

The effects of a moral reasoning educational program on the moral judgement indicators of athletes participating in elite collegiate sports

Project Summary

The *International Literature Review: International Literature Review : Attitudes, Behaviours, Knowledge and Education – Drugs in Sport: Past, Present and Future* (World Anti-Doping Agency, 2007) identified a need to address the limited awareness of the process and content of ethical decision making about doping in sport. More specifically, to unify the ethical basis upon which to challenge coaches and athletes beyond egocentric threat of harm resulting from the decision to practise doping in sport. Researchers within character education within have repeatedly noted that the most effective motivation against doping come from a well formed ethos and telos (Bandura, 1977; Fox, 2000; Lickona, 2004, Stoll & Beller, 1994). However, scholars have suggested that the anti-doping body of knowledge in applied ethics does not sufficiently reflect deliberate efforts to provide coaches the tools to improve critical moral skills against doping (Stoll and Beller, 1997; Laure, Thourenin, and Lecerf, 2001). Against this backdrop the proposed research contemplates using psychometrically established sport specific moral judgement instruments and character development curriculum to address more complex ethical dilemmas commonly encountered by athletes, coaches and administrators in the context of doping.

The population of interest for this study is elite collegiate athletes, administrators and coaches in Division 1 collegiate athletics in the U. S. The population that is accessible to this study consists of all institutions that are clients of the Center for Ethics*, who meet the following criteria: 1) a history of participation in organized sport 2) a willingness to teach moral reasoning curriculum; and 4) they must be 18 years of age or older. A convenient sample from the agency will be obtained. While the study sample cannot be considered representative of the general population, generalizability is not a primary goal -- the major purpose of this study was to determine whether a specific anti-doping ethics program *could* work in an accessible context. Any effects of anti-doping ethics curriculum evident in this study may be generalized to NCAA Division I athletics program that are similar to criteria described above.

All but one of the measures intended for this study are well-known instruments in the research literature on cognitive moral judgment. All instruments will be administered pre and post intervention. The Ergogenic Aids Moral Competence Inventory (EAMCI) (Gwebu, Stoll, & Beller, 2007) is 35 item scale measure cognitive moral competence through a moral

reflection index and principled moral decision making index. Rating are given on a 5 point Likert response scale. The Hahm-Beller Values Choice Inventory (HBVCI) created by Hahm (1989), currently has a database in excess of 80,000. Both instruments, are is excellent in terms of validity and reliability. Cronbach Alpha at .85 HBVCI and .74 EAMCI. Discriminant validity was examined by looking at the cross-construct correlations .305 (EAMCI-HBVCI).

A pre-test/post-test quasi-experimental design study will be used in this study. This study is unique because it addresses a major weakness in most moral psychology studies i.e., tendency to lack of a definition or declaration of the ethical theoretical framework used in the analysis theoretical. We will delimit the present study to a deontological framework.