

WORKING CONDITIONS: WHEN THE RACE FOR PERFORMANCE TURNS SELF-MEDICATION INTO DOPING BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to better understand the link between self-medication and doping behaviors at work (Hautefeuille,2008). More precisely, we wanted to explore how individuals at work practiced self-medication (Fainzang,2012) and how contextual and individual factors could influence their consumption behaviors at workplace. We know that doping behavior could emerge when there is an objective to be achieved or an obstacle faced by the individual (Laure, 2000). To verify this assumption, we have tried to answer this question: “how self-medication could be diverted to doping purposes?”. To study this more closely, we built a methodology based on two tools. First, 17 interviews with workers were done to identify and evaluate the elements and mechanisms derived from working conditions and consumption behaviors, which may explain the consumption behavior at work and, moreover, the doping. Our results allowed us to see that the self-diagnosis phase play an important role in the consumption behavior of individuals. These initial results helped us to create an online questionnaire to which 219 participants responded. For this second tool, we applied a network analysis, using JASP 10.02 software to help us to visualize and understand the link between self-medication and doping behavior. The results of our research indicated that contextual and individual factors had an impact on the psychological state of individuals at work, leading them to develop consumption at work. We have also seen that the practice of self-medication also contributes to the establishment of consumption behavior at work.

Keywords: *Self-medication, doping behavior, performance, working conditions, consumption behavior.*

1. Introduction

Imagine yourself at work, in front of your computer. Suddenly, your manager comes at you, give you a heavy file and say: “*you have to take care of it for tomorrow 8:00 A.M, it won't take more than an hour of your time*”. By reading the documents in the folder you realize that it is going to take much more time than expected. Your head start to hurt, but you continue to work on the content of this folder. You take some aspirin and drink a cup of coffee for helping you to stay awake. The time is running, and you are now realizing that you must run for catching the bus to go home. Once home, you can feel how much you are tired and stressed, you want to be sure that your manager will validate your work. Before going back at the content of this folder, you take some medicine to reduce your stress and drink again few more cups of coffee to stay awake.

After few hours, you finally finished your work, and you send it to your manager. You did not sleep at all and you already must go get ready for work. Later in the day, your direction and manager validate and congrats you for the work you did. You feel relieved. The day will occur as usual with less amount of coffee and medicine as yesterday.

This scenario deliberately cliché, aims to make it clear how the achievement of performance can lead to diverting self-medication into doping behavior.

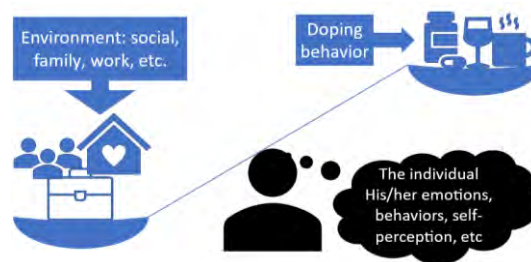
2. Objective

We live in a world where competition and performance are “raised to cult status” (Hautefeuille, 2008), the use of products is becoming more and more visible in the workplace. The objective of this poster is to present a part of the work of a thesis entitled: When self-medication becomes doping behavior in workers (A. MOCO-DAIJARDIN, 2019), but this time slightly more focus on the notion of performance. Indeed, the objective of this thesis was to understand how self-medication (Fainzang,2012) could be diverted into doping behavior (Laure,2000) with the objective to maintain or enhance performance at work.

When we focus on doping behavior at work, it can be observed as an emotional, psychological and finally physical regulator. which probably help the individuals to adapt to they work environment in which they operate. (Hautefeuille, 2008; Johnson, 2012; Loose & Siadou-Martin, 2015). To illustrate our point, we use an illustration (fig.1), which we have readapted of Johnson (2012). The author explains that the more the environmental demand of the individual will be important, the more the doping behavior, will be perceived as a strategy which will make it possible to manage this same environment.

Finally, we will present here the results of the research work of this thesis was based on the identification and evaluation of elements related to the individual's work environment and individual psychological factors.

Figure 1. Adapted and simplified figure from Johnson (2012): Impact of environmental factors and doping behaviour.



3. Methods

To obtain our results, we used two types of methods: interviews (17 participants) and questionnaire (212 participants).

Interviews

We made an interview grid made up of five parts: the practice of self-medication, the notion of values at work, the definition of doping behavior, resources at work or outside of work and the notion of performance. We also integrated the scenario method which described the behavior of fictitious characters under certain conditions and we asked the participants to judge the characters' behaviors, but they also to explain if they could replicate the same behavior under similar conditions as the characters.

Various emails were sent to firms, direct contacts with employees made it possible to find these participants.

most of our participants where employees (2 men and 15 women), from different professional backgrounds. The analysis of the interviews helped to create the questionnaire. Composed of 7 parts:

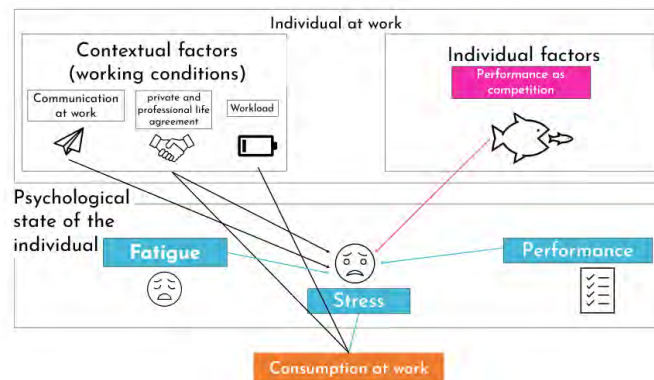
Part I: Sociodemographic data; Part II: My health and my remedies; Part III: Managing my illnesses; Part IV: My performance at work; Part V: My professional daily life; Parts VI: Work management; Parts VII: Scenario

The questionnaire was posted and posted from January to July 2019 via the Google form application. The questionnaire consisted of 45 items, i.e., 40 questions and five scenarios. Our questionnaire was able to collect data from the participants of the national ENVIE (2018) survey on cognitive aging and the environment (the participants of the survey could also reply to our questionnaire through the same platform). We also used various social networks, made direct contact with workers from different sectors of activity in mainland France and overseas.

4. Results

We present here only the results linked to performance and doping behavior (consumption at work). All the results from the interviews and the questionnaire indicate that contextual and individual factors determine the psychological state of an individual. Indeed, our results were able to show that communication at work and the reconciliation of private and professional life had an impact on the psychological state of the individual and the consumption of products at work (more coffee, tea, etc.) Then, we also could see that the mental load has a direct effect on consumption at work. Fatigue and performance at work, connected with the notion of competition or not, have a direct effect on the psychological state of the individual and also participate in consumption at work.

Figure 2. Influence of individual factors, psychological state and self-medication on consumption at work (doping behavior).



5. Discussion and conclusion

It is necessary to remember that doping behavior is not an addiction. It is a fine line that separates the abuse of products from the addiction. It differs in the fact that the objective of the individual by having recourse to doping behavior is to manage an obstacle, whether it is real or felt (Laure, 2000). Once the obstacle is cleared, consumption returns to normal. Performance is indeed found in daily need, at work, family, parenthood, etc. To be efficient in everything, the demands of the environment are greater and greater, and the obstacles are perceived as more and more impassable both emotionally, psychologically, and even physically. Doping behavior then becomes a strategy, a crutch on which the person can rely to manage requests. In view of these results, we can therefore say that the determining and contextual factors linked to the conditions of work, individual factors, participate in the development of consumption behavior at work.

These first results, from a psychological point of view, give preliminary clues to the functioning of the mechanisms which link the practice of performance and doping behavior.

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