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Globalization or Glocalization? The Emerging Scholarship on Sport Match-Fixing in Light of Asian Context

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Abstract: This article aims to contribute to the body of knowledge in sport social science and to serve as a basis for refining the recent Asian scholarship related to sports corruption in general and match-fixing studies in particular. The main goal of this study is to synthesize the relevant evidence by reviewing the literature on documentary materials and conducting interviews with academics, media journalists, baseball coaches, and former professional baseball players. First, the results indicate that the emerging theoretical/conceptual and methodological frameworks of Asian match-fixing studies have been identified. Second, the relevant actors' roles in their embedded structures entail that match-fixing can be better understood from different perspectives, which shape corrupted contexts. Third, this study concludes by providing the implications of its examination of the nuances of match-fixing; it articulates how Asian match-fixing cases shed light on the relevant conceptual implications and practical applications regarding the effect of different cultures and the associated social network relationships.

Keywords: Asia; Eastern; knowledge; match-fixing; scholarship

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Citation: Lee, P.-C. Globalization or Glocalization? The Emerging Scholarship on Sport Match-Fixing in Light of Asian Context. *Sustainability* **2022**, *14*, 14079. https://doi.org/10.3390/su142114079

Academic Editor: José Carmelo Adsuar Sala

Received: 23 August 2022
Accepted: 27 October 2022
Published: 28 October 2022

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1. Introduction

'Corruption already existed at the time of the "good old" ancient Olympic Games. And it continues to exist in modern competitive sport' [1] (p. 215). According to Chappelet [2], 'Match-fixing was identified at the beginning of the twenty-first century as a new scourge in sports'. It is recognized as a worldwide, large-scale, multidisciplinary problem that has become one of the most common forms of sports corruption and has received a great deal of academic interest focused on various sports [3]. Scholars have shared insights and examined what management strategies might be effective in combating match-fixing based on empirical and practical investigations. In the very recent trend of sports studies, scholars have joined academic conversations about sport corruption, and an emerging body of literature has focused mainly on examining various types of match-fixing [3–23]. The growing body of match-fixing literature has become more theoretically enhanced by drawing from different methods that enrich our understanding of how match-fixing takes place in multiple forms and in varying contexts worldwide [3].

Indeed, sport corruption in the global context has recently received extensive academic attention, and match-fixing represents a relatively new source of such corruption. Most of the academic discussion on match-fixing has addressed topics related to football cases in Europe [9,23]. To a certain extent, in the Western (European) context of match-fixing, the development of sport corruption is socially, culturally, and historically specific; therefore, match-fixing in this context simply may not fit the circumstances of the Asian context. Although match-fixing seems to be endemic in Asia, empirical evidence on match-fixing within the Asian sports context is characterized by a lack of academic activity [9].

The current trend in global sports match-fixing represents a relatively new constellation of academic studies. The topic is meaningful in the current debate that focuses on Asia. In the expanding scholarship of match-fixing, an overall review of knowledge

development and trends empowers scholars to better position themselves and to identify scholarly potential more efficiently and constructively. It is expected that this paper will help researchers who are interested in relevant issues familiarize themselves with the core concepts and relate their own work to extant scholarship. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to provide an overview of international match-fixing scholarship in Asia in general, which plays an important role in the current globalized context in particular. In doing so, it contributes to the literature review, which facilitates the further progression and understanding of the Asian match-fixing domain by organizing and synthesizing this research area.

While addressing the emerging role of the scholarship in areas of match-fixing, the Asian context provides an appropriate base for verification and analysis. Accordingly, the study seeks to address a number of key themes, which are summarized in the following: It first provides a brief review of match-fixing works in Asia. Second, the study elucidates an understanding of the theoretical conceptualizations and methodological classifications of the Asian match-fixing literature. Third, the Asian-related sports match-fixing literature incorporating sport corruption is identified and explained. Finally, it moves on to offer conclusions by discussing how Asian match-fixing cases shed light on relevant conceptual implications and practical applications from the perspective of the effect of different cultures in concert with the social network relationship.

2. Methods

2.1. Protocol

This study seeks to understand the development of sports in Asian societies regarding the advancement of match-fixing and its social implications. Through examination of the match-fixing literature and considering the nature and scale of relevant research, it will be possible to evaluate their implications for match-fixing references. There is a large body of literature on match-fixing that stretches across several social science disciplines. It is beyond the scope and ambition of this study to elucidate this large field of research in its entirety. In this vein, the review was conducted through a comprehensive search of literature published from 2008 to 2022. The process involved searching electronic databases and manually searching sports-related journals. The 2008 period was selected not because it is typical in any sense but rather because it contains Lee's [24] article in European Sport Management Quarterly, which is recognized as the inaugural Asian match-fixing study in the international field of sports academics.

This study was based on a qualitative method of the research context that was carried out by drawing on empirical materials from interviews with experts and analysis of documentary data. The researcher probed into the complex facets of match-fixing based on responses of interviewees who have knowledge related to the Asian corrupted cases. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews have been influenced in several aspects, such as participants' attitudes toward doing face-to-face meetings. Within this circumstance, the researcher completed twelve interviews with six domestic and international academic experts, one media journalist, one baseball coach, and four former professional baseball players. To construct novel accounts and interpretations of key references, documentary sources were triangulated with the data from the interviews in this study. The interview data are supplemented by analyses of documentary sources which enabled us to map out aspects of the social context of match-fixing in Asian sport systems and provided support for different research claims.

2.2. Process

As noted above, a two-stage research strategy (gathering of interview information and documentary data) was adopted. In order to obtain the complete source of literature, a review protocol was developed, and the four criteria are as follows: (1) Research references must be written in English. (2) The scope of literature selection was limited in Asia, with key elements such as sport corruption, sport scandal, and match-fixing. (3) The empirical

data on which this study was based consist of case studies on match-fixing in Asia between 2008 and 2022. (4) The references must contain full texts identified through searching titles, abstracts, and keywords. In order to increase the relevance and reduce the volumes, the researcher decided to combine keywords as strings instead of using a single one. The major detailed search strings were identified as "Asia AND sport corruption", "Asia AND sport scandal", "Asia AND match-fixing", "Asia AND sport gambling", "Asia AND sport betting",, etc. In total, 88 references were reviewed, and 23 commentaries were identified to conduct this research.

The study additionally drew on the research method involving interviewing to collect information. An emphasis on interviews in research requires the researcher to record the interviewees' feelings and responses to events and situations, which contributed to reconstructing an accurate picture of what they perceived as having happened in the particular Asian match-fixing circumstance. Due to the controversial nature of the match-fixing topics, when arranging the interviews, each subject was informed that the researcher who is interested in studying match-fixing and that the resulting research will be published. This study was conducted between one to one and a half hours of interviews with each participant. The informants have the right to withdraw at any time during the interview without any responsibility for this study. The author kept interviews focused on what interviewees knew to be general facts, allowing them to leave themselves out of the scene. Interviewees were expected to be less defensive thanks to this approach, and using cases cited from media commentaries and academic journals also prune the conversation.

2.3. Data Analysis

As qualitative research often produces a large amount of linguistic data, its data analysis is a systematic process of organizing. It gradually develops general concepts into specific concepts or themes and further develops the main idea by means of contrasting, induction, and comparison, which serve as the basis of theoretical construction [25]. In this study, data collection, collation, and analysis were carried out synchronously, and the analysis process of research data is an interactive circulation; the three are closely and mutually related. In the process of analysis, cross-references were made through literature discussion, document analysis, and interviews and were integrated into a systematic concept. While repeatedly analyzing data, the researcher carefully selected and set relevant categories for data classification and integration. After the coding system was completed, the data obtained in the study were analyzed, and a preliminary judgment was made on the data to determine the correlation among them. Finally, the research questions were clarified and interpreted to generate theoretical implications.

After deciding on the criteria for assessing the quality of any type of data evidence, in compliance with the NVivo 9 qualitative data analysis software program, the stages in the analysis were as follows. First, the researcher identified concepts and approaches that would be helpful in guiding decisions including the identification of interviewees, and the assortment of relevant references to review. Second, since the approach of thematic coding is enriched with axial and open coding of data, a coding frame was created that deductively draws from the reviewed social and cultural concepts. Broadly, the items derived were categorized into three major domains: social network, social structure, and social relation. The coding frame identified categories that develop from the inductive analysis of the data, some of which were segmented into broad categories and some of which signified new insights; the latter was primarily identified as free categories (i.e., not falling within the domain of the three categories identified above). This approach employed a protocol that allowed for the application of both predetermined deductive, researcher-imposed categories and inductively determined categories or codes arising from respondents' comments, thereby reflecting respondents' worldview for the development of match-fixing references.

2.4. Data Reliability and Validity: Research Trustworthiness

In terms of its sensitive nature, studies on sport corruption are usually confronted by methodological problems, particularly the reliability and validity of the data [4]. Additionally, reliability and validity have been crucial needs in quantitative research, and in qualitative studies, these factors have been in question. Against this, qualitative researchers may not use instruments with established metrics regarding validity and reliability, the researcher decided to develop "trustworthiness" for the qualitative interpretation of the data to explain this study's findings. To understand the criteria used to assess the quality of relevant data applicable to the concepts of research trustworthiness, this study carried out the validation according to the case attributed to inform the following: (i) Originality of data: Through interviewing with different expert academics, supplemented by relevant documents and literature to enrich the sources of information and grasp the multiple aspects of match-fixing, this study provided evidence for the findings. (ii) Credibility of interviews: To verify the main points of each discussion, the researcher transcribed the interview data into text manuscripts and then e-mail the texts to the interviewees for checking and confirmation. This helped to prevent the content text from deviating from or omitting the original intention of the interviewees. (iii) Triangulation of data: By cross-referencing and verifying various data, the possible errors of a single datum can be overcome and the interviewees' statements can be faithfully presented. Through triangulation, the researcher was able to validate information gathered from interviews by checking accounts, documents, etc., that aided in the evaluation of interview respondents' claims.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. An Overview of Asian-Related Match-Fixing Cases

Match-fixing became an issue of public concern when match-fixing markedly increased in numerous sports at all levels. In the international sports field, while most studies on match-fixing have focused on European sports, the geographical and social context of Asia appears to have recently become of interest [9]. With respect to the global match-fixing phenomenon in sport, an Asian investigation has shown incremental growth in the following countries: Bangladesh [26], China [27–29], India [30,31], Indonesia [32,33], Japan [34,35], Malaysia [36,37], Pakistan [38]; Singapore [5,36,37], South Korea [8,14,17,18,39–44], and Taiwan [9–11,21–24,45]. Except for Canadian expert Hill's investigation in Malaysia and Singapore, and Duggan and Levitt's [34] study in Japan, the rest of the scholarship comes from Asia itself and involves region-based match-fixing case analyses. In this body of work, Far Eastern scholars play an active role in describing the Asian local reality. Interviewees reflected on this and mentioned.

There are some Asian scholars doing match-fixing studies well. They have published good-quality papers in international journals such as IRSS and ESMQ. As I understood, Dr. Minhyeok Tak in Loughborough University in the UK and two Taiwanese scholars, Dr. Ping-Chao Lee and Dr. Chien-Chun Tzeng, are among them. (Interview with Academic A).

Currently, some Asian academics have their roles to play in international sports scholarship contributions on sport corruption in general, match-fixing in particular. For example, there are scholars who presented/published match-fixing case studies related to China, South Korea, and Taiwan. (Interview with Academic D).

A review of the extant literature reveals that the term match-fixing has been applied to a variety of regions and countries involved in sport corruption. Match-fixing has been the object of inquiries and prosecutions in a variety of sports across the world, a considerable amount of research has been conducted on match-fixing, and the analyses have focused on various sports [46]. It is difficult to comprehensively measure the extent of match-fixing. It seems that football is the primary context of fixed matches, although other sports have fallen victim to the practice. As Hill [5] (p. 212) noted, 'There is a wave of globalized match-fixing occurring in football. In the last few years, there have been investigations and scandals in dozens of different countries in every continent'. Numerous academic publications discussing match-fixing have addressed topics related to football cases in Europe, although

there are too many to list all of them. Following the trend related to match-fixing occurring in Europe, the series of Asian-based football match-fixing investigations that have emerged in the past ten years is perhaps best represented in the works of Hill [5,37], Tak [17], Tak and colleagues [18,19], and Chinese scholars [27–29]. For example, in the Chinese football cases, the fact that China's match-fixing scandals have consistently affected Chinese football, and The bribing of referees, players, and clubs became so widespread and blatant that it was difficult to play honestly in the Chinese Super League (CSL) [37]. One of the interviewees further stated that.

Chinese football is "unbelievably corrupt". The most famous match-fixing case in the CSL, known as the "Black Whistle" scandal, occurred in 2003. Clubs, players, and officials of the Chinese Football Association (CFA) have been convicted of fixing matches in CSL league play. The "Black Whistle" affair, which spans many disciplines and involves a wide set of variables that correlate with and purport to explain the extent of match-fixing related to players, club officials, and referees, is a serious indictment of the professional football league in China. (Interview with Media Journalist).

When analyzing Asian corruption in sports, the match-fixing scandals in these sports leagues provide an ideal context for exploring because these localities represented sociopolitical variations of Asian culture. It would be interesting to understand the reoccurrence of match-fixing scandals in those societies may not be independent and unrelated events but instead reflect a particular social phenomenon. Reflected on this claim, one academic remarked.

The topics related to match-fixing studies feature a certain degree of innovation in Asian sport research. Basically, the types of match-fixing have been quite diverse, ranging across the field of human social phenomena, and are too abundant to enumerate. Recently, Asian researchers have made important theoretical and empirical contributions to the literature on the role of scholarship in match-fixing. (Interview with Academic A).

The sport literature contains an extensive body of research concerning corruption-related issues in general and match-fixing in particular in which match-fixing cases can be recognized. A review of the literature has highlighted various themes surrounding match-fixing corruption, and numerous publications have studied the types and patterns of match-fixing and competition fraud in sports, often based on case analyses of various sport disciplines. With the sport discipline as the analysis level, the topic of match-fixing is usually addressed at the national and international levels. In this vein, the attributes of match-fixing studies can be understood as providing a social and cultural template within a global field [5,9,38] that has the potential to lay the foundation for broader research in the future.

3.2. Theoretical Context and Methodological Concern

3.2.1. Theoretical Implications

Drawing worldwide attention from high-ranking authorities and academics, sport corruption is usually examined via different theoretical approaches, and various methodologies are employed [47]. To a great extent, empirical research can contribute to enriching the extant scholarship, and theories can also empower us to see a phenomenon in a different way. Within a variety of settings, sport corruption's multiple forms, causes, and consequences and the approaches to reform have been studied at different levels of analysis in which causality, impacts, and reform strategies are of major concern [3]. As sport corruption becomes increasingly globalized, match-fixing, one form of sport corruption, is no exception and is receiving considerable attention internationally. The complex and multilevel phenomenon/multidimensional nature of match-fixing has been recognized in social science literature. Given the nature of the core concern and the themes expected to be revealed, academics from sports management, sports sociology, economics, and criminology are among the most active in match-fixing studies [3]. Asian-related scholars have made important contributions through their theoretical analyses of match-fixing, and different theoretical approaches have been applied, such as criminological analysis [40,43], governance theory [24], the institutional approach [18–20,43], social capital theory [21,22],

and social network theory [5,8,9,14,23,36]. Sports, as a social phenomenon, can be regarded as an entry point for a better understanding of sociology and the application of sociological knowledge. Such theories/concepts provide a way of constructing a narrative that helps us identify and explain the underlying structural and agent relationships.

Specific and visible match-fixing issues can enrich our understanding and application of sociology. For the analysis of match-fixing developments in the specific context of East Asia, the application of sociology will not necessarily undermine the premises of other accounts of social theories. (Interview with Academic C).

Given the above, the adoption of theoretical concepts is expected to contribute to the existing theories on the relationship between sociocultural contexts and social corruption by providing empirical evidence and a solid theoretical framework to detect the social network behind match-fixing in different Asian societies. An overall review of match-fixing studies reveals several key patterns: (a) its definition, taxonomy, techniques, and causality are the topics most frequently discussed, although there is more attribution to personal moral problems [7,46]; (b) both betting-related and non-betting-related match-fixing exist, but the former has received much more attention [48]; and (c) prevention endeavors at both the individual and organizational levels have been proposed [49]. Despite the voluminous body of research on match-fixing, there are some underexplored theoretical issues in the scholarship. For instance, few studies examine the betting aspect of the market, namely, the ecology of gambling operators; we know little about the fixing aspect, especially the methods and strategies for realizing match-fixing proposals [4]. Additionally, the existing match-fixing literature, which talks more about external factors, leaves internal mechanisms less examined. To put it in another way, match-fixing is often imputed to individual players' moral problems [7]. However, players' context, especially in terms of sports movements or organizations, should also be taken into consideration. Research informants agreed with this comment and remarked.

Precisely, the occurrence of match-fixing could be recognized as the outcome of the relationship (interaction) among social contexts and various actors. Therefore, it is important to consider the influence of social context on individuals' interactions in the match-fixing context. (Interview with Academic B).

I played baseball with my teammates. We knew each other for years. We have our own "subculture" in our baseball team. For years, the environment in which we stayed together did influence us in many ways. In addition, there are differences between different teams. (Interview with Player A).

In effect, the research investigations are mainly at the organizational level but cover individual dynamics by choosing match-fixing, a form of sports corruption that serves both individual and organizational agendas, as a case study. Match-fixing is not only an issue taking place at individual levels, nor does it solely involve the actions of individuals existing in a vacuum. Instead, the actors involved are within a given organizational context. Through mobilizing coaches and players as their partners, syndicates are "organized criminal groups" [13]. The focus, therefore, should be at the organizational and individual levels rather than the societal level. It might be possible to examine the extent to which match-fixing impacts society as a whole while applying a micro–macro level of analysis empirically. What concerns us is why and how match-fixing as a form of organized crime is facilitated and what theoretical implications can be concluded.

3.2.2. Methodological Concerns

The empirical literature suggests that the growing body of match-fixing literature has become more theoretically enhanced by drawing on different methods that enrich our understanding of how match-fixing takes place in multiple forms and in varying contexts worldwide [3,13]. Epistemologically, match-fixing studies incorporate three major sets of research methodologies to advance knowledge, namely, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. In terms of quantitative methods, scholars have employed the abnormal returns model [11] and the efficiency and productivity model [50] to analyze the

outcomes of Taiwanese CPBL match-fixing scandals from economic/managerial perspectives. Duggan and Levitt examined collusion in sumo wrestling in Japan. Additionally, the literature on match-fixing, corruption, and gambling scandals in sports reports on negative issues, professionalism, and practicality through the utilization of several quantitative research methods [45]. Given this, a number of academics, adopting quantitative methods, have explored match corruption in Asian sports [36,37].

Compared to the quantitative work on match-fixing, there are several examples that follow the qualitative tradition. To gain a better understanding of how countries deal with match-fixing in various sports, relevant studies have employed a qualitative, interpretive, multimethod approach encompassing the case-study approach [9,20–24], contextualization [17,18,43], and sociohistorical analysis [27–29]. The above suggests that theoretical work on match-fixing in sports has become more abundant by drawing on various qualitative methodologies involving the analysis of official discourses, ethnography, interviews, and content analysis. According to Lin and Chen [45] (p. 306), 'most of the relevant studies explored and discussed match-fixing, corruption and gambling scandals in sports through literature analysis, interviews and qualitative research'. In other words, data from fieldwork, historical reviews, or archive analysis; the collection of official narratives; the reading of documents; and interviews with key informants are important for conducting match-fixing studies.

To some degree, the above two research approaches compensate for each other, especially in terms of what the other cannot explain. The circumstance that the quantitative and qualitative research approaches are not only compatible but also complementary reinforces appeals to employ the mixed methods approach [51]. Examples of match-fixing research studies that have combined quantitative and qualitative research methods exist. In his previous works, Declan Hill, who is known as one of the world's leading experts on match-fixing and corruption in international sports, pioneered the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods to examine match-fixing and other corruptive practices. Hill's [33] study was based on a qualitative approach that relied on interviews with players, referees, sports officials, and corruptors with experience fixing matches and a quantitative approach of performing statistical analysis of a database of related actors. In addition, to determine general trends in why some football leagues have more match-fixing than others, Hill collected data in two ways: qualitatively, in interviews with more than 220 individuals, and quantitatively, through the construction of a series of databases of fixed and non-fixed matches and corrupt and non-corrupt players [37]. Similar to Hill's match-fixing studies in Malaysia and Singapore, one study examining a South Korean case also adopted a mixed methods approach. In their analysis of match-fixing, Lee et al. [38] reviewed the seriousness of match-fixing through both big data analysis (quantitative) and focus group interviews (qualitative) using keywords. Indeed, the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods within one study is likely to be meaningful. Nevertheless, one should keep in mind that the mixed methods approach to research is an extension of rather than a replacement for the quantitative and qualitative approaches to research, as the latter two research approaches still remain valuable and essential [51].

4. Synthesized Comments on the Asian Match-Fixing References

Most international match-fixing studies have been conducted in Europe. While most international scholarship focuses mainly on European scenarios, to date, Asian-based surveys have brought the domestic reality into the broader international infrastructure [9]. In terms of a broad theoretical framework, the introduction of Eastern cases means a change in the conceptualization of how match-fixing works or is accomplished [21,23]. Such a shift within the Asian context and the progress made might be described as involving gradually accumulating knowledge and deepening explanations through conducting match-fixing studies. As an interviewee commented.

By connecting social context and match-fixing studies, Asian studies take steps toward creating a regional model that seeks to suggest a number of intriguing avenues for future research in the sport domain. (Interview with Academic C).

4.1. Eastern Asia

Drawing upon economic lines of thought, Duggan and Levitt [34] provided statistical analysis documenting the collusive behavior of match rigging in sumo wrestling in Japan. The authors examined more than ten years of data on the Japanese sumo elite to find evidence indicating or refuting statements of match rigging. The study revealed that match rigging can be directly linked to the artificially imposed non-linearity in incentives for wrestlers who achieve a winning record. Match rigging appeared to be sensitive to the costs of detection, and in the sumo context, insiders were likely to have good information about who was corrupt. From a cultural and social perspective, Kawai [35] expounded on integrity in relation to match-fixing and illegal gambling in Japan by juxtaposing Japanese attitudes to match-fixing in two of the country's most-loved sports: baseball and sumo. The paper drew conclusions on the tensions found in the government regulatory space by contrasting the various attitudes in Japan toward match-fixing in baseball and sumo and argued that match-fixing is a complex and sometimes localized issue that may not be well explained from a global perspective. In this sense, the unique locality of occurrences of match-fixing cannot be overemphasized, and the particular sociocultural contexts need to be taken into consideration. The empirical evidence gathered in the East Asian region is expected to provide a basis for a future phase of global match-fixing studies.

In the context of sport corruption, a series of studies concerning issues related to South Korean match-fixing are available. In particular, the literature has focused on individual and institutional relationships [17–20,43] as well as social mechanisms and networks [14,41,41]. From a sociological institutionalist perspective, Tak's [17] study reflected on the responsibility attributed to institutions and individuals. It concluded that the attribution of institutional misconduct to an individual's functions to protect the institution's strength and that the football-betting regime sacrifices managerial efficiency for social legitimacy, thereby engendering match-fixing. In studying the countermeasures introduced after a football scandal, Tak et al. [18] recognized match-fixing as a social problem from the perspective of utility-maximizing actors and indicated that key actors managed the risk of losing legitimacy by showcasing efforts to fight against match-fixing, taking advantage of the abovementioned countermeasures to normalize the business of sports betting and legitimize certain interests. Tak et al. [19] explored how match-fixing is recognized as a problem and offered an analysis of the legal framework and regulatory system for sports betting as a causal driver of match-fixing. The research revealed that the elements contributing to the manifestation of match-fixing have been predominantly defined as originating in illegal, criminal entities, morally corrupt individuals, and weak governance on the part of sports organizations. Tak et al. [43] addressed the topic of upholding sport integrity in the context of high-performance athletes' involvement in match-fixing. Their study described and analyzed the prevalence of match-fixing and its locations and origin. It concluded by suggesting that the motivations connected with elite sport development structures may account for non-betting-related match-fixing and its endangerment of sport integrity. Based on the political sociology view with a particular focus on betting monitoring programs, Tak et al. [20] explored the workings of the management of match-fixing issues in sports. The paper analyzed the operating logic and data interpretations of two betting monitoring programs, and the results indicated that betting monitoring is a technical extension of corporate risk management, consistently reflecting the business interests of the betting industry.

From a network perspective, Park [14] noted that the emphasis Korean society places on the connections and networks that arise from the school context or hometowns also plays a significant part in the occurrence of match-fixing. By conducting a keyword analysis of match-fixing using semantic network analysis of social network big data, Lee et al. [40]

sought to delineate a cautious and comprehensive basic direction for coping with negative issues and preventing their recurrence. Particularly focusing on the case of the 2011 K-League scandal, Han [40] examined the characteristics of match-fixing under the state-monopolized sports betting system. This study explored the precipitating factors, which include the financial stability of operators, betting systems, social networks of school ties, training camp culture, and follow-up measures, that underpin large-scale match-fixing in South Korea. In addition to these social network studies, Brooks, Lee, and Kim's [50] study examined why players in the K-League succumbed to match-fixing in 2011. The authors examined the role of sport in South Korea and focused on the match-fixing and gambling scandal that engulfed the K-League. They concluded that there is a need to reduce the incidence of fraud and corruption in football worldwide, particularly by employing a clear counter-fraud strategy. In addition, Chung et al. [39] investigated/analyzed professional players' perceptions of match-fixing and prevention education strategies in South Korea. The results revealed that the athletes of all pro sports considered match-fixing a crime and thought it unethical, and they expected better prevention education to be provided early in an athlete's career and on a regular and innovative basis.

In addition to the above Korean case studies, a series of sports corruption studies focusing mainly on match-fixing and paying specific attention to scandals in Taiwan have also been published recently [9–11,21–24,45]. Using approaches based on governance theory and strategic relations analysis, Lee's [24] study launched an empirical evaluation of the behavior of actors in the corrupt governance of the professional baseball system in Taiwan. It highlighted the significance of political clientelism as a key characteristic of a strategic environment that affords criminal interests space to pursue illicit activities and synthesized the responses of stakeholders in the governance system. In their study, Lin and Chen [45] inaugurated an assessment model for tracking efficiency anomalies that would imply a pattern of match-fixing among CPBL players, and it is expected to prevent future match-fixing scandals from occurring.

Focusing on the spillover effect of incidents involving sports ethics violations, Lu and Chen [11] evaluated the impact of five match-fixing scandals in the CPBL on the abnormal returns of its parent companies and sponsors. The study concluded that the inability to detach from personal relationships is founded on the historical and cultural characteristics of baseball, and these relationships have instead constructed a network for illegal activities. Lee, Ko, and Huang's [10] study identified and analyzed factors of the migration of Taiwanese professional baseball players after the 1997 match-fixing scandal. They claimed that a combination of various push and pull factors, such as economic, social, cultural, institutional, personal, and political factors, were at work and closely interrelated in players' migration. The combination of factors is recognized, and some initial observations can be made with respect to the migration motivations under examination in this specific China-Taiwan context.

Analyzing scandals in Taiwan's CPBL, Tzeng and Lee [21] explored the social conditions and underlying mechanisms of match-fixing when it is not facilitated by a quid pro quo relationship. The study investigated how both individual agendas and organizational interests were served in match-fixing and argued that the relational attributes possessed by actors embedded in social networks are involved in the cognitive process of actors' decision making. Tzeng and Ohl [22] examined the fabrics of an underground sport betting system that is associated with match-fixing in Taiwan. The study analyzed to understand the three stakeholders' (Mafia, syndicates, and bookmakers) roles and networks, what regulates the system, and how the system functions. The paper concluded that actors are empowered by their social capital to streamline their underground business and that betting activities are considered acceptable because of their strong shared culture and networks in their "small community".

Synthetically, a clear shift in the Korean and Taiwanese cases can be observed by viewing them through Confucian concepts. Drawing upon Confucian lines of thought, Lee's [9] study identified and analyzed how aspects of Confucian culture relate to match-fixing

in Taiwanese professional baseball. Kim [8] examined how South Korean sociocultural contexts influence elite amateur athletes with respect to sport match-fixing. Tzeng et al. [23] drew more attention to stakeholders' viewpoints to shed light on how the significance of the code of brotherhood (yiqi in Chinese) plays a role in match-fixing in the Taiwanese professional baseball system. The findings of these studies showed that match-fixing in Eastern sports settings occurred because of various forms of neo-Confucian demands imposed upon individuals within their sociocultural relationships, including obedience to individuals in authority, mutual help, loyalty, and collectivism. Match-fixing settings are influenced by sociocultural contexts at the macro and micro levels.

In addition to the above, there are other academic works that have been published by Eastern Asian scholars. For example, adopting a historical perspective, Chinese academics such as Liu [28] first discussed football fraud, unfair refereeing, and corruption in the development of Chinese football professionalization and then analyzed the causes of these problems, ultimately recommending several measures for the construction of future regulations for Chinese professional football. Huang et al. [27] argued that factors including the underplayed role of sport law; the overplayed role of Chinese Football Association officials; the ambiguous ownership and decision-making processes of the clubs; and the powerless and unprotected position of the referees, the players, and the coaches accounted for a large part of the historical and institutional causes of the rampant match-fixing scandals in Chinese football. In addition, in the Chinese Professional Football Leagues, Liu and Wang [29] identified three forms of bribing referees to manipulate matches, namely, paying off referees, manipulating referees by CFA officials, and investing in emotional bonds.

4.2. South/Southeast Asia

As observations made by a Western academic on Asian sport match-fixing, Hill's series of sports corruption studies have focused on identifying the operation and implication of social networks among actors inside exclusively Asian sporting systems [5,37]. Based on the Malaysian and Singaporean football systems, he identified key factors shaping match-fixing, which include a large and strong illegal gambling network, a high degree of relative player exploitation, and an expectation of complicity among corrupt officials. The factors within these social mechanisms feed into each other and lead to high levels of corruption within sport leagues [37]. By probing the possible groups of actors—referees, players, and team officials—to determine which is most likely to successfully fix a match, Hill [5] explains how the role of sports officials is strengthened by the powerful sense of hierarchy in professional football in Singapore. For their part, players were likely to be weakened by their origins from underprivileged backgrounds and socially/economically marginalized groups. Thus, the high hierarchical position of officials and the shortage of economic opportunities for players characterized the Singaporean sport match-fixing context.

Khan [38] argued that match-fixing issues represent the culmination of the changes that Pakistan and Pakistani cricket have been undergoing. A local-level examination of sport corruption can complicate one's understanding of the larger processes and their ability to shape the culture within a team. Dasgupta [31] commented on the threats posed by match-fixing to Indian sport integrity by examining the existing legal framework and concepts related to match-fixing in India. The study ultimately provided suggestions that can be imposed as temporary measures until the necessary law is drafted and after implementation of this law. Akhtar [30] discussed match-fixing, illegal gambling, and cricket on the Indian Subcontinent. The study concluded by remarking on the need for an evaluation of the origins of gambling in cricket, the framework of the Indian Premier League, the personnel involved, and the disciplinary bodies and court rulings to combat criminal activity related to match-fixing. Adawiyah and Suteki [32] provided an account of the settlement of match-fixing cases in Indonesia based on progressive law enforcement and subsequently promoted the imposition of criminal liability on match fixers by effective laws specific to this issue. Doewes [33] also offered Indonesian experience and responses

on match-fixing in football and the policy (e.g., Anti-Mafia Task Force) implemented by the Football Association of Indonesia to combat this problem.

While aiming to move ahead by exploring what actually happens between corruptors and the corrupted and by evaluating the underlying behind-the-scenes sociocultural factors, the above match-fixing literature has acknowledged its reliance on Western theories in exploring this phenomenon in the East. However, because the Western context differs from that in Asia, it might be difficult to obtain accurate observations if we employ only Western theories. Match-fixing affects a broad spectrum of sports, and the phenomenon is socially, economically, and culturally distinct across various countries. There seems to be some justification for extending the literature to employ "Asian local" concepts deeply rooted in Eastern cultural traditions. Echoing these comments, one participant (Academic B) indicated that 'On the whole, the development of match-fixing has been seen as the consequence of the relationships (interactions) among social contexts, cultural contexts, and a range of actors . . . the importance of identifying relations within a local [Asian] cultural context is acknowledged'.

Sports are a reflection of society and are closely connected with cultures. Sport corruption depends on a set of specific circumstances that are largely independent of a particular culture [5,37]. This research concern was raised by Numerato [13], who asserted that the 'possibly endemic and publicly secret nature of match-fixing suggests that corruption has to be understood in the context of the social structures and culture in which it is embedded' (p. 712). to some degree, the importance of identifying links within a local cultural context is recognized. Basically, the development of match-fixing has been seen as the consequence of the relationships (interactions) among social context, cultural context, and various actors. Social actions are limited by individuals' positions within a social context as well as by the opportunities provided by society over a specific time horizon for the realization of actors' interests.

5. Conclusions

Match-fixing has emerged as an important field in the recent trend of academic sports studies, while various theories have also been identified. To a great extent, empirical research can contribute to enriching the extant scholarship, while theories can also empower us to see a phenomenon in a different way. As match-fixing affects a broad spectrum of sports and the phenomenon is socially, economically, and culturally unique in various countries, there seems to be some justification for extending the literature to employ "Asian local" concepts deeply rooted in Eastern cultural traditions. In terms of a broad theoretical framework, the introduction of an Eastern "conceptual scheme" means a change in the concepts and practices of how match-fixing works or is accomplished. Such a shift within the Asian context and its way of progressing might be described as involving gradually accumulating knowledge and deepening explanations in conducting match-fixing studies.

In addition to the theoretically conceptual concerns, it is important to take into consideration the structures in which actors are embedded. Actors' behavior and conduct are responsible for the effects and outcomes of different actions, which can be observed and explained, within Asian match-fixing structures. As noted, match-fixing is executed through various contingent mechanisms that form part of the dialectic of structure and strategy. Actors can affect outcomes, which are enabled or constrained by the structural contexts in which individual actions are undertaken. The explanations of match-fixing outcomes at both the structure and actor levels help to identify how outcomes are mediated and shaped and, in particular, how different sets of interests are implicated, how power is exercised, and whose interests are served in Asian match-fixing systems.

This review of previous studies specifies that match-fixing has attracted interest with respect to the increasing complexity of sports' social and cultural circumstances, which are characterized by the interaction of organizations and individuals/groups working within and across organizations under the influence of social mechanisms. Match-fixing in sports appears to involve the symbiosis and complicity of various actors within a specific

social network of corruption. The emerging literature on sports further suggests that social networks in various cultures are consistently strengthened by the types of match-fixing that they map. In response to continuing concerns raised in arguments concentrating on the actors and processes involved in sports match-fixing networks, the above studies indicated that the match-fixing process resembles a simple web in which various dyadic ties are formed and sometimes overlap. Such arguments have led the author to focus on mapping social networks linking actors within a corrupt sports system, where people view themselves as interdependent and embedded in the surrounding Asia social context.

Funding: This research was funded by National Science and Technology Council, Taiwan, grant number MOST 110-2410-H-142-012-MY3.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: The study did not report any data.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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