Development and evaluation of a value-based doping prevention program for young athletes
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Introduction

Doping or the use of banned substances or methods to enhance performance is a prevalent phenomenon in sport with negative consequences for athletes and the integrity of sport. Not only in elite sport but also among young athletes doping is increasingly becoming a problem.

Anti-doping approaches

- Detection and deterrence approach = doping controls and punishment → limited in effectiveness and cost
- Prevention approach = prevention through education
  - knowledge-based approach = teaching facts and giving information → not sufficient to tackle doping
  - value-based approach = discussing and reflecting values; training skills e.g., decision-making

Looking at the psychosocial factors associated with doping intentions and behavior, Donovan and colleagues (2002) suggest considering both personal and environmental factors, and a meta-analysis of Ntoumanis and colleagues (2014) revealed that variables of moral nature are important. For example, athletes’ moral disengagement and anticipated guilt have been identified as predictors for doping intentions in previous research (Kavussanu et al., 2015).

Aim

1) develop an intervention program that focuses both on personal and environmental value-based variables
2) evaluate its effectiveness in decreasing doping intentions in young athletes, in comparison to a knowledge-based intervention program

Method

Sample

- 200 young elite athletes (m/f) from team- and individual sports, aged 13-19 years old, will be recruited
- Why adolescent athletes:
  - attitudes, values, and decision-making skills are still developing
  - critical developmental phase when deviant behavior is often initiated (Kavussanu et al., 2006)

Measures

- Doping intentions: 2 hypothetical doping scenarios (Kavussanu et al., 2016)
- Moral Disengagement: Moral Disengagement in Doping Scale (Kavussanu et al., 2016)
- Anticipated guilt: “guilt” subscale of State Shame and Guilt Scale (Marschall et al., 1994)
- Ethical climate concerning rules and code: subscale of Ethical Climate Questionnaire (Victor & Cullen, 1988)
- Collective Moral Motivation: subscale of Ethical Climate Index (Arnaud, 2010)
- Empathic concern and Perspective taking: 2 subscales of Interpersonal Reactivity Index - Short - German (Paulus, 2009)

Design

- Cluster randomized controlled trial (randomization of school classes) with:
  - Pretest
  - 6-week intervention (1 session/week)
  - Posttest
  - Follow Up
  - Designed to stimulate cognitive, emotional and social processes by:
    - Decision-making training through moral dilemmas discussions
    - Talk about doping related feelings, e.g., guilt, regret
    - Identifying and rethinking moral justifications
    - Group goal setting concerning moral and ethics

Time (3) X Group (3)

- value-based intervention (80 athletes)
- knowledge-based intervention (80 athletes)
- waiting control group (40 athletes)

Outlook

Depending on the results of this study (expected mid 2020), the main goal will be to design a teachers’ manual that can be used for value-based doping prevention at elite sport schools.

Contact

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References


