

An Empirical Investigation of Sport Values, Moral Attitudes, and Clean Sport Behaviour

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Tier: 2

WADA's International Standard for Education emphasises the importance of values-based education for promoting clean sport and protecting athletes against doping. Although researchers have demonstrated that values and moral attitudes are associated with moral decision-making and moral violations (e.g., cheating) in sport, related research in clean sport behaviour is still in its infancy. Accordingly, most research on doping behaviour has focused on the use of prohibited substances but has overlooked the risk for engaging in other types of Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) - altogether, actions or omissions that constitute ADRVs reflect negative behaviours that undermine clean sport. Furthermore, there are limited studies on positive behaviours that contribute towards promoting clean sport and the denormalization of doping.

The present project will empirically examine, for the first time, a model that describes the associations between sport values, moral attitudes and moral emotions to doping, and behaviours that reflect both negative and positive behaviours in the context of clean sport. Specifically, we will utilise an extended version of the Values & Moral Attitudes Model (Lee, Whitehead, & Ntoumanis, 2007) in order to: a) assess the direct associations between sport values, moral attitudes, self-reported ADRVs, and willingness to report doping misconduct; b) examine the mediation effects of moral attitudes and moral emotions towards doping on the said associations. To achieve these objectives the project team will utilise a cross-sectional survey-based methodology, and collect anonymous data from 450 elite adult athletes, across three countries (i.e., Cyprus, Greece, and the United Kingdom).

Our project will significantly advance scientific knowledge and understanding about the ways sport values relate to both negative and positive behaviours that are relevant to clean sport. The project's focus on moral attitudes and emotions as mediators of these relationships will also allow us to identify underlying processes that are amenable to clean sport education interventions. The empirical evidence generated by the project will be used to inform values-based clean sport education. Importantly, our strategic partnership with NADOs will ensure that the research findings will inform both policy and clean sport education initiatives.