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Cash Rules Everything Around Me (C.R.E.A.M): The Balancing Act of Competition

and Revenue in a Collegiate Athletic Department

Organizational Communication Capstone Project
University of Portland
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Abstract

Competiveness within a culture is often discussed as an important factor to the degree that knowledge is shared within an organization. In this paper, I consider the influence of the degree of *competitiveness* of such organizational cultures on knowledge sharing, a crucial process in knowledge management, and on how competiveness affects team-to-team relationships in the athletic department. Through my research, I wanted to find out: To what degree does the competitiveness of an organization's culture play on the way knowledge is shared in that organization, and what methods are used inside an athletic department for creating a culture that promotes openness and success? In doing this, I sat interviewed multiple members of an athletic department and documented their meetings. Results showed competiveness to not be helpful in a department more geared towards competiveness with other institutions. Knowledge sharing is too important in this industry and stakeholders rely too much on the department for competiveness to interfere with an open culture.

Rationale
Picture this: an organization made up of various other organizations who compete against each other while at the same time representing the umbrella organization that houses them all. Phew, that was a mouthful. Albeit a mouthful that, hopefully, is able to sketch a rough outline of the dynamic organizational nature of collegiate athletic departments.

A NCAA Division I athletic department can house, roughly, ten to twenty varsity teams. This research focuses on a west-coast Division I university with six men's teams and seven women's teams (an example of a larger university is the University of Southern California's athletic department: it manages 10 men's teams and 10 women's teams). The number of various stakeholders interacting inside an athletic department is vast, and the topic is understudied.

Athletic departments are organizations that must somehow be all things to all publics. They pursue their own needs while also addressing the needs of their stakeholders through communication campaigns and issue management (Boyd & Stahley, 2008). At a fundamental and broad level, these organizations must satisfy the community, the school, the varsity teams, and the internal faculty of the athletic department. The tensions bound to arise from this complicated web are worthy of closer examination. In particular, the tensions around the competitive nature of each team within an athletic department and if there is competition for resources (i.e. scholarships, travel money, recruiting costs, gear, etc.).

The benefits of this research are potentially vast. With gaining a better perspective of how competition relates to the communication within a department, it could prove helpful in understanding how certain individuals operate. Getting to

the bottom of the complicated world of stakeholder interaction is also paramount in this research. Questions relating to who is represented and how they are represented internally and externally of the department are key as well. Grasping a more insightful view into an athletic department's necessary dealings with stakeholders and how it affects the organization's larger web of communication.

The theoretical framework upon which this literature review is based is below, but it mainly rests on Network Theory. It is described and situated within a broader scope looking at organizational communication within an interdepartmental organization. After the theory is discussed, a literature review will look at various pieces of work supporting the claim to the importance of learning more about athletic departments. The main themes covered in the literature are: complexity of athletic departments, stakeholder communication, time constraints, culture, and competiveness within organizations. Following that will be proposed research questions and methodology for further qualitative analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Relationships within an organization influence behavior. Within the scope of an athletic department, the interactions between coaches and administrators; athletes and coaches; and among administrators themselves can significantly sway power from one place to another. In looking at various relationships and their outcomes, Network Theory is a theory that can help ground the research.

Network Theory is the study of how the social structure of relationships around a person, group, or organization affects beliefs or behaviors (Rogers, 1986).

Barnes and his study of a Norwegian island parish and its particular networks developed the theory in the 1950's (Barnes, 1954). Network theory views individuals, groups, and teams as units and our reality should be viewed through the development of these units. This theory is grounded in the notion that the relationships between people are of the utmost importance, not the characteristics of the people (Burt, 1992). The evolving relationships can be used as a tool to examine and help explain "organizational phenomena" (Burt, 1992). An example could be the position an employees holds within the communication network of an organization and how it influences their relationship with power. The amount of information an employee is exposed to can heavily weigh on their ability to maneuver within an organization (Haythornthwaite, 1996). With network analysis, structural features can be analyzed and communication patterns in an organization, or the identification of groups within an organization, will come to emerge. As these groups come to emerge, their flexibility must also be examined under an intertextual lens.

Organizational communication can be viewed as intertextual (Taylor & Lindolf 2005). In postmodernist theory, intertextuality is taken to demonstrate the fluidity of an organization while "situated within a broader cultural 'economy' of textual interaction" (Taylor & Lindolf, 2005, p. 122). Members of an organization enable multiple types of discourse to shape their interactions. The presence of "competing narratives" helps to shape hierarchies within an organization (Taylor, Lindolf, 2005, p. 122). This theory revolves around discourse as the paramount definer of human understanding and relationships. The organizational processes

within an athletic department center on use of language and its implications; the postmodernist theory will ground much of the qualitative research taken from the organization. This is taken to mean how important language is within the organization and the amount of power it holds. The terms in which some teams, coaches, athletes, and other stakeholders are described are crucial to their perception within the organization.

Literature Review

Scholarly research done on collegiate athletic departments is lacking. There is little to no qualitative research dedicated to the organizational communication within these complex systems. However, there is research devoted to interdepartmental communication, competitive culture, departmental diversity, and knowledge sharing within organizations. By evaluating the research done in these specific areas, extrapolation to a similar organizational climate (i.e. athletic departments) is possible. This literature review will go over the main points (time and stakeholder management, culture, competiveness) of a few scholarly articles and then work to appraise them through the lens of sports management.

One of the more intriguing facets of athletic department communication is the immense number of stakeholders they look to please, including administrators, coaches, athletes, donors, and the student body. Using close textual anlaysis of the National Collegiate Athletics Association's (NCAA) community relations program, Boyd and Stahley (2008) hold that organizations must be all things to all people while pursuing survival. In their article, they say, "Individuals as well as organizations operate to balance their interests and those of others" (p. 252). By

acknowledging the need to "balance" interests, the authors recognize there are various sides of competing forces within an organization. Boyd and Stahley refer to this struggle in rhetoric as *communitas/corporatas* tension. While communitas tends to agree with the previously mentioned intertextual focus, corporatas seems to push again the notion of fluidity in a workplace.

Communitas is what happens in the midst of spontaneity. It is when community is born out of organic communication, not shaped by an institution. An example of this would be if the some members of the athletic department decided to grab drinks after work and hang out. It is no way mandated by the organization, but rather a choice the members make to better their relationships. In direct opposition of communitas is corporatas. According to Turner, corporatas is "a structured, differentiated, and often hierarchical system of politico–legal–economic positions with many types of evaluation, separating men in terms of 'more' or 'less'" (1969, p. 96). An athletic department must maintain their corporatas ideals to maintain hierarchies, but also must cultivate communitas values to reach out to their publics. Organizations must align themselves between and among both to maintain a rhetorical balance among multiple publics (Boyd and Stahley, 2008).

The balancing acts done within an athletic department can only occur- successfully- with outstanding interdepartmental communication. A study by Ballard and Seibold (2006) sought to "examine members' reported communication load, job satisfaction, and interdepartmental communication satisfaction in relation to their temporal experience along eleven dimensions—flexibility, linearity, pace, punctuality, delay, scheduling, separation, scarcity, urgency, and present and future

time focus" (p. 318). The study's emphasis on the communicative outcomes of how employees decided to spend their time with an organization is especially critical to understanding better how it can affect workplace relationships and manage tensions.

"Time is both multidimensional and multiplicitous" (Ballard and Seibold, p. 319, 2006). The duo observes that members of organizations are social role-players and tend to exist in the intersections of the intersubjective, objective, and subjective (Hernadi, 1992). Time is a force that everyone operates under the influence of and, sometimes, it can lead to constraints. Especially when the time is not shared (intersubjective) and subjective time can interfere with shared experiences. In athletic departments, with so many things needing to get done and so many people looking to be pleased, time is of the essence. When members of an organization fail to understand why or how another member is using their time, it can cause conflict (Ballard and Seibold, 2006).

Network Theory research focuses on the constructions of time (intersubjective, objective, and subjective) and how they mold organizational members' temporal experience. Time and the way it is perceived within an organization have serious affects on stakeholders and their experiences. Influences from the level of cultural, environmental, organizational, group, and individual all shape these experiences. This research focuses most on members' intersubjective experience of time and the extent to which it shapes daily routines. It is particularly poignant because of where the research was conducted- a housing overseeing organization within a medium-sized west coast university.

Culture within an organization is more than a buzzword, it is actually important. Van den Hoof and Schipper (2005) delve even deeper into culture and indentify what they label *competitiveness* within an organizational culture. They define this as: "a culture in which employees' individual performances are the prime criteria for rewards and appreciation, where there is an emphasis on extrinsic (financial) rewards related to explicitly formulated targets, and in which mutual competition is emphasized over collaboration" (p. 2). Extrapolating this to an athletic department is relatively clear. Coaches are competitive against other coach for budget money; teammates compete against one another for scholarships; administrators are likely to keep some knowledge privy in hopes it will help down the road. The many motivations within an athletic department create the competitive culture van den Hood and Schipper write about.

Competitive cultures value where there is an emphasis on extrinsic, as opposed to intrinsic, rewards related to explicitly stated goals (van den Hood and Schipper, 2005). Examples of explicitly stated goals could be games won, points scored, All-Americans produced, etc. This mode of competition does not favor a knowledge friendly organizational culture. However, what if the organization's culture is set up to value this sort of competition- like an athletic department's most likely is. Tensions would be more easily navigated in this kind of system and the competitive culture could be necessary. Van den Hood and Schipper (2005) came to define the basis of competitive organizational culture as: "a culture that scores high on individualism, masculinity and low on uncertainty avoidance, is a competitive organizational culture" (p. 8). Using this definition, it will be easier to qualify an

organization as appearing competitive or not.

Using the van den Hood and Schipper research that states high masculinity is a sign of a highly competitive, non-knowledge sharing culture, we can springboard to research done by Neupauer (1998). He found at the collegiate level that men administer 97% of the athletic programs (Neupauer, p. 1). The research is around 16 years old and women have become more involved in sports administration but, it is clear athletic departments are a male dominated arena scoring high in masculinity.

The culture of an athletic department is fascinating. Competition highlights almost every facet of the organization and the conflicting motivations unavoidably cause conflict. While literature supports the ideas about what could possibly happen within the communication channels of a collegiate athletic department, there is not enough qualitative research dedicated directly to better understanding the interworking inside these multi-faceted organizations.

Research Questions

R1: To what degree does the competitiveness of an organization's culture play on the way knowledge is shared in that organization?"

R2: What methods are used inside an athletic department for creating a culture that promotes openness and success?

Proposed Methodology

My research methodology required gaining access to a Division I athletic department. Luckily, I work in the Sports Information office at a Division I university and already have to the department through several gatekeepers. My main contacts within the athletic department are all part of the Sports Information office and they

were the ones who led me deeper into the department. After reaching out to one of

my gatekeepers, he assured me I would be allowed sit in on a weekly staff meeting

and conduct a series of interviews. I was able to sit in on both an external and

internal relations meeting. During these meetings, I heard from every single

member of the administrative staff of the athletic department. I recorded scratch

notes with pen and paper, I never voice recorded these meetings.

In my two, sit-down interviews I used a voice-recording device, in addition to

taking notes. I had thought about using a video camera but I am unsure about how

that will change the answers I would get from a more tradition interview style. I

interviewed the Sports Information Director and the Associate Athletic Director.

Both interviews lasted about half an hour and were conducted inside their

respective offices. Their voice recordings were then safely locked into my recording

device and transcribed for my data collection.

As stated, once all data material was collected, I broke them down and

analyzed them. My focus was mostly on motivations for communication and trying

to understand more about competition within the department. A few exemplars

came out from my data analysis and they are discussed in detail in the following

section.

Findings

The first research question analyzed through interviews and meetings within

the athletic department was: To what degree does the competiveness of an

organization's culture play on the way knowledge is shared in that organization? The lion share of decoded information from these interactions showed that respondents believed competiveness would only hinder interdepartmental knowledge sharing. One senior administrator put it bluntly when they were quoted saying: "being internally competitive is problematic". Competition between athletic department personnel was never directly observed in the meetings attended or the interviewing process; however, interviewees did acknowledge competition between (a) peer institutions and (b) between coaching staffs from different teams within the department. These are two pieces working to constitute the competition aspect of athletic departments.

Competition Aspects of Athletic Departments

Competition between peer institutions. This first point of dialogue centers around how administrators within the athletic department do not see competition internally, rather they view it as a healthy, and necessary, part of their relationship with other peer institutions and departments housed on campus. David, a senior administrator interviewee, holds there cannot be any internal competition among staff because of how closely they work with one another:

> I would say relative to other departments I've been around and other schools I've witnessed, no. Not to that level. I think the general athletics culture is, though. I think our culture is pretty strong where, from my perspective, the external relations unit I work in is so reliant on each other—our jobs are so intertwined—I'm so reliant on my co-workers to be able to do their job well that I think our competition is with peer institutions more than each other

> This discourse illustrates the hesitancy to claim any sort of internal

competition, and places it all on outside oppositions. David went on to talk about the

pride the athletic department holds for women's soccer and their exemplary national standing. In a separate interview with Bill, another senior administrator within the athletic department, he talked about the "visibility" of the women's soccer program to the community and other institutions. The athletic department pushes women's soccer to the forefront of all external relations because they understand it is where they gain value—it is where outside athletic departments look to replicate their own programs.

In the external relations meeting, women's soccer and men's basketball were the only two sports focused on. Which was intriguing since neither sport is currently in season. When asked about the obsession with women's soccer, Bill said, "We've established a culture in women's soccer where certain things are expected from us. We're not going to just ditch that, because we have such a great thing going here and fans have come to expect certain things from us." The expectations from outside stakeholders (fans) to continually compete with other athletic institutions on a national stage, pushes the school to focus resources on the women's soccer program. Both David and Bill conceded the focus on women's soccer was important not because of revenue generation, but because of national attention.

Revenue, however, was a word that riddled the pages of transcripts for this research. David and Bill echoed similar sentiments about how men's basketball is the only team in athletics that is truly capable of making money for the school, David saying: "Men's basketball is our biggest opportunity sport because it still brings in more revenue than any sports, or potentially all of our sports combined." On the basis of competing financially with other institutions, men's basketball is the athletic

department's only real hope to gain revenue—thus, it garners so much attention: "The opportunity to be successful in men's basketball becomes a priority for us to try and capitalize on that because if that happens, it puts money in all of our other sports," said Bill. They both see the attention placed on men's basketball as fair because of what it provides the rest of the department's teams.

David summed it up why men's basketball was such a figurehead in the department: "The revenue makes them (men's basketball) a focus for us." Throughout the meetings observed and the various interviews, at no time was there talk about trying to make other teams within the department more financially viable; the focus stayed on men's basketball and women's soccer and how those two teams can keep providing competition to peer institutions.

Simply put, competition is revenue based. The athletic department externally pushes two specific teams because they are the teams capable of generating returns.

Competition between coaching staff from different teams within the department. This piece of discourse stems off from the last one, whereas there is a question of coaches competing interdepartmentally for budgets, resources, scholarships, etc. While it was earlier acknowledged from the senior administrators that they do not see competition internally between employees, competition between coaches was recognized in the interviews. The coach competition was never made out to be a negative, though. Bill said:

> And you do see it, coaches saying, "Why is this program getting this, when they haven't won a game in a year?" So, there is a level of competiveness among coaches. But, there is also a level of support between the programs

Coaches compete for extrinsic rewards because they understand that is how the culture of this athletic department is. Athletics reward winners, and winners come from taking advantage of *opportunity*. In the internal relations meeting, administrators talked about new opportunities the tennis program afforded the department after seeing some recent success. It was only later, in a meeting with David, where he explained the tennis had been proactive in trying to gain more publicity for this squad: "Our men's tennis coach is very good about putting stuff on a plate for me... The more proactive you are, the more opportunity you have." This spells out the name of the game in the athletic department.

In another example, the former rowing coach at the university "pushed—but in a good way," Bill told me. He qualified the rowing coach's "pushing" by saying it made other coaches question the accepted paradigm in the department. That paradigm being coaches are stuck with the resources they have. Once the former rowing coach received the things he wanted, it prompted other coaches to reevaluate the established practices in the office: "I think people are starting to see things and question them. Internal competition stems from that and when people start recognizing stuff can get done," said David.

Again, the sports grabbing the majority of the discussion points in both the internal and external meetings attended, as well as the interviews conducted, were men's basketball and women's soccer. The obvious question is: Can coaches respect the amount of press and resources dedicated to these two programs and understand it benefits everyone in the department? After referring to men's basketball as a "money maker", Bill said:

We need to do everything in our power to try and help promote men's basketball... Because it is completely revenue based. None of our other sports are probably going to make any money. If we can help men's basketball succeed and become a successful program, it will do nothing but benefit the rest of our programs.

Bill conceded that he didn't think every coach in the department understood it to be this way:

I don't think so. And that sucks. We try to do a job in here of trying to promote every team as much as possible. But it's inevitable, and this will happen in every department, that, say, rowing is going to get a little less attention than men's basketball. And it sucks, but it's true. I hate to admit it but men's cross country, which has been a successful program for 30 years now, probably doesn't get the attention it needs and that sucks and I hate that it has to be like that, but with the lack of resources, manpower, and staffing we have in Sports Information, marketing, and the rest of the athletic department, it sucks and that is just a by-product of that lack of resources.

In summary, a coach willing to reconcile his or her own motivations to compete for resources with the understanding that by the athletic department focusing their attention on the "money makers" everyone will win, is crucial. While the internal struggle for resources is acknowledged in the department, it is also recognized that coaches can only fight as much as they have opportunity to. Opportunity is granted through winning, exposure, and revenue generation. If a team cannot accomplish these benchmarks, then they should continue to support the teams (men's basketball, women's soccer) that are helping elevate the entire department.

Creating "Good" Culture
The second question looked during this project was: What methods are used inside an athletic department for creating a culture that promotes openness and success?

Findings through meetings and interviews point to the athletic department's "open" culture to facilitate the vast amount of communication needing to be received by all the stakeholders. Open culture in the department is described as (a) ease of communication, (b) spatially close, and (c) ability to have fun.

Easy to Communicate With. This was an emergent theme throughout the research. The "exchange of information" internally and externally is something David said is extremely important to being a successful department, and this exchange of information cannot happen if there are not open lines of communication. David went on to talk about the old athletic director (AD) was not as open in his communication ("he really only communicated with a handful of people") as the current one (Steve), and only privileged individuals had access to him: "He (Steve) brought a lot of open communication into this organization. Which was something that was missing and sorely needed." The office now has transparency between all parties.

Open culture was visible in both the internal and external meetings observed. Each member of the meeting was offered a chance to speak and address the group in both observations. Although a few "closed" aspects of communication were seen through the meetings. "Junior" and women members of the meetings seemed to have less attention paid to them, or even not speak at all. During the internal meeting, there were two "junior" members—junior meaning only have worked in the athletic department for less than three years—and two women. Each time a junior member spoke during the internal meeting, other members seemed to shut off to their words. At one point, Steve, the current AD, took out his phone and

checked it while a junior member was speaking. It was the only time he looked at his phone throughout the entire meeting. The junior member did not seem phased by, or even notice, Steve's phone play; he kept his two cents short in comparison to everyone else and was silent the rest of the meeting. The role of hierarchal structures within the department did not seem strong; however, this was an example that seemed to nudge at said structures.

In the larger external meeting, the same sort of dissonance occurred when junior members spoke (the same two from the internal meeting); however, a larger conflict occurred with the women in the meeting. Three women, Jane, Kristen, and Alison, were present and only Kristen spoke the entire time—interestingly enough, Kristen was the one *leading* the meeting. Kristen would call on a member of each department to give an update on their weekly progress, but either a male member of the same department spoke on behalf of the female, or she never spoke at all. In this case, it was hard to see the absolute openness of the athletic department.

The fact that it was indeed a female who led the external meeting creates a strange tension as to why the other females were so poorly represented within the meeting. Obviously, this was one meeting and no grandiose conclusion can be made from the small sample taken, but it would be an interesting phenomenon to probe into more. The characteristics that make a female well respected in this male-driven world could provide answers.

Being Spatially Close. This finding is more in relation to the Sports Information Office and its (new) proximity to the rest of the department. All the athletic department offices are housed within the same building; however, the

Sports Information Office used to be fragmented from the rest of the offices and was

housed in a renovated janitor's office. It was about 200 yards from the major

groupings of offices. Sports Information moved into the main grouping of offices in

the spring of 2013. Bill said:

> Oh absolutely (communication has gotten better since moving), without question. And when we first moved, I didn't like it, I didn't want to be over here, and, in hindsight, it was a really good move to have us next to marketing, tickets, and sponsorships. Back then, sure, we still communicated with e-mails and phones, but it's just nice to stick my head out the door and ask a question to marketing

The move to the main fold helped create more open communication. It was

no accident this moved occurred just shortly after Steve replaced the former AD.

David talked how being in the main group of offices was better "from a community

perspective" and how there is now more "functional, face-to-face communication",

which he believes has enhanced communication.

The Ability to Have Fun. The final theme recognized in the findings about how

culture is created within the athletic department is the ability for the office to have

fun with one another. In both meetings, a office-wide kickball team was being

organized to compete in a tournament. Whenever it was brought up, the mood of

the meeting shifted and people loosened up; they started telling each other "it's time

to practice" and how they "needed to be on their 'A' game". It was clear this was all

said sarcastically, but it still pushed forward the importance the office places on

having a good time.

Bill describes the culture as: "an open culture, a welcoming culture. Like I

said, laid back is maybe not a great defining term for it, but I think it is a culture

where we have fun. I think it is a culture where it's very inclusive." Bill qualified

having fun as going out for beers after work sometimes, and just having a generally family-oriented atmosphere.

David mirrored Bill's sentiments when he said, "ability to have fun—we like to have fun in this office, so we don't take ourselves too seriously, but we also know when to be professional and get the job done." Being able to switch between work and play is an important part of being able to work well in the athletic department. David also mentioned how "our (the athletic department) business is not life or death." He understands the necessity of the ability to have fun and its importance in keeping their open culture alive and well.

The culture desired in and around the athletic department hinged upon (a) ease of communication, (b) spatially close, and (c) ability to have fun. Each of these themes surfaced and became evident through multiple interactions within the department. The biggest takeaway from these findings has to be the recognition of communication improving after the Sports Information Office moved into the main fold of offices. With enhanced face-to-face communication, it increased the openness of their culture.

Discussion

This brief study within an athletic department has interesting, and revealing findings, while also providing potential questions for further research. The research finds openness of culture has direct impact on information sharing, as well as finding the ability of a team to generate revenue for the athletic department impacts

its visibility internally and externally. When all the research is examined closely, it points to a common variable affecting everything in the department: relationships.

Much of the focus of this study was on competition and how it affected culture inside the department. It was quickly found through observing meetings and several interviews that internal competition was nonexistent; rather, relationships were held in the utmost importance because of the interconnectedness of the entire department. Because of this interconnectedness, everyone needs to be on the same page, with the same knowledge. When May and Mumby (2005) provide the postmodernist theoretical framework, we see "knowledge is inextricably tied to power" (126).

There was distinct transparency between all administrative staff in the athletic department; there was a lot of shared knowledge. Of course, it was clear there was always someone in charge (the AD) and a "hierarchy" did exist; however, since the new AD took over, communication channels have become more accessible and the power structure has flattened. Both interviewees commented on the openness of communication within the department and how that stifles competition. Network theory tells us, "The position an employee holds within the communication network of an organization influences their relationships with power." In this particular organization, employees interact on a level playing field in terms of knowledge and having shared knowledge directly influences (i.e. lessens) their level of interdepartmental competitiveness.

Boyd and Stahley (2008) describe how competiveness plays into the communitas and corporatas tension of an athletic department. With so many

stakeholders in cohort with the organization, various interests must be navigated and managed. The interests Boyd and Stahley bring up refer to the interplay between an open, knowledge-sharing culture and a more rigid, hierarchal knowledge-concealing culture. The corporatas culture is alive in this athletic department to maintain bureaucratic structure, but the interviewees acknowledge the communitas culture now present in the office.

The identification of the communitas culture was seen through the openness of the AD with the rest of the staff—his willingness to: "meet with anyone, at anytime", as described by Bill. Also, the movement of the Sports Information office from the janitor's closet to the rest of the offices created a spatial change influencing organic communication. Boyd and Stahley would agree that face-to-face communication provides more in terms of creating open culture than e-mailing and other computer-mediated communication. This organic communication defines communitas.

Competiveness is most rampant between the athletic department and peer institutions. It is most highly focused on: trying to gain community members through success of women's soccer and generating revenue through men's basketball. Turner would classify this sort of external system of politico-economics as corporatas. Thus, herein lies the tension between the communitas and corporatas.

This study tackles the level of competition in an athletic department and its affects on openness of culture (i.e. knowledge sharing). While it does have good insight into the discovered understanding that athletic departments rely heavily on

making sure everyone has the same information, it is worth noting the limitations
this study has. By studying only one small, Division I university, it provides a
relatively small sample size. Furthermore, by only attending a weeks worth of
meetings, and interviewing three people, it reinforces the small sample size. Also,
this university is not particularly competitive in any "money-makers". The levels of
competiveness might be far different at a much larger institution with a full-fledged
football team.

Looking deeper into how different athletic departments deal with
competiveness and the affects it has on their organizational culture will provide
better understanding into the tensions previously mentioned. By gaining a broader
knowledge of how these organizations deal with demands of their stakeholders, it
will provide insight into best practices for athletic departments.

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