

Attitudes of Students of Sports Participants about Doping in Sports

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Abstract.

The main objective of the research was to test the level of knowledge and to identify students' attitudes about the use of prohibited substances (drugs) in sports. The study included a total of 100 students, of Department of Physical Education and Sports in AMU, Aligarh. M.P.E.d and B.P.E.d students participated. As a way of gathering the necessary information an a questionnaire was used, with 13 clearly defined questions (11 closed type questions and 2 open-ended type questions) which were related to the specific knowledge and attitudes about the use of doping substances in sports. It is important to note that 80% of the participants involved in any sport (sport games, athletics, martial arts, skiing, tennis), different ranks of competition. The obtained results are relevant for the global indicator of awareness, knowledge and attitudes of students about the increasing problem of today's modern sport that is called doping.

Keywords: Attitudes; Prevention; Students; Questionnaire; Doping;

1. INTRODUCTION

Many measurement scales are used to examine attitude. Attitude can be different to measure because measurement it arbitrary, meaning people have to give attitude a scale to measure it against and attitude are ultimately a hypothetical that can't be observed directly following the explication dichotomy, attitude can be examined through direct & indirect measure.

The International Olympic Committee in 1975 prohibited the use of all forms of stimulants. At the same time, regardless of the stated commitment to preserving the spirit of sport, most of the sports federations continued with the development of chemical and biological agents and methods that enable endurance and feasibility.

The latest seizure of medals from cyclist and Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong is certainly a surprising fact and warns all those who engage in doping substances that they can be detected and thus lose much more than their medals, prestige and honor in the world of sports. Or the example of Marion Jones and Tim Montgomery who, after the discovery of THG doping, are no more masters of athletics (Michalak, & Kyselovicova, 2001; Hnizdil, 2000).

The problem may be in the personality of the athlete who is dissatisfied with his performance or advancement, a very strong desire to achieve the best results, which is followed by bulky profits, popularity and reputation, the belief that others use the same or similar substances and lack of knowledge about the unwanted effects of the use of doping. Very often, the environment and the expectations of coaches, the audience and family and friends and even society itself lead to considerable pressure on the athlete, which is manifested by using banned substances. Awareness of the limits of the body and the limits of endurance through which one cannot pass, lead the athlete to cross the limits even at the cost of their own health (Masic, 2006; Pavlovic, 2006).

Pioneers of modern doping in sport were swimmers. They swam at the 1865 contest across the Amsterdam channel and they excelled in all the disciplines. After the incredible success of the competition in the sporting circles of the time more and more rumors were spread about the use of some types of stimuli that helped, "the contestants to move through the water as if they had fins on their feet". The first information about the doped athletes we have in the modern Olympics held in St. Louis when the American winner of the marathon Hicks while under medical care received several subcutaneous injections of strychnine sulfate (Pupis & Polgar, 2006; Pavlovic, 2006). During the decades that came stimulants ranked high in the world of sports. The use of anabolic steroids in modern sport is recent. The first users of anabolics were mainly body builders, weight lifters, football players, cyclists, and athletes, in general those athletes that were subjected to extreme efforts. After some time, the stimulants slowly became part of the "queen of sports". The first recorded death due to the use of illicit substances was recorded in 1896 when English cyclist Linton died during the Paris-Bordeaux race, after consuming ephedrine (Pupis & Korcok, 2004). In 1960, at the XVII Olympics in Rome, Danish cyclist Kurt Jansen Enemas died, who according to experts was receiving strong doses of amphetamine derivatives and nicotinic acid from his coach After this event, the IOC Medical Commission prepared a technical analysis of the material which was accepted at the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1964 and also accepted the first definition of doping. These are the Olympics that are especially important because of the adoption of the first list of banned substances and at the Olympic Games in Mexico City in 1968 the list was officially approved and the testing of athletes started in the Summer as well as the Winter Olympics (Macvanin, Soldat, & Macvanin, 2011; Zivanovic, 2000). Similar studies were carried out in the last few years by Ukrainian authors who even published a national

study in partnership with WADA (Bondarev, Ajitskiy, Galchinsky, Labskir, & Druz, 2008; Bondarev, Galchinsky, Labskir, Druz, & Ajitskiy, 2009; Bondarev & Sirenko, 2010). In our country there has not been any research on this subject in the population of pupils and students. For these reasons, and often based on questions that come to mind regarding doping, almost daily, in the sphere of sport and in the wider public, the idea for this research emerged. The basic problem, which is defined in this study are the attitudes and knowledge about the possible prevention of doping substances in sport in order to assess students' knowledge and attitudes about the use of illicit substances (drugs) in sports. The knowledge and attitudes of university students about the problem of doping in sport has been the subject of research of other authors. Some authors (Melia, Pipe, & Greenberg, 1996) conducted a survey of five Canadian regions, which included 107 schools with 16,119 students, randomly selected in order to determine the prevalence of the use of anabolic-androgenic steroids, their attitudes and knowledge about doping. The results showed that most of them used banned substances in the year prior to the survey. A total of 29.4% of the participants said they injected some substance, and 29.2% shared the needle during injection of anabolic-androgenic steroids. A significant number of participants said they used other substances (caffeine, 27%, extra protein, 27%, alcohol 8.6%; pain medicine, 9%; stimulants, 3.1%; "doping methods", 2.3%, beta-blockers, 1%) attempting to improve their sport performance. These results were unexpected for teachers, health and sports workers.

METHODOLOGY

The study included a total of 100 students, 85 (male) and 15 women who were students of the Department of Physical Education in AMU Aligarh., Age of the sample ranged between 18-26 years. As a way of gathering the necessary information, questionnaire was used with 13 clearly defined questions which were related to the specific knowledge and attitudes about the use of doping substances in sports (eleven were closed type questions and two questions were open type). Students voluntarily participated in the survey. It is important to note that 80% of the participants were of all India interuniversity level players.

RESULTS WITH DISCUSSION

The result of the research is presented in table 1 and figures 1 and 2 (prevalence of doping in sports). Based on worldwide insight into Table 1 it can be concluded that the students were uniform in only one question (question 3) which referred to the opinion that if any of you have ever taken the banned substances. All students (nearly 100%) responded affirmatively with YES, while in other issues opinions were divided. Although the study included a small sample, the obtained results are great and extremely important. Based on the survey results a real picture of the attitudes and knowledge of the student population on the misuse of doping in sport was determined.

Table 1. The questionnaire responses

Question	Yes %	No %
1. Have you ever in contact with doping substances?	34	66
2. Do you know the list of banned substances and drug?	42	58
3. Have you ever taken the banned substances?	9	91
4. Would you ever taken a drug to achieve personal results?	14	86
5. Have you think that some of the current top athletes are taking drug?	65	35
6. Have you met someone for whom you knew to be taking dope?	30	70
7. Do you think it is right t have someone positive to doping near you?	74	26
8. Do you think that doping controls can detect 100% of the athletes who took dope?	35	65
9. Do you think there is a way to deceive the doping control test?	52	48
10. Are there some of the world anti-doping program to support the athletes in the country?	34	64
11. Do you know what WADA is?	55	45
12. Which sport do you think is the most marked by doping scandal?	Chart 1	
13. Which sport do you think is the least marked by doping scandal?	Chart 2	

Fig.1. Sports Most marked by doping scandals.

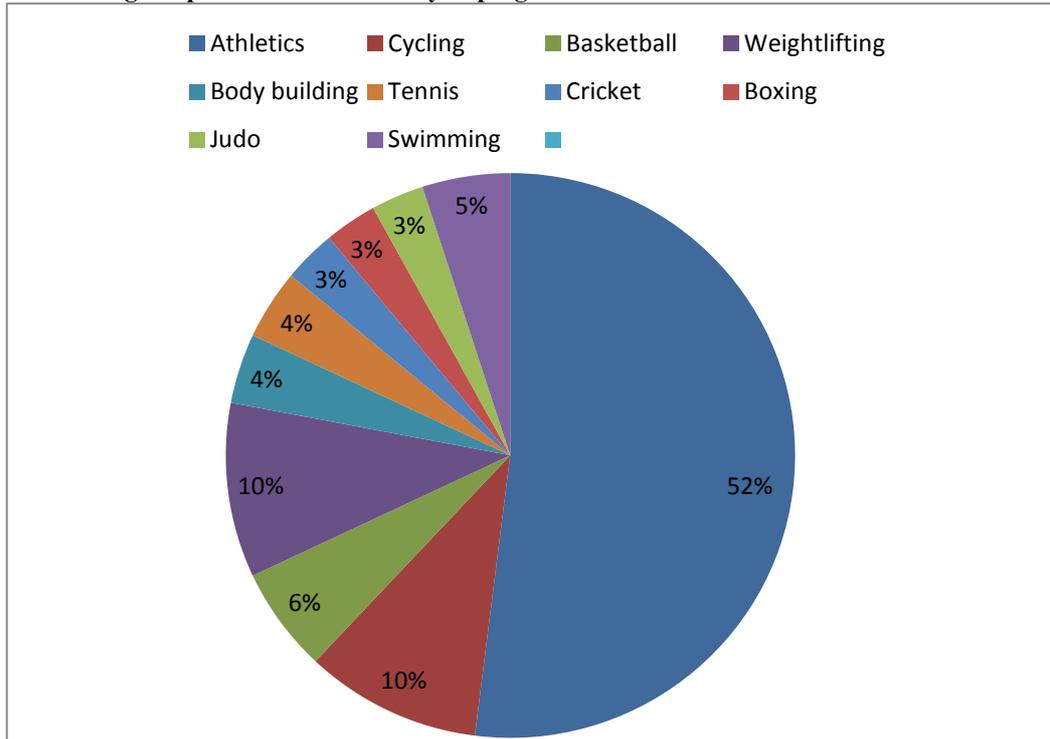
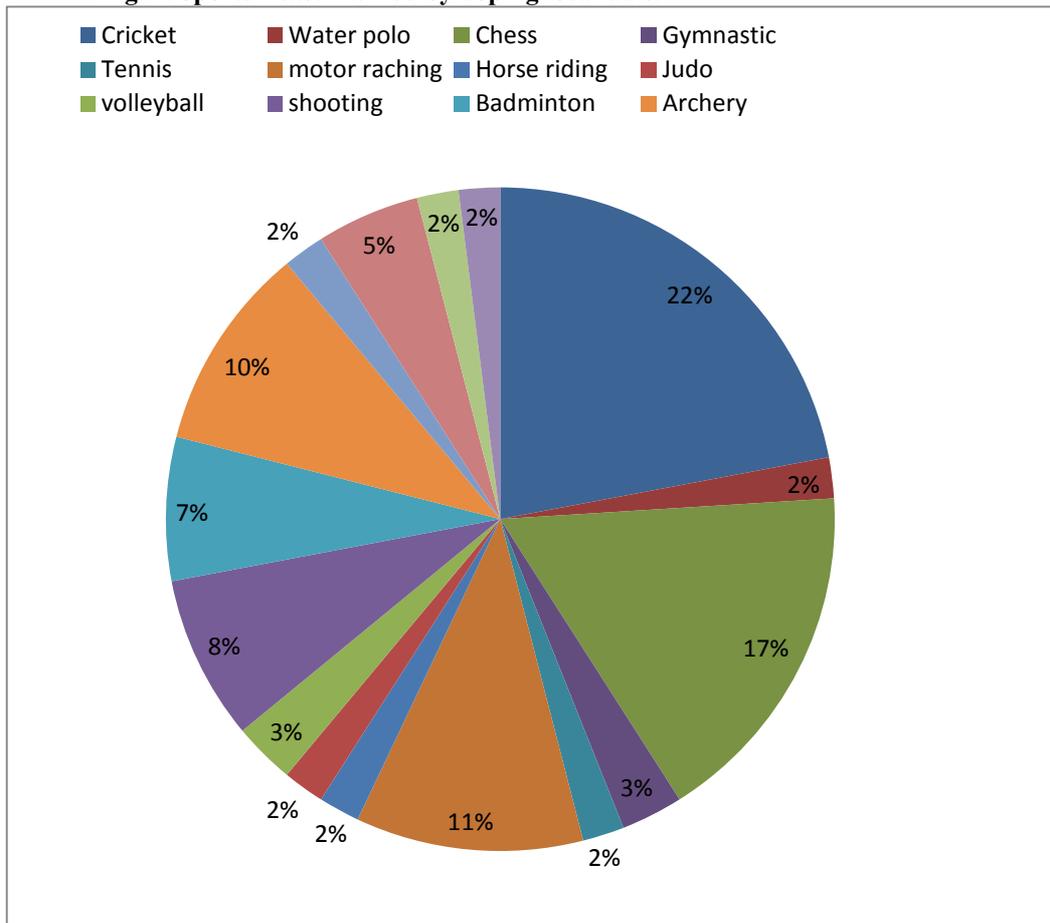


Fig. 2. Sports Least marked by doping Scandals.



The results of this study provided some information on the attitudes and knowledge of students of physical education and sport on the problem of doping in sport, and it is important for the reason of the population

included in the survey, because they are the future educators in physical education, and sport, whose imperative is to work with young populations and their education on the issue. In my study of the total number of participants, 34% had been direct contact with an illegal substance and 66% had never been in contact with any of banned doping substance (Table 1, Que.1). The presented data showed that a significant majority of students still have the correct opinion, and a negative attitude toward doping, thus showing that doping is unwanted and should not be practiced. One should also take into account the fact that 58% of them do not know the list of banned substances and drugs, which probably represents a problem because the education about doping is insufficient, insufficiently represented so we should enter into mutual agreements with the main anti-doping agency, which would preventively educate students about the unwanted effects of using doping agents (Laure, Binsinger & Lecerf, 2003).

That is according to a survey by French authors (Laure, Binsinger & Lecerf, 2003). They compiled a sample of 402 French general practitioners, randomly, by telephone with a prepared script, had a conversation about their attitudes and knowledge about doping, and their contact with doped athletes. The results showed that the response was 50.5% (153 men and 49 women, mean age 45.6 ± 5.6 years). Of the participants, 73% confirmed that they had a list of banned products, and only 34.5% said they were aware of the recent French law on the fight against doping dating from March 1999. Some 11% directly met the requirement for a prescription drug funds during the preceding 12 months (mostly anabolic steroids, stimulants and corticosteroids were requested), and 10% had warned an athlete who was afraid of the health risks (mainly anabolic steroids). More than half (52%) doctors issued a prescription for a doping agent. According to 87.5% of the participants, doping is a public health problem, and 80% said that doping is a form of addiction. Most (89%) reported that general practitioners have a role in the prevention of doping, but 77% were not eager to participate in prevention. A very high percentage (91%) of our participants had never used banned substances, only 9% had taken a banned substance, so we can say that this data is encouraging and the percentage is negligible. Some basic sports (athletics, Weightlifting) where doping agents are mentioned as great harm for the human body. But the problem are the 13% of those who have already consumed an illegal substance, probably (not) aware of the possible consequences. If we compare the results with earlier ones, we can conclude that our results are different (Bondarev et al., 2008; Bondarev et al., 2009; Wanjek et al., 2007).

Similarly, students were thinking about the possible use of banned substances to achieve personal results. More than 86% had a negative view on the matter and 14% supported the use of prohibited substances for personal results. Among these 14% are also those who consumed the substance, so that this percentage and the opinion is expected, but it is very important that the majority of participants have a negative opinion on this matter and does not support taking any banned substance. There is a frightening fact obtained by American researchers who studied the negative effects of doping on athletes body. They obtained the results where 195 of 198 (98.5%) of athletes are ready to use doping and 50% would be willing to die (within 5 years) after a big victory (Pupis, & Korcok, 2004).

It is interesting to note the fact and the attitude of all the participants (nearly 35%) who believe that some of the current top athletes were taking some sort of banned substances. This confirms our assumption that there is a negative perception about top and professional sports in this young population, where most of them are engaged in some sport. Such information greatly reduces the level of motivation of young people and has a significant impact on their future careers. The same results were obtained by some other authors (Bondarev, & Sirenko, 2010; Pupis, & Polgar, 2006). As many as 30% had met someone who was taking drugs, 70% have never met a person whom they knew be to using banned substances.

They expressed a similar view as to whether it was right to have someone positive for doping in their vicinity. Of the total number of students 26% are against such a person being found in their vicinity and 74% approve, which shows a certain degree of tolerance to doping in sport.

One maybe interesting result has been obtained about the reliability of testing on doping and possible frauds. In response to this question, 35% of the participants believe that doping controls cannot always detect the athlete using doping, and 65% believe that this is possible. The half of the participants, 52% believes that there are certain ways to deceive the doping control tests and 48% participants believes that can't deceive the doping control tests. Similar results in their study were also obtained by some other authors (Pupis, & Polgar, 2006). This percentage suggests that there is still an embarrassment among students about the reliability of anti-doping controls and their implementation. When asked if there was some state anti-doping program to assist athletes, more than half of the sample (64%) is aware that in their country there is some of world anti-doping program to support athletes, in terms of continuing education, seminars, conferences, etc., and up to 36% of them are not familiar with these agencies at the state level.

In terms of sport, which is most marked by doping scandals, the responses were different.

(Figure 1). Of the sports the first ones singled out were athletics (52%), cycling (10%), Basketball (6%), weightlifting (10%), then Body building and tennis (4%), Cricket, Boxing and Judo (3%), and Swimming (5%). In a survey of Slovak authors (Pupis, & Polgar, 2006) athletics took first place (88%), then strength sports (30%) and sports games (24%). Generally, we see that it usually revolves around individual sports, where we assume

that Weightlifting and athletics are generally identified with the constant media attention and with the athletes in this group, who are most often part of doping control. As the sports least infected by doping of cricket (22%), chess (17%), motor racing (11%), horse riding (2%), Volleyball and gymnastic (3%), Badminton (7%), Table tennis, Kho-kho, tennis water polo, judo, Tennis and hockey (2%), Archery (10%), Basketball (5%) and shooting (5%) (Figure2). In a survey of Slovak authors (Pupis, & Polgar, 2006) sports games, with 66% were also indicated as a sport that is least infected by drugs. Cricket and chess have been identified as the least infected by drugs, even if our issue is not specific to sports, sports groups. This result can be justified by the fact that the whole team is included, not one individual who can bear the consequences. Related to this is the media coverage of the offenders that is not as common as in the individual sports. Also, the cost of doping control in sport clubs is several times larger than that for the individual athlete.

Conclusion

On the basis of these results, and especially those 9% who have already taken banned substance and 14% who would take the banned substance for personal scores we should take this data as a warning. We believe that more information and awareness is needed among youth sports, sports schools and sport clubs on the harmful effect of doping on the health of athletes. For the purpose of the assessment of the objectivity of intentional and unintentional doping, it would be appropriate if the drugs available on our market were marked, which would clearly show that the drug does or does not contain banned substances. In terms of the law, it is definitely a long process, but the pharmaceutical companies should not be a problem, because they know what their products contain.

It is also necessary to communicate with the young athletes in order for them to be able to understand all the negativity and the risks associated with doping. Generally it can be concluded that the results of students in terms of statistics on the use of doping, knowledge and awareness about the negative effects of doping are insufficient. It is this population of students that is the future of sports and therefore the need for additional education on this issue is needed. This research can serve as a framework for the same or similar types of research and all in order to understand and prevent the use of prohibited substances in sport among young people.

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