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Knowledge and experience of doping among national level boys and girls taekwondo players

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Abstract

Doping in sports today is a major concern and widespread among elite players to grass root level. Doping is illegal and unethical use of banned substance with an objective to improve their sports performance. That is why, in recent years, there has been a growing demand and opinion of public in favour of putting more resources in creating awareness into health education and preventive measures. A study was conducted using the method of diagnostic survey (questionnaire) in the month of November 2012, among the athletes in the national level junior level taekwondo competition held at Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh (India).

Keywords: Doping, sports, taekwondo

1. Introduction

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is an old but still meaningful saying in the context of health care. It is also equally well-grounded in the context of the “doping disease” which has been consuming modern sport since its very onset. In the fight against doping a significant role has been played by the doping control system and legal sanctions. The system of doping control has been constantly improved in the areas of legislation, organisation and laboratory research. Without underestimating the significance of the existing doping control system, it must be noted that doping control is mostly reactive and it suppresses the symptoms rather than the causes of the disease. The latter are manifold and inherent in individual athletes (lack of satisfaction and sports results, psychological and physical dependence, lack of self-confidence, perception of doping as not necessarily unethical behaviour, etc.) and in society at large (on a micro social scale, i.e. the athlete’s immediate surroundings exerting, more or less openly, pressure on him or her to reach for prohibited substances; and on a macro social scale, e.g. outrageous cases of state-run organised doping in former East Germany).

The present study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To assess the general awareness of doping measures among the Junior Level Taekwondo players;
2. To assess the federation’s efforts towards anti-doping measures among the Junior Level Taekwondo players;
3. To assess the moral and ethical behaviour among the Junior Level Taekwondo players towards doping.

2. Methods

The study was conducted using the method of diagnostic survey (questionnaire) in the month of November 2012, among the athletes who had come to participate in the national level junior level taekwondo held at Naharlagun, Arunachal Pradesh (India). The subjects were instructed about the aim of the study and expressed their consent to participate in the questionnaire survey. They were also informed that the study result would be used for scientific purpose only. Eighty five questionnaire forms were distributed among the respondents. Out of which thirty five questionnaires were returned showing a responses rate of 41.17%. The low response rate may be attributed to lack of time for the junior players as the survey was conducted during the tournament period and also lack of awareness about the importance of the queries raised by the researcher of this one questionnaire was unusable due to incomplete filling of the

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questionnaire. 55.9% of the respondent was male and 44.1% were female. The subjects were divided into 10 weight categories as per the World Junior Taekwondo Championships

for both male and female. Table No 1 Show's the different weight categories of the respondents. Out of these there were no respondents with Light Heavy category.

Table 1: Weight Category

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fin	4	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Fly	3	8.8	8.8	20.6
	Bantam	6	17.6	17.6	38.2
	Feather	2	5.9	5.9	44.1
	Light	4	11.8	11.8	55.9
	Welter	5	14.7	14.7	70.6
	Light Middle	4	11.8	11.8	82.4
	Middle	4	11.8	11.8	94.1
	Light Heavy	0	0.0	0.0	94.1
	Heavy	2	5.9	5.9	100.0
Total		34	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics Age of the respondents. The subject's age ranged from 13 years to 17 years of age. The mean age of the respondents was 15.47 years. The youngest respondent being 13 years in age.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics– Age of Respondents

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
Age	34	4	13	17	15.47	.190	1.107	1.226

The athletes' knowledge was assessed using a questionnaire form designed by the researcher for the purpose of the study. The subjects assessed the authenticity of 29 questionnaire items by way of dichotomous variables in the form of yes or no. The nature of question were basic general awareness about doping, ethical and moral related questions and federations measures towards creating awareness of doping among the Taekwondo players of the country.

regulator, 61.8% of the respondent acknowledged that they knew the full form and 38.2% were not aware of these regulating bodies. Similarly the respondents were asked 29 questions and out of which 10 were regarding the general awareness of the respondents towards the doping. Some of the respondents had no idea regarding some of the queries like for example genetic manipulation allowed in some sports etc. whereby they have left the answers as blank. But taking into all such issues, the researcher has calculated the average replies of the respondent and has found that 61.76% of the respondent are aware of most of the questions put forwarded by the researcher to find out the general awareness among the Junior National Taekwondo Players.

3. Results

3.1 General Awareness

The respondents were asked question related to full form of WADA and NADA to test the general awareness of the doping

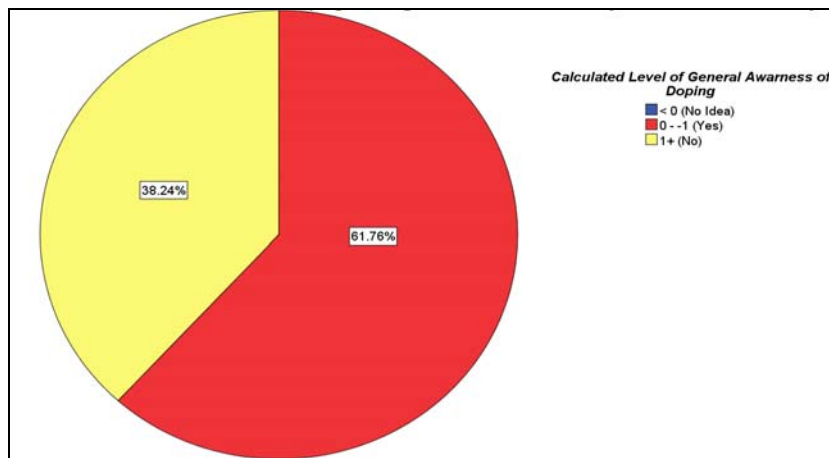


Fig 1: Calculated level of general awareness Doping national level junior boys and girls taekwondo player

In one of the query raised respondent were ask about their opinion on some food supplements containing banned substances, 50% agreed with the question, 18% did not agree with the opinion but there 32% respondents who did not have any idea, therefore they have left the replies as blank. It shows that there are still lot's of efforts to be made to make them aware about the food and other supplements taken by the

players. It was also found that many of them relied their awareness from the sports magazine, friends, family members, internet, weight trainers, doctors, school and coaches, but in this case also many of the respondents left the answer as blank, meaning that they were not made aware about such items by any persons.

3.2 Doping Measures

The respondent were enquired whether they have been ever tested for doping, 94% of the respondent gave negative replies, which is true because in India at junior level there is no doping test conducted. Some of the respondents who have replied might have taken part in the senior level because of which they might have undergone doping test else the finding coincides with the practice at the junior level in India. The federation needs to work on formal anti-doping education because 82% of the respondents have replied in negative regarding their undergoing any formal anti-doping education conducted by the federation. The use of nutritional and food supplements were very low among the junior taekwondo players (74%) it may because of the reason that culturally Indian players don't give importance to nutritional and food supplements but to the traditional form of foods like milk, ghee, fruits etc. The efforts of the coach matters a lot in the doping measures, but 90% of the respondent have informed that they were never supplied or informed about any WADA code by their coach. 82% of the national level junior players also showed lack of awareness about the side effects of Anabolic, Beta-Blockers, Gene Doping and Blood Doping. The respondents were aware of the psychological effects of banned substances on health in most cases (56%), but the other group (44%) would be very significant in the long term, because the lack of awareness may lead to using of these banned substances in future. Caffeine was removed from the prohibited list in 2004, 38% of the respondents said yes and 62% of the respondents gave negative replies for this query. Alcohol is a masking agent and it is banned during the competition, violation of threshold (haematological values) is at or beyond 0.10 g/l is considered doping agent, which is acknowledged by most of the respondents (81%). Urine sampling is the standard procedure of doping and the 85% of the respondent have replied as yes to this procedure. The respondents were asked who Lance Armstrong is, 44% of the respondents knew him and rest of them had replied in negative.

3.3 Moral & Ethical Behaviours

The researcher with the objective of finding the moral, attitude & ethical behaviour of the National Level Junior Taekwondo player towards doping had framed nine (9) variables to test their response. This section deals with the variables which highlighted the moral and ethical behaviour towards doping by the Taekwondo players. 90% of the respondents were not tempted to use the banned substances. It was an interesting fact to know that 56% of the respondents knew or met person who have used banned substances. This shows the prevalence of doping among the junior level players also. High level of confidence is revealed at junior level in the variable which shows 79% of respondents think of winning medal without doping. 77% of the respondent feels that even if the doping is legalised they will not use it for winning the competition. 67% of the respondent feels that penalties for doing are not adequate in the current context. The respondents felt that the current methods of doping preventions are not adequate in India (75%).

Table 3: Do you think Anti-Doping education will Increase the intake of Dietary Supplements

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	17	50	68
	No	8	23.5	32
	Total	25	73.5	100
Missing	System	9	26.5	
Total		34	100	

Table: 3 revealed status of players in relation to intake of dietary supplements. As it is evident from table 68% players have shown their agreement to use of dietary supplements for performance enhancements. It may possible due to their use of supplements or may they have got informed about it from there coaches or trainers. On the basis of table it can be concluded that positive responses of subjects may possible because 90% subjects have not been tempted to use the banned doping substances. While 32% players have not showed their agreement with statement. It may be possible because they may have not been told or educated about abuses of doping by their coaches or trainers. As various research shows or as we all know no of players being caught in doping due to their lack of knowledge or low education level. A less educated player is found more prone to being indulge in doping because he/she exactly does not know about prohibited doping substances, even no of players have been caught in doping while they were on medication just for fever and cold.

Table 4: Is it Possible to Reach the Top Level in Your Sports without Doping?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	23	67.6	74.2
	No	8	23.5	25.8
	Total	31	91.2	100
Missing	System	3	8.8	
Total		34	100	

Result of table- 4 is also supporting the findings of table- III, where in table- IV almost 74% players believe that they can reach to top level without doping. While if we see the table-III where 68% players have belief that through dietary intake they can achieve their goal. Table also revealed that 26% players do not believe in dietary supplementation. It may be possible due to lack of self-belief, lack of training and coaching facilities.

Table 5: Should You Report a Doping Case if Found to Federation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	23	67.6	74.2
	No	8	23.5	25.8
	Total	31	91.2	100
Missing	System	3	8.8	
Total		34	100	

Table: 5 shows approx. 91% players have shown their support against doping. It shows that players are somewhere aware about abuses of doping. As doping at junior or any level may take all hard work away from any player, who is preparing hard from number of years. Result is good sign for player's awareness and suggests that sports federations and anti-doping agencies need to put some more honest effort to raise awareness about prohibited substances and its abuses. It may provide fair chance to each and every player to explore his/her self and earn glory for himself, for his sport and for his nation.

4. Conclusions

On the basis of findings following conclusions has been drawn.

- A. Players at junior level have superficial knowledge about doping and doping code. While in terms of technicalities they are lagging far behind to standard level.
- B. Players are somehow aware about psychological side effects of doping while most players are not known about physiological side effects of doping which clearly support the earlier conclusion.

- C. Most players have belief that through nutritional supplementation top performance can be achieved and in this respect they shown their support by accepting that they will report to federation in case of doping.

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