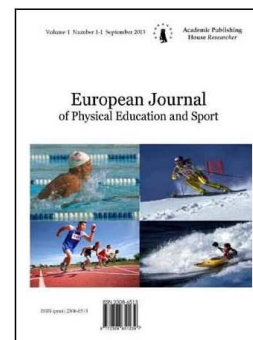


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Psycho-social Determinants in the Utilization Of Doping Substances by Athletes in Nigeria

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Abstract

The use of doping as a substance or method is potentially harmful to the health of the athletes and also gives them an unfair competitive edge. It represents an anathema, which poses great threat to the development of sports ideals in the modern day sports competitions. It is illegal and unethical to the sanctity of sports. It also has both short and long term side-effects on the athletes. This paper examined the psycho-social factors that may facilitate the utilization of doping substances either on a continuous or intermittent basis by athletes in Nigeria. A sample of 360 elite athletes in nine states of Nigeria was selected using purposive, simple and stratified random sampling techniques. A- 21- item self-developed questionnaire was used to gather relevant information for the study. Frequency counts, percentages and chi-square were used to analyze the data collected. Findings revealed that the prominent psychological and sociological determinants in the utilization of doping substances by athletes included the desire for excellent performance and gaining monetary or material rewards. It was therefore, recommended that athletes should be given social-network support, and be properly oriented towards adjustment to the various psycho-social conditions that may prompt them to the use of doping substances.

Keywords: Psycho-social; Athletes; Psychological determinants; Sociological determinants; Doping substances; Utilization.

Introduction

The extensive use of physical performance-enhancing substances by athletes could be traced back to the Greek physician, Galen (Klaff & Daniel, 1981). Periodic reports describing the use by athletes of caffeine, alcohol, anabolic steroids, amphetamines and narcotics reflected the dearth of evidence for the utilization of doping substances for sports contests world wide (IOC Medical Commission, 1999).

Doping as an artificial enhancement of athletes' performance could be in form of the use of performance-enhancing drugs (pharmacological), blood doping (physiological), ergogenic substances and the use of substances designed to conceal the presence of other prohibited

substances (WADA Code, 2005). This act is illegal, unethical and potentially harmful to the athletes' health. Socially, it results in stigmatization, loss of job, sanction, criminal offences and discrimination.

Elite athletes are particularly prone to the use of performance-enhancers for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage or competitive edge in a sporting contest. Winning a sport's contest by athletes, drugs (legal or illegal) may have been taken for a variety of reasons according to Awoniyi (1998), Synthetic Report (2007) and Mohammed (2009) as: legitimate therapeutic purposes, for performance continuation; for recreational use and for performance enhancement, which is considered a most serious threat to the credibility of competitive sports. This has become the subject of doping control regulations.

Furthermore, athletes utilize doping substances for various reasons according to Mark (2008) which include, physical, psychological or emotional and sociological. One of the personal justifications for utilizing doping substances by athletes is psychological (Donald, 2008). Athletes use mind-altering drugs to provide for the most convenient escape from unpleasant emotions, stress, frustration, boredom, anxiety and other personal problems (Ancheal, 2010). The pressure from training schedule, experimentation, for self-confidence, physical exhaustion, high expectation from athletes' support personnel and severe time to meet the external demands may lure athletes to utilize performance-enhancing substances.

Perhaps, there are no greater determinants of the use of doping substances than the responses to social and societal pressures. Peer pressure, imitating and modeling the behaviour of elite athletes, media reports on incidence of drug in sports and team acceptance are likely to determine the use of doping substances sociologically (Gillzeal, 2011; Wraglow, 2012). The monetary or material reward, advertisement through mass media and pressure from athletes' support personnel are sociological reasons for the utilization of doping substances (International Olympic Committee Medical Commission, 2007).

Doping among athletes put at risk the ethical principle and educational values embodied in the International Charter of Physical Education and Sports of UNESCO and the Olympic charter. Considering these submissions, the study was designed to investigate whether psycho-social indices were responsible for the utilization of doping substances by athletes in Nigeria.

For the purpose of the study, a research question and hypothesis were generated.

Question: What are the psycho-social determinants of the utilization of doping substances by athletes?

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the psycho-social determinants of utilization of doping substance between male and female athletes.

Methods

The study involved 360 elite athletes with age range of 17-31 years drawn from nine (9) States (Ekiti, Oyo, Lagos, Niger, Bauchi, Kaduna, Akwa Ibom, Ondo and Ogun) using purposive, simple and stratified random sampling techniques. A total of 40 elite athletes (20 males and 20 females) were selected from each state. The research instrument was a 21-item self-structured questionnaire on psycho-social determinants. The professionals in Health and Physical Education and Test and Measurement validated the instrument. The instrument was pilot tested twice within two weeks with a sample of 50 participants selected outside the actual sample used for the study. Using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation method, a Reliability Coefficient of 0.81 was obtained.

Data were collected from the participants in their sport training venues during sports training programme. The services of research assistants were employed for data collection. All the 360 copies of the instrument administered were duly completed and returned for the study (representing a 100% return rate). The data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and Chi-square statistics.

Results

Question: What are the psycho-social determinants of the utilizing doping substances by athletes?

Table 1: Psycho-social determinants of utilizing doping substances by athletes

S/N	Psycho-social Determinants	Responses			
		Yes		No	
		N	%	N	%
(a)	Psychological Determinants				
I	Desire to experiment	184	51.1	176	48.9
ii	Fear of failure	156	43.3	204	56.7
iii	For relaxation	227	63.1	133	36.9
iv	To prevent nervousness	276	76.7	84	23.33
v	To prevent frustration	171	47.5	189	52.5
vi	Desire to excel	291	80.8	69	19.2
vii	To stimulate alertness	207	57.5	153	42.5
viii	To inspire self-confidence	187	51.9	173	48.1
(b)	Sociological Determinants				
i	Monetary/material reward	207	57.5	153	42.5
ii	Athletes' support personnel	149	41.4	211	58.6
iii	Social recognition	153	42.5	207	57.5
iv	Advertisement/Image laundering	162	45.0	198	55.0
v	Peer group interaction	163	45.3	197	54.7

Table 1 showed that the desire for excellent performance (80.8%) by the athletes in sports is the most prominent psychological reason for utilizing doping substances. Other important psychological reasons for using performance enhancers are to prevent nervousness (76.7%), for relaxation (63.1%), to stimulate alertness (57.5%), desire to experiment (51.1%) and to maintain self-confidence (51.9%). Similarly the table revealed the sociological reasons for engaging in the use of doping substances by athletes.

A total of 207 (57.5%) respondents indicated they used doping substances to gain monetary or material rewards. Other sociological determinants responsible for utilizing doping substances include, peer group interaction (45.3%), advertisement (45.0%), social recognition (42.5%) and interaction with the athletes' support personnel (41.4). Findings revealed that athletes in this study involved doping for different psycho-social reasons, which include desire for excellent performance in sport, monetary and material rewards, influence of peer group and the wish of athletes' support personnel.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the psycho-social determinants for utilizing doping substances between male and female athletes.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis showing psycho-social determinants for utilizing doping substances by athletes

Psycho-social determinants for utilizing doping substances	Sex		X ² -cal	X ² -tab	df	R
	Male	Female				
Desire to experiment	105	79				
Fear of failure	75	81				
For relaxation	201	26				
To prevent nervousness	178	98				
To prevent frustration	101	70				
Desire to excel	190	101	220.05	21.03	12	*S
To stimulate alertness	130	77				
To inspire self-confidence	110	77				
Monetary/material reward	140	67				

Athletes support personnel	100	49				
Social recognition	53	100				
Advertisement	142	20				
Peer group interaction	131	32				

p>0.05 level of significance

*S

Table 2 revealed that chi-square calculated value of 220.05 was greater than Chi-square table value of 21.03 at df= 12 and p< 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there was a significant difference in the psycho-social determinants of utilization of doping substances by athletes. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

Findings in this study revealed that there is a significant difference in the psycho-social determinants for the utilization of doping substances by athletes. Psychologically, athletes utilized doping substances for excellent performance (80.8%) in sporting events while sociologically; monetary or material reward (57.5%) was the prominent determinant of utilizing performance-enhancing substances. Other psycho-social determinant for athlete's involvement in doping include, prevention of nervousness (76.7%), relaxation (63.1%), peer group interaction and advertisement through mass media. This is consistent with the report of Woolley (2000), Oshodin and Egor (2001) and Rathod (2006), that athletes involved themselves in the use of doping substance for psychosocial reasons. Similarly, (Mottram, (1988), Nardo (1992), and Synthetic Report (2007) found out that athletes engaged in doping behaviours for various psycho-social reasons under the influence of winning at-all-cost syndrome to meet their targets.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings in this study revealed that athletes were involved in the utilization of doping substances considering psycho-social as determinants. The study revealed that there was a significant difference of psycho-social determinants in the utilization of doping substances by male and female athletes in Nigeria.

The psychosocial reasons for engaging doping substances by athletes include desire to excel in sports contests, gaining monetary or material rewards, prevention of nervousness, advertisement, peer group interaction and pressure from athletes' support personnel. Other determinants of utilization of doping substances by athletes as revealed in the study were to inspire self-confidence, fear of failure, experimentation, relaxation among teammates and other personal problems.

Based on the findings of this study, it was therefore recommended that:

(1) Drug education programme should be implemented comprehensively in all educational institutions in Nigeria.

(2) Athletes should have support network to help cope with sport-related pressures and stresses.

(3) Incentives for the athletes who performed excellently should not be too flamboyant to avoid involvement in doping by athletes.

(4) The integrity of sports participation should be highly emphasized rather than focus on winning-at-all-cost.

(5) Experienced top athletes should serve as good models to be emulated by young athletes.

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