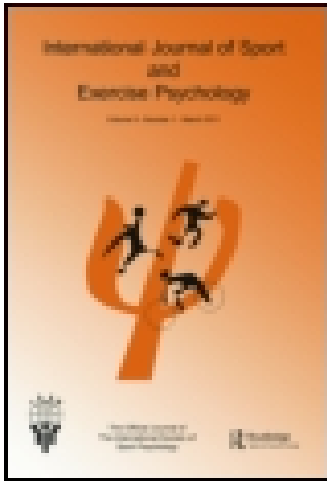


This article was downloaded by: [Fabrice Dosseville]

On: 25 March 2015, At: 10:54

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjjs20>

Sports officials in home advantage phenomenon: A new framework

Fabrice Dosseville^a, Koffi Pierrot Edoh^b & Corinne Molinaro^a

^a UFR STAPS, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie, 2, boulevard du Maréchal Juin, 14032 - Caen Cedex, France

^b CTS STAPS, Université d'Abomey Calavi, Abomey-Calavi, Benin
Published online: 23 Mar 2015.



CrossMark

[Click for updates](#)

To cite this article: Fabrice Dosseville, Koffi Pierrot Edoh & Corinne Molinaro (2015): Sports officials in home advantage phenomenon: A new framework, International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, DOI: [10.1080/1612197X.2015.1023422](https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2015.1023422)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2015.1023422>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms &

Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Sports officials in home advantage phenomenon: A new framework

Fabrice Dosseville^{a*}, Koffi Pierrot Edoh^b and Corinne Molinaro^a

^a*UFR STAPS, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie, 2, boulevard du Maréchal Juin, 14032 – Caen Cedex, France;* ^b*CTS STAPS, Université d'Abomey Calavi, Abomey-Calavi, Benin*

(Received 3 April 2014; accepted 29 October 2014)

The home advantage is one of the best-established and documented phenomenon in sports settings. Conceptual frameworks do not involve, or little, sports official. Nevertheless, we assume that this decision-maker play a determinant role. Thus, the main objective of this paper was to propose a conceptual framework of home advantage including the sports officials and to guide future research on the influence of sports officials on the home advantage phenomenon. Situational, contextual, individual and ethical/economic dimensions compose this new framework.

Keywords: sport officiating; home advantage; decision-making

Both the scientific literature and the lay knowledge concur in the fact that it is easier to win at home than when playing away. A number of studies focused on the home advantage phenomenon and several authors provided evidence for the home advantage in most of team sports, cultures and countries (see Carron, Loughhead, & Bray, 2005; Nevill, Balmer, & Wolfson, 2005; Pollard, 2008). A large diversity of dimensions seems to influence this intriguing phenomenon. Among those dimensions, the influence of the sports officiating (i.e. referees, judges and umpires) was rarely questioned in the home advantage literature. Nevertheless, sports officials hold a particular position in the sport settings and could be involved in the home advantage. The main objective of this paper was to propose a conceptual framework including the sports officials and to guide future research on the influence of sports officials on the home advantage phenomenon.

Sports officials and home advantage

The emergence of scientific studies has emphasised the many facets of sports officials and the complexity of this essential activity (Dosseville & Garncarzyk, 2007; Dosseville, Laborde, & Garncarzyk, 2014; Guillén & Feltz, 2011; Plessner & Haar, 2006). The sports officials are required to process a large amount of information under time pressure and during ambiguous situations, which make them susceptible to some bias. Thus, a lot of variables are involved in judging actions. Some belong to the social domain and can sometimes lead to decision-making biases (see Plessner & Haar, 2006). Are sports officials involved in the home advantage phenomenon? Currently, two main frameworks try to explain the home advantage (Carron et al., 2005; Courneya & Carron, 1992; Pollard, 2008) but integrate in an indirect way the sports officials.

*Corresponding author. Email: fabrice.dosseville@unicaen.fr

Courneya and Carron (1992) initially provided a first conceptual framework highlighting five components explaining this phenomenon: game location (home vs. away), game location factors (crowd, learning, travel and rules), critical psychological states (athletes, coaches and officials), critical behavioural states (athletes, coaches and officials) and performance outcome (primary, secondary and tertiary). The sports officials were included in this framework. However, Carron et al. (2005) examined the extent to which this first framework could be viable to understand and organise research on the home advantage. Consequently, they modified their framework by the inclusion of physiological states relying on the results of Neave and Wolfson (2003). These authors showed that testosterone levels were significantly higher before a home game in player soccer. Moreover, another major difference was the absence of a sports official. Carron et al. (2005) assumed that referees, judges and umpires do not have a home or a visitor status. At the same time, Pollard and Pollard (2005) attempted to show the complex interrelationships of causes of home advantage in soccer. These authors did not suggest five components including sub-components, but rather they held seven main causes, which interact: crowd support, travel fatigue, familiarity with local conditions, territoriality, special tactics, psychological factors and referee bias. In their proposal, the sports officials were rehabilitated. Nevertheless, studies focused on officials showed that officials' bias might be a consequence of crowd support. In fact, the crowd would be able to influence the sports officials in a subconscious way (Nevill, Balmer, & Williams, 1999, 2002).

Towards a new framework: sports officials in home advantage

To show that sports officials may be an important contributor to the home advantage and to guide future studies, an alternative framework can be proposed by focusing on sports officiating. This is not to say that Carron et al. and Pollard's frameworks are not appropriate to highlight the understanding of the home advantage, but the current objective is to place sports officials at the heart of this new frame. The previous frameworks involve the sports officials only through the influence of the crowd. We consider that they may be more directly involved through four dimensions, which compose this alternative framework.

The first dimension is situational and includes factors influencing the current decision-making. These situational factors impact the sports officials throughout social information processing (i.e. perception, categorisation and integration; Plessner & Haar, 2006). In fact, officiating-specific demands are extreme since sports officials need to assess situations as rapidly and accurately as possible, to manage the game, to preserve the order and to solve hostile interactions. Moreover, sports officials experience negative feedback during a sport event from athletes, coaches and spectators. In this way, Nevill et al. (1999, 2002) assumed that soccer referees might use crowd reactions as a decision cue (i.e. indicator of seriousness of the foul). The sports officials might be biased by crowd reaction, favouring the home team in an unconscious way, and thereby contributing to the home advantage. In addition, sports officiating can be a stressful occupation in which sports officials have to manage and regulate their own feelings and emotions (Guillén & Feltz, 2011). It is surprising that research on emotional states of the sports officials are so little developed since sports research stimulate interest in building a bridge between these two topics: emotion and decision-making (Laborde, Dosseville, & Raab, 2013; Laborde, Raab, & Dosseville, 2013).

The second dimension is contextual. The sports officials can develop expectations towards teams (e.g. perceived importance of the competition or match by teams, teams' rank and prior officiating of one of the teams), towards crowd reaction (e.g. derbies, match stakes and opening match) or towards stadium (e.g. synthetic playing field, sound system, meteorological conditions and architectural characteristics of the stadium). Thus, the sports officials have to process a large amount of information and link it to the knowledge stored in the memory. This

knowledge is organised in complex structures known as categories, schemas or action scripts (Bless, Fiedler, & Strack, 2004) and can engender expectations in officials. Thus, the reputation of an athlete or a team, that is, knowing the athletes judged or being informed about a higher level of aggression in a team, influences the official's judgement and, therefore, their decision (Findlay & Ste-Marie, 2004; Jones, Paull, and Erskine, 2002). Other studies focused on the influence of stereotypes, particularly gender stereotypes, and have shown that the gender of the athletes judged can affect the decision-making (Souchon et al., 2009).

Individual factors are the third dimension and correspond with individual characteristics such as psychological traits or individual differences. Officiating task itself (i.e. judging, deciding, ruling, measuring, assessing, grading, penalising and regulating), possible mistakes, social interactions with athletes, coaches and spectators, fear of the aggression or to injure itself may increase stress level in the sports official. Stress may influence decision-making in a various way. Consequently, personality (Balch & Scott, 2007; Kaissidis-Rodafinos, Anshel, & Porter, 1997; Quain & Purdy, 1988), coping strategies (Page & Page, 2010; Voight, 2009) or emotional intelligence (see Laborde, Brüll, Weber, & Anders, 2011; Laborde, Raab, et al., 2013) might influence decision-making processes. Nevertheless, few studies focused on this individual dimension (see Balch & Scott, 2007; Poolton, Siu, & Masters, 2011).

Finally, ethical and economical dimensions would be taken into account in the home advantage phenomenon. This last dimension is maybe the least studied but also the most complex and controversial topic. Firstly, some sports economists included economical and political variables in their determinants of team performances (Andreff, Andreff, & Poupaux, 2008; Leeds & Leeds, 2009; Tcha & Pershin, 2003), but only one study included the referee in its model (Torgler, 2004). Suggesting the cultural closeness between the soccer referee and a team, Torgler (2004) analysed the impact of the referee's region and language on the team performance and found a positive influence of the same but not speaking the same language. Secondly, the sports officials may be assessed, judged and marked by supervisors or medias. If most of sports officials are still amateurs, officiating is also a function for which the official can be paid. Numerous elements are so combined to place the sports officials in a situation potentially complicated to manage since judgement and social comparison are inevitably important elements. Moreover, Torgler (2004) suggested to professionalise sports officials and to open their market. However, to study the weight of this constant external assessment on the decision-making and impact on the home advantage phenomenon may be a real challenge for sports sciences researchers.

Home advantage is due to many dimensions, which may interact with each other. This paper assumes that the sports officials play a determinant role in the phenomenon. States provoked by the game situation, expectations, individual differences and external pressures could orientate original research to understand better the role of the sports officials in a so complex phenomenon. Thus, future research could examine the impact on team performance of interactive terms between home advantage and sports officials' characteristics such as personality (Laborde, Raab, et al., 2013; Poolton et al., 2011), experience or nationality (Torgler, 2004), or between home advantage and some political variables such as nations' political regime or geopolitics (Andreff et al., 2008; Leeds & Leeds, 2009).

References

- Andreff, M., Andreff, W., & Poupaux, S. (2008). Les déterminants économiques de la performance olympique: Prédiction des médailles qui seront gagnées aux Jeux de Pékin. *Revue d'Economie Politique*, 118(2), 135–169.
- Balch, M. J., & Scott, D. (2007). Contrary to popular belief, refs are people too! Personality and perceptions of officials. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 30(1), 3–20.

- Bless, H., Fiedler, K., & Strack, F. (2004). *Social cognition. How individuals construct social reality*. Hove, UK: Psychology Press.
- Carron, A. V., Loughhead, T. M., & Bray, S. R. (2005). The home advantage in sport competitions: Courneya and Carron's (1992) conceptual framework a decade later. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 23(4), 395–407. doi:10.1080/02640410400021542
- Courneya, K. S., & Carron, A. V. (1992). The home advantage in sport competitions: A literature review. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 14(1), 13–27.
- Dosseville, F., & Garnarczyk, C. (2007). L'arbitrage des pratiques sportives : Jugement et décision. *Bulletin de Psychologie*, 60(3), 225–237.
- Dosseville, F., Laborde, S., & Garnarczyk, C. (2014). Current research in sports officiating and decision-making. In C. Mohiyeddini (Ed.), *Contemporary topics and trends in the psychology of sports* (pp. 13–38). New York, NY: Nova.
- Findlay, L. C., & Ste-Marie, D. M. (2004). A reputation bias in figure skating judging. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 26(1), 154–166.
- Guillén, F., & Feltz, D. L. (2011). A conceptual model of referee efficacy. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2(25), 1–5. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00025
- Jones, M. V., Paull, G. C., & Erskine, J. (2002). The impact of a team's aggressive reputation on the decisions of association football referees. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 20(12), 991–1000. doi:10.1080/026404102321011751
- Kaissidis-Rodafinos, A., Anshel, M. H., & Porter, A. (1997). Personal and situational factors that predict coping strategies for acute stress among basketball referees. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 15(4), 427–436. doi:10.1080/026404197367218
- Laborde, S., Brüll, A., Weber, J., & Anders, L. S. (2011). Trait emotional intelligence in sports: A protective role against stress through heart rate variability? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 51(1), 23–27. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2011.03.003
- Laborde, S., Dosseville, F., & Raab, M. (2013). “Emotions and decision making in sports”: Introduction, comprehensive approach, and vision for the future. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 11(2), 143–150. doi:10.1080/1612197X.2013.773686
- Laborde, S., Raab, M., & Dosseville, F. (2013). Emotions and performance: Valuable insights from the sports domain. In C. Mohiyeddini, M. Eysenck, & S. Bauer (Eds.), *Handbook of psychology of emotions: Recent theoretical perspectives and novel empirical findings* (pp. 325–357). New York, NY: Nova.
- Leeds, M. A., & Leeds, E. M. (2009). International soccer success and national institutions. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 10(4), 369–390. doi:10.1177/1527002508329864
- Neave, N., & Wolfson, S. (2003). Testosterone, territoriality, and the “home advantage”. *Physiology and Behavior*, 78(2), 269–275.
- Nevill, A. M., Balmer, N. J., & Williams, A. M. (1999). Crowd influence on decisions in association football. *The Lancet*, 353(9162), 1416–1416. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(99)01299-4
- Nevill, A. M., Balmer, N. J., & Williams, A. M. (2002). The influence of crowd noise and experience upon refereeing decisions in football. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 3(4), 261–272. doi:10.1016/S1469-0292(01)00033-4
- Nevill, A. M., Balmer, N. J., & Wolfson, S. (2005). The extent and causes of home advantage: Some recent insights. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 23(4), 335–336. doi:10.1080/02640410500074375
- Page, K., & Page, L. (2010). Alone against the crowd: Individual differences in referees' ability to cope under pressure. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 31(2), 192–199. doi:10.1016/j.joep.2009.08.007
- Plessner, H., & Haar, T. (2006). Sports performance judgments from a social cognitive perspective. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 7, 555–575. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2006.03.007
- Pollard, R. (2008). Home advantage in football: A current review of an unsolved puzzle. *The Open Sports Sciences Journal*, 1, 12–14.
- Pollard, R., & Pollard, G. (2005). Home advantage in soccer: A review of its existence and causes. *International Journal of Soccer and Science Journal*, 3(1), 25–33.
- Poolton, J. M., Siu, C. M., & Masters, R. S. W. (2011). The home team advantage gives football referees something to ruminate about. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 6(4), 545–552. doi:10.1260/1747-9541.6.4.545
- Quain, R. J., & Purdy, D. A. (1988). Sport officials: Who are these people? *Journal of Applied Research in Coaching and Athletics*, 3(1), 60–74.
- Souchon, N., Cabagno, G., Rascle, O., Tractel, A., Dosseville, F., & Maio, G. R. (2009). Referees' decision making about transgressions: The influence of player at the highest national level. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 33(4), 445–452. doi:10.1111/j.1471.6402.2009.01522.x

- Tcha, M., & Pershin, V. (2003). Reconsidering performance at the summer Olympics and revealed comparative advantage. *Journal of Sports Economics*, 4(3), 216–239. doi:10.1177/1527002503251636
- Torgler, B. (2004). The economics of the FIFA football Worldcup. *Kyklos*, 57, 287–300.
- Voight, M. (2009). Sources of stress and coping strategies of US soccer officials. *Stress and Health*, 25(1), 91–101. doi:10.1002/smi.1231