports managers and lecturers wanted to reach the desired state.

Mousavi et al. (2013) during research to describe aggressive behavior in high school sports competitions, according to gender (girls and boys) and type of sport (volleyball, basketball,

handball, soccer and futsal) in the sports Olympiad of 2012 and including 302 competitions. And 1531 players have been paid

Hosseini et al (2012) investigated the factors of tax evasion phenomenon among professional athletes and coaches. The data analysis showed that among the legal factors, the lack of transparency of the clubs' financial information; Among the cultural factors, athletes' wrong perception of tax payments; Among the legal factors, the lack of executive guarantee by the relevant institutions on the clubs; Among the management factors, most of the active sports clubs in the country are state-owned; And among the economic factors, the factor of not paying the athletes' contract on time; were prioritized.

Allison (2008) studied the role of sports and its relationship with professional and civil ethics of athletes in Georgia, Thailand and South Africa. Based on the results of this research, violence and tax evasion and conflict with referees and the opposing team are the most important unprofessional behaviors of athletes. . Delaney and Kinney (2009) in research titled Sports and Cultural Capital in England, compared the level of sports participation and its link with social capital in this country with other European countries and concluded that the stronger the cultural capital - Okayasu and others (2010) in research entitled "Relationship between sports clubs and social capital", investigated the difference between the types of sports clubs in Japan and their relationship with types of social capital. By distinguishing between general sports clubs and specialized sports clubs, these researchers showed that each of them produces different social capital.

According to Perks (2007), at some times, sports, especially its competitive type, can lead to multiple divisions and social differences. Based on this, many researches have shown the inequalities and multiplicity caused by sports. Ford (2007) has investigated high-risk behaviors in high school and college athletes and indicators of alcohol and drug use, unsafe sexual practices, not using helmets or seat belts, carrying weapons, gambling, improper nutrition, and improper use of medications. or supplements. has examined.

### Materials and Methods

Survey method is used in this research. In this research, according to the nature of research, the emphasis is on the simultaneous use of quantitative methods (survey), during which the collection

of information is done by directly referring to the statistical community, therefore, in this research, two methods are appropriate to the goals of the plan. A little bit was used to answer the main questions of the research. The statistical sample of this research is Iranian male athletes over 18 years old in the disciplines (football, bodybuilding, basketball, volleyball, handball, karate, taekwondo) which are more popular among young people. And the athletes have, form. This research was conducted in 10 big sports cities of Iran (Tehran, Ahvaz, Shiraz, Isfahan, Sari, Rasht, Tabriz, Mashhad, Urmia). The number of statistical samples was estimated to be 1765 based on Sample Power software.

The data collection tool is a researcher-made questionnaire, which was used for face validity from the opinions and suggestions of physical education experts and club managers, and Cronbach's alpha test was used to provide empirical validity. In the questionnaire, the researcher has used a standard questionnaire to measure the main variables of the research (non-professional and abnormal sports behaviors), which has validity and scientific validity based on previous research. In this article, in accordance with the measurement level of the variables, a set of parametric and non-parametric statistical techniques and coefficients have been used to analyze the data. Therefore, in this article, in addition to descriptive statistics, regression analysis is used to analyze the relationships between variables. And analysis of variance has also been used.

**Table 1.** Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the examined variables

<b>variables</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha coefficient</b>
<b>The amount of religious observance</b>	0.83
<b>The level of awareness of the code of ethics</b>	0.85
<b>The amount of clubs' actions according to charter</b>	0.84
<b>The presence of psychological counseling</b>	0.81
<b>sports field</b>	0.88
<b>Family supervision and consent</b>	0.83
<b>Refer to counseling centers</b>	0.86

In this study, according to the objectives, different methods were used for data extraction and analysis, which include descriptive analysis and inferential analysis methods. Also, the method of path analysis and multivariable regression is used to explain and predict its changes, and the F test is used for relationships that are measured by several variables.

**Table 2.** Distribution of the research sample according to sports fields and cities (systematic random sampling method)

Sport type	Tehran	Mashhad,	Tabriz	Karaj	Ahvaz	Shiraz	Urmia	Rasht	Isfahan
Soccer	200	25	50	25	50	25		25	50
Volleyball	40	15	15	15	15	15	45	15	15
Karate	40	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Handball	40	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Basketball	40	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Body building	40	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Taekwondo	40	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
Total	530	145	170	145	170	145	145	145	170

The most important variable of this research is legality in sports, which is measured by legal authorities in one of the indicators, doping, conflict with spectators, conflict with coach, conflict with referee, formal contracts, drug use, collusion. , bribery to the referee and tax evasion, alcohol consumption, smoking, which are emphasized in the ethical and professional charter.

## Results

### Norm avoidance and law avoidance

According to the data in the table below and based on self-report, an average of 6.5 percent of the research sample has been warned for committing one of the unprofessional and illegal behaviors or anomalies. Most of the warning cases It is related to conflicts with referees and conflicts with opponents, about 8.5% of people have been warned because of conflicts with referees and conflicts with opponents, 7.5% of people because of conflicts with coaches, 4.5% of respondents because of doping and conflicts with Spectators and 4.5% due to formal contracts, 3.9% due to collusion and collusion, 3.5% due to participation in parties and 4.8% consumption of alcoholic beverages, and 4.5% due to tax evasion and 2.8% due to being warned by managers.



**Table 3.** Distribution of the examined sample according to their opinions about unprofessional behaviors in terms of the percentage of qualified

Variable	Have you ever been given a warning for unprofessional behavior?		
	Yes	No	standard deviation
Tax evasion	4.8	95.2	.172
Doping	4.5	95.5	.175
Engaged with the spectators	8.5	91.5	.219
Engaged with the coach	4	96	.222
with the referee Engaged	8.5	94.9	.184
Engaged with the opponent	5.2	94.8	.177
Engaged with a teammate	8.4	91.6	.071
Hypothyroidism	4.5	95.5	.216
Alcohol consumption	5	95	.167
Lying and hypocrisy	5.9	94.1	.162
Formal contract	4.5	95.5	.073
Vilification	6.8	93.2	.106
Bribe the referee	5	99.5	.157
Slandering the opponent	6	99.4	.168
Participate in the party	3.5	96.5	.080
Dmoking	9.5	90.5	.059
Drug use	4.5	95.5	.167
Collude	2.9	97.1	.044
Average	6.5	93.5	

**Table 4.** Regression coefficient of variables affecting receiving a warning due to unethical and dangerous behaviors

Variables	B	The standard error	Standard beta	T value	p
Constant	8.40	0.26	-	27.32	0.001
Grade	0.31	0.005	0.031	8.22	0.001
The amount of religious observance	0.11	0.087	0.025	5.23	0.001
The level of awareness of the code of ethics	0.24	0.065	0.11	5.13	0.001
The amount of clubs' actions according to charter	0.14	0.043	0.16	3.65	0.001
The presence of psychological counseling	0.14	0.043	0.16	3.65	0.001
sports field	0.11	0.056	0.15	3.10	0.04
Family supervision and consent	0.11	0.041	0.16	3.01	0.005
Refer to counseling centers	0.11	0.062	0.17	4.04	0.001

**Table 5.** Variance analysis to determine the significance of the regression equation

Source	SS	MS	F	DF	p
Regression	13424.832	1342.334	116	10	0.001
Remainder	164237.28	11.54		14232	
Total	177662.653			14242	

**Table 6.** Summary of regression model of variables affecting behavioral abnormality

R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Standard error
0.297	0.087	0.085	2.21

The data of the regression table shows that the variables of membership in the club, awareness of the moral charter, attention of the clubs to the implementation of the charter, and the level of

religious observance and family approval have the most effect and the highest coefficient in building the structure of moral anomaly. These findings suggest that professional and religious factors have the strongest influence. According to the logic of regression, which is prediction and explanation, more changes are explained by four variables, awareness of the moral charter, attention of clubs to the implementation of the charter, and the amount of religious observance and supervision and approval of the family. The coefficients of the regression table show the influence of this It has components. Therefore, it should be said that the better and stronger the status of variables such as membership in the club, awareness of the moral charter, attention of the clubs to the implementation of the charter, and the level of religious observance and family approval, the same moral and professional abnormality. It becomes less. Data and regression coefficients show that the mentioned variables and sources explain and recount only 38% of the changes affecting behavioral abnormalities in sports. In the sense that it is affected by many variables and factors. The research data show that there is a direct relationship between going to counseling centers and the level of unprofessional behavior and law evasion. They have shown the elusive law. Of course, about 18% of clubs do not believe in the effectiveness of counseling centers in normal behavior, and 31% of professional athletes had doubts that they did not refer to counseling and psychological centers during their career as professional athletes.

## Discussion

The data shows that 93.5% of the respondents were not warned due to unprofessional or risky behaviors, and in other words, 93.5% of the athletes in various sports fields in Iran fully comply with professional ethics, and 6.5% from Their clubs and other authorities have been warned and reprimanded for committing unprofessional or risky behavior. According to the respondents, smoking and the issue of conflict (with the sports environment, including coaches, referees, spectators, teammates) are the most common and most noted unprofessional behavior in Iran's sports environment. 9.5% of the athletes surveyed smoke. 5% of the examined sample consumed alcohol and 4.5% used drugs and were warned and reprimanded.

Today the atmosphere of sports culture in Iranian society is characterized by images such as non-planning, lawlessness, lack of meritocracy, state ownership and government management,

incorrect orientation of sports sciences, team approach in educational and student sports, women's showcase sports, violence and Aggression and vandalism among the spectators, doping and the use of powerful drugs, exploitation and exploitation of the body, weak and unfamiliar management with sports expertise and experience, the approach of noise and marginalization of the media, the lack of use of modern knowledge and science, and the like can be drawn. .

Therefore, in the cultural atmosphere of Iranian society, modern sports activists have challenged many of the central concepts of the cultural system of sports in Iran, such as white beard, friendship, morals and knowledge, ethics, bravery, and bravery. Therefore, cultural changes (cultural pluralism and multiplicity of subcultures) can have many results.

The results of this research are with the results of Delancey and Kiani (2009), Hoffman (2006), Maya (2010), Salimi and Mousavi (2015) and Salimi and Khodaparast (2023) on the impact of the role of counseling centers and the role of psychologists and family supervision and awareness. According to the charter and rules of the clubs, there is a high similarity in the incidence of unprofessional and abnormal sports behavior among young people and they confirm each other.

The results showed that the average of illegal and unethical behaviors of athletes in team and individual sports does not have a significant difference; Team sports athletes do not have higher behavioral and moral abnormalities than individual sports athletes. Awareness of the charter, clubs' attention to the implementation of the charter, and clubs' attention to cultural programs and the lack or inefficiency of legal structures related to the field of sports have the greatest effect and the highest coefficient in building the legal structure of young athletes from professional principles.

#### **Data availability statement**

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

#### **Ethics statement**

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by ethics committee of University of Isfahan.

#### **Author contributions**

AG and MZ contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection and analysis. The author contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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### Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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