Project Boardley

Designing and Validating Measures of Doping Moral Disengagement and Self-Regulatory Efficacy, and Assessing a Model of Doping Behavior

Evidence associating doping behavior with Moral Disengagement (MD) has accumulated over recent years (Boardley & Grix, 2013; Boardley, Grix, & Dewar, in review; Lucidi, Grano, Leone, Lombardo, & Pesce, 2004; Lucidi, Zelli, Mallia, Grano, Russo, & Violani, 2008; Zelli, Mallia, & Lucidi, 2010). Moral disengagement involves the conditional endorsement of transgressive conduct, and can occur through any of eight methods as described by Bandura (1991). Use of these methods reduces or eliminates unpleasant feelings normally associated with such conduct (for example, guilt, shame) that normally deter future transgressions. Research examining links between MD and doping has either been qualitative in nature (i.e., Boardley & Grix, 2013; Boardley et al., in review), or has been conducted on convenience samples of high-school students with low levels of extracurricular sport activity (Lucidi et al., 2004, 2008; Zelli et al., 2010). Thus, there is a need to test models of doping behavior that include MD, and the factors that lead to and result from such disengagement, in various sport and exercise populations. However, to do so would require the development of valid and reliable instruments to assess doping MD, as well as one to assess a person's capacity to withstand personal and social influences that encourage the use of Performance Enhancing Drugs (PED). This is referred to as doping self-regulatory efficacy, and is suggested to be a key influence on MD (Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, & Regalia, 2001).

To address these research gaps, the current project has two main objectives. First, to design and validate measurement tools to assess doping MD and doping self-regulatory efficacy by collecting quantitative data from a large sample of sport (e.g., team, individual) and exercise (e.g., bodybuilding, aerobics) participants. These data will be utilized to select items for the final versions of the instruments and determine their validity and reliability across different sport and exercise contexts (team sport, individual sport, hardcore gymnasia, and leisure gymnasia). This will be done using accepted scale-development procedures previously employed by the Principal Investigator (PI) (e.g., Boardley & Kavussanu, 2007, 2008; Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009) and co-investigator (e.g., Raedeke & Smith, 2001; Weiss, & Smith, 1999) to develop instruments assessing psychological constructs. Critically, the data collected when designing and validating the two instruments will then be used to achieve the second objective of the project, testing a behavioral model of moral disengagement and doping in sport and exercise based on existing theory (Bandura, 1986, 1991; Bandura et al., 2001). This will be achieved by using the data collected to test this model using advanced statistical techniques. As such, this project will make two major contributions to anti-doping research: First, two valid and reliable measurement tools for use in anti-doping research will be developed; second, a behavioral model of doping behavior will be tested. Importantly, the model tested will critically inform the design and delivery of effective anti-doping education programmes and intervention strategies.