The Imposter Phenomenon Among Intercollegiate Sport Leaders

Bobby Dhaliwal

Supervisor: Dr. Brian Turner

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The Ohio State University

Introduction

Notable Trends

Implications

Introduction

- Initially introduced as a self-concept to describe the intellectual phoniness experienced by high-achieving women (Clance & Imes, 1978)

- "an internal experience of intellectual phoniness...[in which] subjects [who] had obtained earned degrees, high scores on standardized tests, or professional recognition from colleagues or organizations ...did not experience an internal sense of success" (Clance & O'Toole, 1988, p. 56)

Notable Trends

On-field Sport Leaders

- Coaches may not internalize identity based on overly critical self-reflection related to game results (Johnson et al., 2023; Rocaboy & Pavlik, 2020)
  - ➤ Influence of perfectionism due to value of winning in different contexts (e.g., youth sport and intercollegiate sport)

- Female coaches must portray male-like image for validation (Walker & Bopp, 2010)

- Players may engage in self-handicapping to protect self-esteem (Wright et al., 2011)
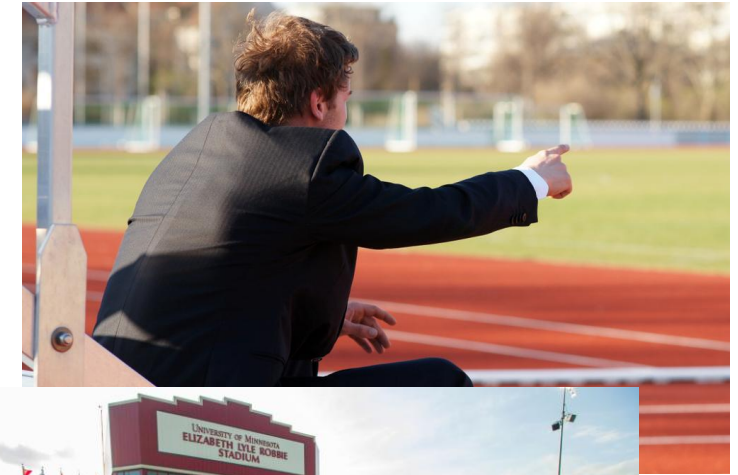
Notable Trends

- Women may conceal identity to uphold perfectible perception → "false self" development (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007)

- Women and racialized minorities can engage in self-handicapping by monitoring efforts levels to desensitize themselves from hegemonic structures (Wright et al., 2011)

- Emotional labor component often associated with women's off-field leader roles that perpetuate societal norms (Inglis et al., 2000)

Implications

Theoretical Implications

- Solidifies IP construct in sport management literature

- Supports future research in understanding both sport leadership and followership development

- Transferability to various sport contexts (e.g. youth sport, college sport, and professional sport)

Managerial Implications

- Sport organizations can focus leadership development toward overcoming imposter feelings (e.g., programs)

- Sport psychology units may implement new approaches to aid in overcoming imposter feelings

➢ e.g., periodic check-ins with coach/athlete following entry point