REVIEW OF INTERVENTIONS TO REDUCE RISK FACTORS FOR ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG STUDENT ATHLETES

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CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL

- Athletes who use steroids might start drug abuse with cannabis. Furthermore, another article reported that adolescents who used anabolic drugs not only shared needles but were more likely to use other drugs (DuKant B, Rickett V & Ashworth C, 1993).
- The negative consequences that directly affect the abuser include: passing out, regurgitating, aggressiveness, poor lack of judgment and slow reflexes. The most serious consequence that requires the immediate attention of adults by is suicide.
- In football, Shawme Merriman of San Diego Chargers, who was one of the best athletes of his time tested positive for steroid use and received a 4-game suspension.
- Olympic Sprinter Ben Johnson lost his gold medal one week after winning it. He tested positive for steroid use and lost his title as a champion, “September 27” three days after winning the 1988 Olympic Gold he tested positive for the anabolic steroid stanozolol and had to give up his gold medal and 1987 World Championship title” (Johnson, B., 2009, p. 1).
- Other consequences commonly associated with such abuse include vandalism, poor academic performance and sexual misconduct (Consequences of High-Risk Drinking, 2009).

CONSEQUENCES OF STEROID USE

Adverse effects of anabolic-androgenic steroid use (Bahre et al., 1998; NIDA, 2000; American Academy of Pediatrics, 1997; Pope and Katz, 1994; Su et al., 1993; Brower et al., 1990 Kennedy and Lawrence, 1993; Daigle, 1990; Gruber and Pope, 2000; Kleiner, 1991; American College of Sports Medicine, 1987; Bahre et al., 1990; Beal et al., 1998; Strauss et al., 1985; Yesalis et al., 1989)

Psychological and Behavioral Effects:
- Mood swings
- Aggressiveness
- Paranoia
- Depression
- Irritability
- Psychosis
- Anxiety
- Psychological dependence

Physical Effects:
- Liver damage (cancer)
- Severe acne
- Cardiovascular disease
- Male pattern baldness
- High cholesterol
- Impaired reproductive functioning
- High blood pressure
- Physical dependence or addiction

Gender-Specific Effects (Males):
- Reduced sperm production
- Testicular atrophy (shrinking of the testicles)

Gender-Specific Effects (Females):
- Irreversible deepening of the voice
- Hirsutism (excessive growth of the body hair)
- Menstrual irregularities
- Clitoromegaly (clitoral enlargement)
- Breast shrinkage

INTRODUCTIONS

1. Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids (ATLAS)
   Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids (ATLAS) is a school-based drug prevention program. The intervention includes interactive classroom and exercise training sessions given by health educators and athletes by coaches and strength trainers. Program content includes education on addictions to agents of sports nutrition, examine alternatives to AS and sport supplements, and the effects of substance abuse in sports, drug refusal role-playing, and the creation of health promotion messages” (Goldberg, 2002, p. 332). However, the treatment is not generalized to meet the necessities for all age groups.

2. Random Drug Testing
   A research finding random drug testing in educational institutions such as high schools was found to have an effect in reducing the drug abuse among adolescents. "Other organizations at various levels of sports have adopted programs to monitor and police drug use by behavior" (Shields, 1995, p. 30). Conversely, studies suggest that random drug testing is not only costly but inefficient in dramatically eliminating the drug use among adolescents (Taylor, 1997).

3. Religion
   Some athletes who are concerned to the use of substances to enhance their athletic performance take religious counseling. "Religiousness is extensively studied and regularly found to be a protective factor against substance use in the overall population" (Rodek, J., Sekulic, D., & Palascia, E., 2009, p.446). However, the theory still remains open for researchers to disseminate and their isn’t any current studies suggested the efficacy or validity of this intervention strategy.

METHODOLOGY

This paper reports on data from studies of 28 recent articles from many highest-ranking academic journals in the field of psychology. Sixteen articles from the top-ranked were analyzed, along with many government websites and two newspaper articles. Although comparing the validity of various interventions was the primary motive for this paper, interventions originally chosen as the focus of prevention programs were not generalized enough. It became evident once the research paper was under way that many sport psychology related articles did not offer a prominent intervention to cope with the opposing dilemma. Throughout this paper, consequently the data conveyed should promote further disseminations of the interventions, as well as new outcome studies. Before the analysis of articles began, a list of conventional keywords particularly related with the interventions for student athletes was generated to find the articles.

CONCLUSION

Due to the various consequences of substance and alcohol abuse among athletes, through the examination of research articles of student athletes, the researcher was able to answer the following questions:

1. Who is directly affected and what are causes of abuse?
2. What factors deter and contribute to the drug abuse and alcohol abuse abuse as well as binge drinking among young athletes?
3. What implementations can be researched for possible interventions?

All of these questions served as an outline to understand the issues pertaining to drug and alcohol abuse among student athletes. Since alcohol and drug consumption have been increasing rapidly among young athletes, previous research studies on interventions that were conducted for efficacy were compared for validity. By assessing the variety of interventions, the researcher was able to conceptualize an outline that will serve as a guide to develop a possible outline.

The main idea and purpose of this research was to inspire other researchers who possess the financial means to conduct further studies in a controlled environment. Such advancement will further evolve current research on interventions on this important subject matter.