

## Uses of Drugs and Its Effects on Sports Person: An Overview

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**Abstract:** The paper examined drugs and its effects in competitive sports. The use of illegal substances in sports is a trendy topic in today's society. In the last few years a copious amount of players have been under the spotlight of substance abuse, which led to a punishment for their actions. These drugs have had a large influence in the overall performance of the players, even if it the use of drugs is "often denied or simply overlooked". The type of drugs that are banned in sports, which are performance-enhancing drugs such as psycho-stimulant, sympathomimetic aminos (Amino substances) central nervous system stimulators, narcotics etc. Effects of doping drugs on the athlete and the psychological implication, which include deterioration of performance with constant use indiscipline and sometimes destitution, may result. Suggestions were made on ways of curbing drugs abuse in competitive sports including counseling. The paper concluded that if the suggested measures are adopted, drug use in sports will be reduced to the barest minimum or totally crimated from sports; that the use of drugs in sports if not curbed may result in more negative psychological consequences on both the athlete and society in general.

**Keywords:** Drugs, Amino Substances, Players, Performance, Injuries, Society, Samples.

**Introduction:** Drug's in Sports In today's professional athletic events athletes are using whatever they can find to give them an upper hand or give them the winning edge on other athletes just to keep their careers in check, but what is the price of using drugs in sports? Athletes endanger not only themselves

but everyone around them when they use drugs. Athletes are aware what damages they could receive if they take these drugs but they refuse to give them up. Professional sports commissioners should enforce a drug testing policy for all athletes. There are many drugs that professional athletes can use to increase

their performance in sports. In this drug era in today's sports there are tons of drugs that athletes can use to help them do better in their specific sport they are participating in. Androstenedione or "Andro" is most known in the sports community. Andro boosts blood levels of testosterone, helping athletes to build muscle mass, improve their strength and endurance, and recover more quickly from injury and recovery time from workouts. Andro gives athletes the hitting power in professional games. Tetra hydro gestrone, "THG", or "the Clear" is also a well known performance enhancement drug. "THG" has no medical use it's mostly for athletic purposes. THG is used to increase muscle strength and promote muscle growth for the athlete that uses it.

**Reasons for Using Drugs in Sports:** The causes for its uses are obvious, according to Gabodomosi (1988), some use drugs to improve their performances in sports. Some too use drugs for social reason that is to overcome their shyness and move freely with peers. For athletes it is presumed that drugs relieve tensions and tiredness of muscles.

Most athletes are at the peak for a short span of time, and they try to make the most of it, but it comes with certain risks. Firstly, athletes who take these illegal drugs can get suspended for a long time, and some are also handed lifetime bans. Secondly, it puts the athletes' health in grave danger and has many long-term implications. Training and hard work are the only fair way for a sportsman to win, but the use of drugs boost their effort and gives them shortcuts.

### **Athletes Who Takes Drugs and Spoil Their Career:**

**Shane Warne:** In February 2003, prior to the start of the cricket World Cup, the ace Australian spinner was sent home after testing positive for a banned diuretic during the One-day series in Australia earlier that year. He claimed ignorance of the banned nature and tablet he took, as well as much of the drug policy of the Australian Cricket Board despite extensive briefings on the matter in the past. Charged with using "a prohibited method to enhance

performance", he faced a two-year ban from cricket if found guilty.

**Lance Armstrong:** One of the biggest names in cycling, Lance Armstrong was stripped of 7 Tour De France titles after he admitted to taking performance-enhancing drugs Erythropoietin (EPO), human growth hormone, testosterone, cortisone as well as having blood transfusions.

**Marion Jones:** Female athlete, Marion Jones became a hero and role model to many at the 2000 Summer Olympics, after racing her way to 5 medals - three gold, the most by any female athlete in a single Olympics. Jones became an overnight star, appearing on the cover of Vogue, and became one of sport's first female millionaire. Fast forward 8 years, and America's darling was sentenced to 6 months in prison after she admitted lying to federal agents about steroid abuse. Jones stated that her former coach, Trevor Graham, gave her the substance, telling her it was the nutritional supplement flaxseed oil. The supplement was actually a steroid known as "the clear".

Many other well known athletes becomes eminent due to drug abuse viz. **Andre Agassi** (Tennis), **Martina Hingis** (Tennis), **Pradeep Sangwan** (Cricket, India), **Shoaib Akhtar**, **Mohammad Asif**, (Cricket- Pakistan), **Kunjrani Devi** (Weightlifting –India), **Seema Antil** –Discus thrower (India), **Mandeep Kaur** –Athlete (India) and many more

**India's Rank 3<sup>rd</sup> in Doping:** Sporting minnows India has been ranked third in a doping violation report published by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) with 117 athletes from the country being punished after testing positive for banned substances. India followed Russian Federation (176) and Italy (129) at third spot in the doping violation chart released by the WADA, the same position as in the reports of 2013 and 2014. All the dope violations by the Indians came from urine samples.

**The worrying sign for India is that the number of dope offenders has been increasing in the last three years.** India had 91 and 96 Anti-doping Rule Violations. Among sports disciplines worldwide, bodybuilding overtook athletics in contributing the highest

number of dope cheats with 270 such cases. Athletics is second at 242, followed by weightlifting (239), cycling (200), power lifting (110), football (108), rugby union (80), boxing (66), wrestling (57) and basketball (39).

**Commonly abused Drugs and their Effects on the Athlete:** Primary natural products such as hemp or cannabis are usually cheap; you can buy rapps of N10.00. They are readily available too. They often provide a feeling of sublime and call for repetition of such experiences they create. Hence complete dependence is possible once somebody is involved in it. The modern addictive drugs have hallucinogenic properties, strong hypnotic effects and stimulant action (Amphetamines). These drugs synthetic Analgesic drugs are common in Medical practice. As Govil (undated), put it, their regular administration leading to physical dependence and addiction, which lead to mental changes. Example delayed comprehensive, weak memory, faulty decision, illogical reasoning and action. He went further to state “the psycho-

physical damages resulting from prolonged indulgence may become irreparable in time. These dangers enumerated affect athletes; performances. It leaves a lot of psychological effects on the athlete who may discover that he/she is strong physically but has weak memory, faulty decision, delayed actions in taking decisions. He/she may be very hostile to even the coach who is suppose to be the closest person to him in training.

#### **Drugs Used to Enhance Performance in Sports:**

Generally, drugs used in sports can be grouped into two main categories.

- a. **Restorative Drugs:** These are drugs used to treat injuries, illness and in some cases to suppress pain. They are therefore taken with the sole aim of restoring the athlete’s normal prowess. In this group are analgesics or anodynes pain relieving drugs, muscle relaxants etc.
- b. **Addictive Drugs:** This is usually taken with the aim of stimulating the athlete’s performance beyond

his/her normal or natural limits. These drugs, which enhance performance is termed “Doping”.

**Astrand & Rodahl (1988)**, defined doping as: the administration or use of substances in any form alien to the body or of physiological substances in normal amounts and with abnormal methods by health persons with the exclusive aim or attaining an artificial and unfair increase in performance in competition. Furthermore, various psychological – measures to increase performance in sports must be regarded as doping.

The use of drugs, especially doping has acquired widespread use in professional sports especially, wrestling, weight lifting, boxing, football, cycling etc. It has also reared its ugly head in the ranks and file of Amateur Sports. Akono (1989) reporting the current International Olympic committee rules stated that there are five known banned groups of pharmacological substances or preparations. These include:

1. Psychostimulants: Examples are Amphetamines, cocaine,

fencainfamine etc. These are substances that act primary on the psychic, producing a stimulating effect and subdue weakness thereby causing a feeling of increased ability.

2. Sympathomimetic Aminos (Amino substances): Examples are Ephedrine, Methoxyphenamine, Methylephedrine and Chemically or Pharmacologically related compounds. These are through the nervous flow respiration and other physiological system there aiding sports performance.
3. Central nervous System Stimulators: Examples are Nikethamide, Bemigrade etc. These drugs improve the reaction time or reaction to situations of an athlete.
4. Narcotic analgesics: Examples are Morphine, Heroin, etc. Their drugs reduces the effect of pain on the body. It is usually for combat sportsmen and women.

5. Anabolic Steroids: Examples are chostebol neramol etc. this unlike the first four groups act in a chronic manner in what Medical Doctors will describe as the anabolic effect. This is a Arobable increasing the metabolism of proteins retention of water and other substances.

This long-term harmful effects are the occurrence of traumas, joint ailments, liver disease, intestinal diseases, cancer, high blood pressure, decrease sperm production in men, disruption of menstrual flow in women, muscularlinization of women and stops the growth of height of young growing sportsmen and women. Sometimes infertility. Apart from the aforementioned substances, there are others like the Beta-blokers. There are another groups of central nervous system acting drugs that are used by athletes. There are also other non-pharmacological ways of doping, example blood doping or blood transfusion.

**Effects of Doping on athletes:** Does doping really have any beneficial effects on the athletes anabolic Steroids, present the possibility to the athlete of training harder for longer duration than is naturally possible. This enhanced training in turn leads to the enhancement of glycolytic enzymes in the muscle cells. Athletes in sprinting events, jumping, throw and weight-lifting activities patronize drugs a lot. The drug users have some advantage over the non-users. This is because the users can train longer and harder thereby enhance performance.

**Psychological Implications to the Athlete:** Doping not only creases a situation of unequal participation during competitive sports but also disrupts its moral and ethical basis, which affects the athletes psychologically. The disgrace meted out to Ben Johnson, of Canada is a typical example. He had advantage over other participants. If he was not detected out, this should have been enough to psyche others out of competition. On the other hand, he was caught and banned for two years, which

psychologically affected him and tarnish his image worldwide.

Performance usually deteriorates with constant use of most drugs. This makes the athlete get to his peak very easily. This may cause easy frustration on the part of athletes. Consequently, the athlete will become very hostile to both coach and sometimes teammates who are not involved in drugs use. Indiscipline of all sorts result, which leads to breaking of bounds.

As the monetary demands also increase, begging, borrowing or stealing becomes a way of life, this psychologically affects the athlete in performance. He thinks more of how to obtain drugs than he thinks of training. As such he cannot perform to his peak; because, he is not sure of where to get money to procure the next round of drugs. If this happens during a major competition, the athlete is bound to make mistakes because he hardly concentrates.

Depression is another psychological emotion usually exhibited

by individual including athletes that use drugs. At this point in time, if they are competing or training properly as such, no activity makes meaning to them at this time. Indifferences to the athletes personal image and anti-social behavior may manifest which affects him psychologically. Most of the times they resort to a lot of self-defense mechanisms to safe image.

#### **Anumonye & Ajaji (1988)**

outlined the following as the immediate psychological (emotional) effects of Indian hemp which is a common drug used amongst our youths including our athletes.

1. Distortion of the senses: Such as disturbance in timing of effects.
2. False confidence about one's clarity of thinking.
3. Hampered performance in many ways including clumsiness in movement
4. Misinterpretation of things perceived often referred to as illusions
5. Observing things, which others do not observe, often called hallucination. This can affect any of the five sense organs



### **Meditation is a remedy of all kinds:**

Meditations are used by athletes both prescription and non-prescription. Taking performance enhancement drugs is a gamble on an athlete's health and their career. On the other hand, meditation has no risks and it is a natural way of improving your skills and overall health. A continuous use of drugs leads to a state of dependence on it, characterized by an urge to take drug on a continuous basis to maintain the new pathological state of wellbeing. All drugs with all abuse potential act on the central nervous system and either stimulate or depress it. The central nervous system depressant suppresses the higher centers of exhibitory control and thus causes an uninhibited release phenomenon, which is manifested as euphoria. In larger quantity they cause marked dysphoria and depress respiration, blood pressure and produce a fall in body temperature.

### **Suggestions**

1. Anti-doping control is very necessary in the country now. This involves special measure directed at the

detection of doping drugs and substances used by athletes to enhance performance.

2. Proper dissemination of information on the harmful effects of drugs in sports should be encouraged in the country.
3. Counseling both in and out of school can reduce drug use to an extent
4. Since religion plays a major role in the life of individuals in the country, religious leaders should assist in educating their followers on the harmful effects of drugs use in sports
5. The availability of drugs especially addictive ones such as cocaine and Indian hemp should be made difficult by very strict and restrictive measures.
6. Coaches should be properly educated on drugs education so as to be able to educate their athletes
7. However, to curb drugs amongst youths, the effect by the Federal Government against drugs is highly commendable
8. The propaganda embarked on buy various organizations example that Lion Club, the Lioness Club,



International Federal of Women Layers is also the right step in the right direction.

**Conclusion:** Sports have always been important to everyone in society. The use of performance enhancing drugs in sports undermines the integrity of sports and creates an unfair advantage. An athlete who takes performance enhancing drug has an unfair advantage over other athletes who do not take PEDs. It is not fair to the athlete who chooses to obey the rules. PEDs are not only harmful to the health of the athletes but it is also a form of cheating. If my solution was to become law or policy it would bring fairness to sports and moral integrity as well. Also there will be the policy of the risk of performance enhancing drugs to the health of the athlete. The side effects can include renal failure, addiction, blood pressure increase and change in body temperature. One of the arguments is taking performance enhancing drugs are against the rules for athletes to use performance enhancing drugs. The second argument is the unfairness an athlete who uses PEDs has

over an athlete who does not use drugs. The third argument is the harm performance enhancing drugs are to the athlete's health. A final argument is the use of performance enhancing drugs in sports undermines the integrity of sports. The opposition objects to the harm of PEDs and unfairness. The risks that come from using PEDs should not be left up to the athlete. If an athlete is caught using performance enhancing drugs they could be suspended from the league.

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