

Free the impact of drug addiction of health and fitness research paper example

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In today's society, athletes have been using different types of drugs to enhance their performance. But, the excessive use of drugs has a negative impact on the health and wellness of these athletes. For many athletes, to need to excel often outweighs the need to practice sound judgment in their fields. As such these athletes resort to the use of drugs as there is the strong belief that performance enhancing drugs have complete positive reactions on individual users. In recent years, the mass media has played a negative and a positive role in the way athletes perceive the use of drugs. The media glorifies athletes who use performance enhancing drugs and present these athletes as the world's greatest in the field of sports. But, the media also highlights the downfall of these athletes who use drugs. Despite the positive enhancement that drugs provide for physical strength and success in sports, there are serious negative effects of performance enhancing drugs that cause lingering effects on the physical and mental health of sports athletes. When one thinks of drug addiction, one immediately thinks of cocaine addicts and other hard drugs users, but addiction to drugs goes beyond the hard drugs users and have surface in the athletics world. The use of drugs in athletics is a common affair and sporting individuals have become victims of drugs abuse because of the growing need to satisfy the society's, managers, sponsors, and personal desires. One an athlete begins to take performance enhancing drugs; the need to continue to take these drugs grows as the athletes feels a sense of invincibility and pride despite their dishonesty. Personal desires often lead these athletes to engage in the use of drugs and eventually, the feeling of euphoria as the media glorifies the performances leads to an addiction to performance enhancing drugs.

Generally, athletes point out that there is an inner competitive drive to compete and win as this brings about personal gratification and gives the glory of being able to win medals for their country or securing a position as a professional athlete with high earnings. In this environment, many athletes resort to the use of performance enhancing drugs as a way of increasing their chances of succeeding. Nevertheless, the use of drugs to boost one's performance level can cause serious health issues despite the common use of these substances. Anabolic steroids are among the most popular performance enhancing drugs in the field of sports and a number of athletes take different forms of anabolic-androgen steroids or anabolic steroids to increase the level of muscle growth, strength and body weight, (Performance Enhancing Drugs: Know the Risks, 2015). Anabolic steroids help the body to build on the level of testosterone and increase the muscles in athletes. In addition, anabolic steroids help the athlete to recover more quickly after extensive training as these steroids reduce the level of damage to the muscles, (Performance Enhancing Drugs: Know the Risks, 2015).

Based on the use of these steroids, athletes can train harder and for longer periods of time. But, athletes often become more aggressive after the use of these performance enhancing steroids. Arguably, there is a psychological damage that comes with the use of these steroids. Designer steroids form part of the group of anabolic steroid. Studies show that the presence of synthetic steroids that is often undetected during the present drug tests, (Performance Enhancing Drugs: Know the Risks, 2015). This class of anabolic steroid is designed for athletes and there is no current data to suggest that there are medical reasons for using these designer drugs. As a result, the

sports' governing bodies have rule that the drugs are forbidden as they have not been tested or approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Additionally, sports' governing bodies have agreed that designer drugs present a threat to the health and fitness of athletes in general.

The use of androstenedione (andro) is also common among athletes.

Androstenedione is produced in the adrenal glands, (Performance Enhancing Drugs: Know the Risks, 2015) and changes to estradiol and testosterone in male and female athletes, (Performance Enhancing Drugs: Know the Risks, 2015). The drug, Andro, is legal through prescriptions and its use can be controlled. Both the manufacturers and printed media advertise the use of Andro as one that will increase the bodybuilder's ability to carry out extensive training and experience a speedy recovery after extensive training sessions. Nonetheless, the use of any form of performance enhancing drug remains illegal in many countries, including the United States as the use of the drug cause the muscles to strengthen and increase the performance level in athletes. Similarly, Erythropoietin helps to boost the hormones even though the drug has positive rewards for the treatment of people with severe kidney problems. Studies show that the use of erythropoietin " increases production of red blood cells and hemoglobin, resulting in improved movement of oxygen to the muscles," (Performance Enhancing Drugs: Know the Risks, 2015). But, athletes use Epoetin, a synthetic version of the drug to improve the level of endurance even as they engage in extensive training sessions.

The role of the media in promoting the use of performance enhancing drugs is a cause for concern among a number of individuals. In general, the media

promotes the success of athletes and glorify the historical moments when athletes break records. Clearly, this will have a psychological impact on the athletes who crave success in their specific areas. In addition, the public often revel in the success of athletes especially at international meets such as the World Cup of Football, World Championships and Olympic Games, and the Super Bowl, to name a few. At the same time, the public bashes those athletes who are not successful and this place a strain on the psychological development of these athletes.

In his review of Erikson's theory of self- development, Saul McLeod articulates the Erikson's views that " culture and society and the conflicts that can take place within the ego itself," (McLeod, 2008) forces athletes to resort to performance enhancing drugs to improve their overall performances. Furthermore, McLeod points out that Erikson theory speaks to the development of the ego as a driving force behind the adaptive and creative aspects of the achievement of individuals. In essence, athletes strive for success based on the need to develop success that draws the appreciation of the wider society.

Similarly, athletes often crave the attention that the media provides when they are successful and therefore, they will go to different lengths to get the publicity that the media offers. For many athletes, the lifelong dream of representing their country or become wealthy, will only come with success in sports. Therefore, they use drugs that will help to build their performance and allow for a sense of personal achievement. Greg Stevens, in his article, Why Performance Enhancing Drugs Belong in Sport, points out that caffeine allowed in the sports until 1962, (Stevens, 2013) and " then it was banned by

the International Olympic Committee,” (Stevens, 2013) as it was classified as an illegal and disgusting manner that allowed for an unnatural advantage in athletics. Later, the ban was lifted in 1972 and returned to the list of banned substances in 1984.

Caffeine remains a banned substance because of the case where the Australian Rules player became sick in 2010 after having a negative reaction to sleeping pills and caffeine in 2010. Lance Armstrong, Alex “ A-Rod” Rodriguez, Marion Jones, and many other athletes have been placed on the Athletic board banned list as they have been guilty of using banned substances to enhance their performances. The media has highlighted these stories over the years and have made the public aware of the constant use of drugs to enhance performance. While many athletes have not shown serious negative effects of using performance enhancing drugs there have been numerous cases of athletes gaining excess muscles after taking these banned substances. Steven further notes that the Mitchell Report in 2007 speaks to the ongoing investigation that includes the current investigation into the Biogenesis of America and the stories that are presented in the media, (Stevens, 2013). The media presents these stories sleazy and morally degrading acts that lead to the destruction of the dreams of these athletes. Additionally, the negative publicity leads a number of athletes feeling remorseful. The use of steroids and the scandal associated with the use of steroids is not a new phenomenon as East German athletes in former years used steroids to enhance their performance. The media broadcasted the medical problems that surfaced as the testosterone in the steroids led to organ damages, liver cancer, and a change in the physical appearances of

the female athletes. Aside from the physical and health challenges, these athletes faced short-term and lifetime bans from the sports.

In the last decade, the world has witnessed the “ fall” of a number of athletes who had once enjoyed the media spotlight. In a CNN Report in 2015, there are statistical data to show that the use of performance enhancing drugs has spread across almost every field of sports. In December 2007, CNN reported the news of the IOC stripping Marion Jones of her five gold medals, (Performance Enhancing Drugs in Sports Fast Facts, 2015). The report also points to the Mitchell Report and the case of baseball players: Roger Clemens, Barry Bonds, Gary Sheffield, Andy Pettitte, Paul Lo Duca, and Eric Gagne being accused of using performance enhancing Drugs. In 2009, Miguel Tejada was charged with using steroids in the Major League Baseball games and Alex Rodriguez admits to using steroids, (Performance Enhancing Drugs in Sports Fast Facts, 2015). The list of athletes charged with the use of performance enhancing drugs also includes cyclist, Lance Armstrong and American sprinter, Lance Armstrong. What does this truly say about sports and the role models in the field? The response for many critics would be that athletes are human being with the desire to fulfill their dreams and desires. The fulfillment of these dreams comes with a price as there is a constant need to win. Many athletes who strive for success will become addicted to the substances that they take. In many cases a single win in an athlete’s career is not enough and in no time, the athlete becomes addicted to the substance that they are taking. Michael Scott (2008) suggests many outstanding athletes have used performance enhancing drugs to stimulate their endurance level, but too many athletes have begun to use these

substances as a means of enhancing their performances, (Scott, 2008). The reality is that the use of these drugs has negative effects on the users despite the fact that they provide entertainment in the sports. On the other hand, performance enhancing drugs diminishes the value of true sportsmanship, (Scott, 2008).

Kirk Johnson postulates that many athletes come to the United States to purchase these drugs because they are illegal in their home country, (as cited by Scott, 2008). But, the use of performance drugs is widespread as the media releases countless stories about the results of the use of performance enhancing drugs. The advertising agencies have supported the use of these drugs even though there are serious side-effects of using the drugs. Studies show that a number of the dietary supplements that these athletes take are illegal steroids that can cause death in the cases of overdose, (Scott, 2008). Anabolic steroids can cause negative physical and psychological effects, (Doug West as cited by Scott, 2008). The most common side effects include stroke, cancer, excessive aggression, and stunted growth in the bones, (Scott, 2008). Nonetheless, a number of athletes crave the media spotlight and continue to use these steroids. The feeling of invincibility and rage misguide many athletes into thinking that their performance stems from their natural abilities. This feeling remains constant as long as the athlete continues to take the drug. Matt Barnard suggests that the international sport bodies silently encourage athletes to use performance enhancing drugs as these organization issue high stakes for the ultimate athlete. This reward is great for the athletes and they often become addicts to performance enhancing drugs. The high-end performance

of these athletes is often broadcast across the mass media and aspiring athletes emulate the performances of their role models. As such, the world has opened the doors for young athletes to attempt to use steroids to boost their athletic performances.

The lack of information in the media, training centers and schools have led to the further increase in the use of performance enhancing drugs. While the collegiate athletic associations have joined forces to reduce and eliminate the use of banned substances, there is always that one athlete who fall the victim of coaches who will stop at nothing to create mega stars in the sporting fields. Hence, the use of performance enhancing drugs will continue to be a topic of debate in many circles as the ego of the athlete and coaches allows for the use of performance enhancing drugs. Arguably, the role of the coach is teach athletes in general about the negative effects of using performance enhancing drugs, but these coaches also long for the fame and fortune that comes with coaching a star. Clearly, the coaches and the mass media are two influential forces in shaping the athlete's attitude towards the use of drugs.

The health and fitness of the athlete is fundamental development of all athletes and the lack of information about the need to maintain a balance between health and fitness leaves many athletes as victims of trying to amass fame and fortune in a society that judge individuals based on their fame. Gillinov highlights the fact that performance enhancing drugs least to an increase in aggression and strength, but causes impotence and depression in a number of athletes, (Gillinov , 2015). Additionally, Erythropoietin (epo) causes an increase in the production of red blood cells

and this increase leads to the capacity to send more oxygen to the muscles in the body, (Gillinov, 2015). Ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and amphetamines increase the physical performance and aggression in athletes, (Gillinov, 2015). However, these short - term effects are minimal to the long range negative effects of severe blood clot and eventually heart attacks and psychosis in its users, (Gillinov, 2015).

In conclusion, performance enhancing drugs have long - term negative effect on the athletes who use these drugs. Across the world, athletes have used performance enhancing drug in different fields of sports. Many have used these drugs to improve their performance for personal gratification while others use these drugs to amass wealth. While performance enhancing drugs allows the individuals personal gratification, there is the unwanted experience of suffering medical problems through the use of the drugs. In some cases athletes become addicted to these drugs as they must maintain their high standard of performance. With each era come a new, athletic star, and the “ older sporting starts resort to performance enhancing drugs to improve their performance. Interestingly, the need for fame surpasses the truth of the serious health and psychological damage that these drugs can cause. The media and schools can play their part in educating athletes about the cases of death, cancer and aggression that comes with using these drugs. The stakes for the winners is always high because the organizers increase the winner’s prize with time. However, if the society’s expectation and the organizers incentives were lower, then there would be a reduction in the level of desire to become the dominant athlete in the field.

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