

Wrestling, doping behavior and/or doping in Senegal: from consumption logics to circulation logics

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ABSTRACT:

This study looks at doping and doping behavior among wrestlers in Senegal. It attempts to grasp the practices observed in this respect, as well as the rationale behind the consumption of traditional products or those derived from traditional pharmacopoeia, in order to achieve sporting and social success. In addition, this work questions the types of products and their circulation logics in the wrestling sector. The methodology used to carry out the survey is essentially based on the use of semi-structured interviews as a data collection technique. The results confirm the use of doping and the adoption of doping behaviours by wrestlers. This behavior is based on a triptych: building muscle mass, sporting performance and socio-economic fulfillment. While products related to traditional medicinal plants are accessible to all, doping products - anabolics and steroids in general - circulate in black markets, gyms and networks that most wrestlers are familiar with.

KEYWORDS: Traditional pharmacopoeia, performance, wrestling, muscle mass, , Senegal

1. INTRODUCTION

Wrestling is a bodily, traditional, cultural and social practice (Cheve & Al, 2014) essentially part of traditional society. It has become a professional sporting practice, and the subject of economic, social and political concerns (Loum, 2012; 214). Wrestling, a complex and entire social phenomenon that once held great significance and played an important social function, is now considered an economic activity. Today, like most other sporting and "professional" disciplines, it is not immune to cheating and deviant behavior.

The professionalization of traditional Senegalese wrestling has had an impact on the money paid to wrestlers qualified as very important personalities (VIPs) (Cheve & Al, 2014). As a result, some wrestlers take health risks in order to be among the best. For example, the wrestler Bombardier received nearly a hundred million CFA to fight Modou Lo, and Balla Gaye received over a hundred million to face Tyson. These substantial financial gains have given rise to a cult of performance, and can be seen - in terms of both production and consumption - in all sectors or fields of activity: sporting, intellectual, professional and economic (Ehrenberg, 1991). As part of a competitive rationale, wrestlers do not hesitate to use drugs, which they divert from their prescribed uses.

Thus, doping seems to go beyond sporting boundaries today to become a real social phenomenon. Norbert Elias (Elias & Dunning, 1994) explains this idea by the fact that society tends to assign roles according to performance rather than social position. Consuming products to improve one's abilities seems effective in achieving success these days. Returning to the specific context of Senegal, it has been noted a rapid and worrying increase in the muscle mass of some wrestlers and even a physical deformation. For example, some wrestlers have become unrecognizable after an increase in their muscle mass. In addition to this worrying increase, cases of suspicious deaths among wrestlers have been observed. Thus, the work of Ba (Ba, 2002) shows that some wrestlers use products that are more or less dangerous for their health just to gain volume. In other words, the use of doping and/or the adoption of doping behaviors are essential as a practice considered effective for success for it promotes an improvement in performance (Louveau & Al, 1995). The latter could promote sporting success and,

consequently, social accomplishment then reflecting social recognition through a better self-image. Moreover, this worrying increase in wrestlers' muscle mass explains the establishment by the national wrestling management committee of a structure responsible for conducting unannounced checks to combat doping. Despite the existence of this structure today, it is clear that few wrestlers test positive.

After this reflection, the objective of this article is to question the doping behaviors of wrestlers in Senegal. By "doping behaviors", we mean here "the consumption of a product to confront or overcome an obstacle real or felt by the user or by his entourage for the purpose of performance" (Laure, 2000). This adoption of doping behaviors can be part of a quest for power, money, conservation of one's capital, prevention of failure, improvement of one's image from a symbolic point of view (Laure, 2002). Understanding in a sociological way doping behaviors and "wrestling considered as a bodily practice, expressed in terms of body techniques by Mauss (Mauss, 1950), habitus or bodily hexis by Bourdieu (1980), will allow us to question the issues and the way in which wrestlers obtain substances - including those of the traditional pharmacopoeia - to increase their muscle mass in general. In addition to this, there is an identification of the banned products used in particular (AMA, 2021). The study will also analyze the circulation spaces of these consumed products. What are the issues that explain doping behavior or doping among wrestlers in Senegal? What are the products that allow wrestlers to quickly increase their muscle mass? What are these substances' logics of distribution? What are the structures that have become circulation spaces for "doping" products?

2. DOPING AND DOPING CONDUCT

From the history of doping and doping conduct, one principle remains universal from the point of view of the desired effects which are of two kinds: "the first is the direct improvement of performance and the second aims to reduce factors likely to hinder performance" (Laure, 2004). These two kinds of consumption are sometimes associated with purely cultural purposes outside the utilitarian, sporting framework. The consumption of products for performance purposes seems to be very old according to historical studies. "The first signs of those uses go back to around 5000 years before our era" (Laure, 2004 & De Mondenard, 2003). This was manifested with the use of plants (cola leaves) for performance purposes. These uses were made on all continents "in Asia with products such as opium, ephedra, hemp, etc., in America with mate, peyote, etc., in Africa with coffee, kola nuts, etc., in Oceania with hemp, betel nuts, etc. and in Europe with alcohol, vomica nuts" (Laure, 2004); in other words, they did not escape any human group.

Doping, the latest indicator of the excesses of our consumer society, has become a social problem (Loum, 2001). Continuing her analysis, Loum (2001) explains that doping affects all social classes and all sectors of social life, including the sports sector. She continues by emphasizing the complexity of analyzing this concept of doping, which is polysemic. The use of drugs to increase performance peaked in the 1950s and 1960s. The development of doping products during this period led to the first serious accidents and even deaths caused by doping (Mignon, 2002). The definition of doping seems to evolve as the products and methods associated with it are renewed. This evolution is thanks to the development of science. A first legal definition is proposed in France by the law of June 1, 1965, which characterizes doping as the fact of "knowingly" using a substance intended to "artificially and temporarily increase one's performance" (Bigard, 2011). However, the term "knowingly" poses a problem for this definition. Because any athlete tested positive can resort to the accidental excuse; that is to say, he can attest that the act is involuntary. The argument of the accident clashes with that of good faith.

The mid-1990s correspond to "the age of unreason and product specialization" (Laure, 2004). Consumption practices concern all categories of actors, from athletes to workers, from students to business leaders. This is the period when these consumptions are now tested and improved by the progress of science, industrialization and the appearance of modern sport. With the progress of pharmacology, doping products or substances likely to improve performance increase. "These substances constitute many molecules to be diverted for the benefit of the search for performance as soon as we attribute to them any doping virtue, even imaginary" (Laure, 2004). In the 90s, definitions that favor psychological and physiological aspects appear. It is in this sense that Laure (1995) defines doping as a substance applied to a subject with the aim of modifying their psychological or physiological behavior and thus increasing their performance". With the development of science, it is difficult to see a definition of doping being imposed. The institutions responsible for the management of doping (the International Olympic Committee, the World Anti-Doping Agency, the French Anti-Doping Agency, sports federations, etc.) seem to be lagging behind the industry specializing in this field. The observation remains the emergence and discovery of new doping products, new methods, sometimes even natural (genetic doping) which make the sporting principles of fairness and justice difficult. This seems all the more true since today doping is positioned as a real market where each player (athletes, sports institutions, media, pharmaceutical laboratories, sponsors) tries to make the most of profits.

In the sense of this sports legislation, there is no possibility of including similar consumption practices that can be considered as "doping behaviors". The notion of doping behavior, the meaning of which can vary from one

author to another, is a polysemic notion because the interpretation of its meaning is far from uniform. According to Jean Yves Trépos (2002), the multidisciplinary approach to this notion raises in many ways the complexity of having a universal definition of doping behaviors. Speaking of Favre and Laure (2002), Trépos (2002) explains that the latter consider that doping behaviors are adopted by people who, faced with an obstacle, will commit to overcoming it by consuming doping products. For Favre and Laure (2002) "doping behavior is a behavior of consuming products for the purposes of performance adopted by a person faced with an obstacle". Laure (2002) will continue her analysis by focusing on the avoidance of failure to explain doping behavior. For him, "doping behaviors are avoidance behaviors (or failure prevention behaviors). Laure's explanation is centered around the fear of failure to define doping behaviors. Binsinger and Friser (2002) talk about substance consumption, legal or not, intended to face a real or perceived obstacle, by the user or his entourage for the purpose of performance to designate doping behaviors. Doping would then be a particular doping behavior. Definition of doping serves as a reference for this study. Doping is analyzed in a broader and more inclusive manner. It refers to doping behaviors recognized today as a social fact in the sense that they sometimes concern the entire population. They seem to be trivialized by all age categories and particularly young people where there is much consumption. Young people can expose themselves to the discovery of consumer products of all kinds including doping products. The latter generally called pick-me-ups or stimulants are means to succeed through the search for professional, intellectual and physical performances. Today, despite the health risks of using doping substances, they exist in the wrestling world.

3. METHODOLOGY

To carry out this work, surveys were made in the Dakar region where most wrestlers are concentrated. The probability of a high circulation of products consumed in spaces such as gyms also makes it an interesting study setting. To collect the data, semi-directive interviews in the sense of Kaufmann (1996) were administered to the wrestlers. About ten interviews were carried out using an interview guide consisting of four themes. The first relates to the wrestler, his career, his trajectory. A second theme addresses the representations that these wrestlers have on doping behavior and doping in the wrestling domain in Senegal. The third relates to the products used by wrestling practitioners. The fourth and last theme concerns the places of circulation and distribution logic. The interviews were transcribed and thematically analyzed with cross-references (Kaufmann, 1996 ; Quivy, 2006) to better understand this issue. Given the sensitivity of the subject, nicknames (wrestler 1 for example) are given to protect the identity of those surveyed and to comply with the ethical requirements of scientific research.

4. RESULTS

4.1. DOPING BEHAVIOR AND DOPING AT THE HEART OF THE TRIPTYCH MUSCLE MASS GAIN, PERFORMANCE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUCCESS

Data processing highlights a close relationship between the adoption of doping behaviors, the use of doping and the gain of muscle mass initially. Indeed, the availability of significant muscle mass is one of the characteristics that forge the identity of the wrestler. It indicates that the latter has trained well and is ready to fight and defeat his opponent. This image of corpulence is also perceptible in current wrestling leaders such as Balla Gaye 2 or Gris Bordeaux.

"Sometimes, we see a wrestler who gains muscle mass that is clearly not at all natural, but nothing is said there is no control, there is not anything of that kind. When people see the build and size of Balla Gaye, Gris Bordeaux, their age and their wealth, success in wrestling is closely linked to this gain in muscle mass. They weigh 130, 140 kilos. Even when you lose weight, your relatives ask you if you are sick or if you do not train. When we see you, your size must prove that you are a wrestler" (wrestler 1).

Secondly, muscle development generates a significant increase in strength which is decisive in achieving a performance in wrestling. The internal logic of this sporting discipline requires contacts, holds to throw your opponent to the ground like in judo. Thus, strength makes the techniques used and/or the blows given effective. In other words, build is a determining factor in sporting success. Finally, in a third and final stage, sporting success in wrestling leads to social success as the more fights the wrestler wins, the higher he is positioned in the hierarchy to join the category of wrestlers qualified as VIPs. This is manifested by significant financial gains amounting several tens of millions of CFA . This is why wrestlers adopt doping behaviors or dope themselves despite the health risks that such attitudes entail. They increase the frequency and training sessions while using products whose dosages can be doubled or tripled to improve their performance. These facts are illustrated by the comments below:

"Most wrestlers use doping products such as anabolics and proteins in the form of food supplements because bodybuilding and intensive training that is done morning, noon and evening, three times a week create physical fatigue. Given the quality of food in Senegal, we are forced to consume them. However, some of us abuse them and do not respect the dosage. They want to develop muscle mass so much that the doses are doubled or tripled" (wrestler 5).

"Most wrestlers want to become VIP, they want to change category in a short period of time, a very short

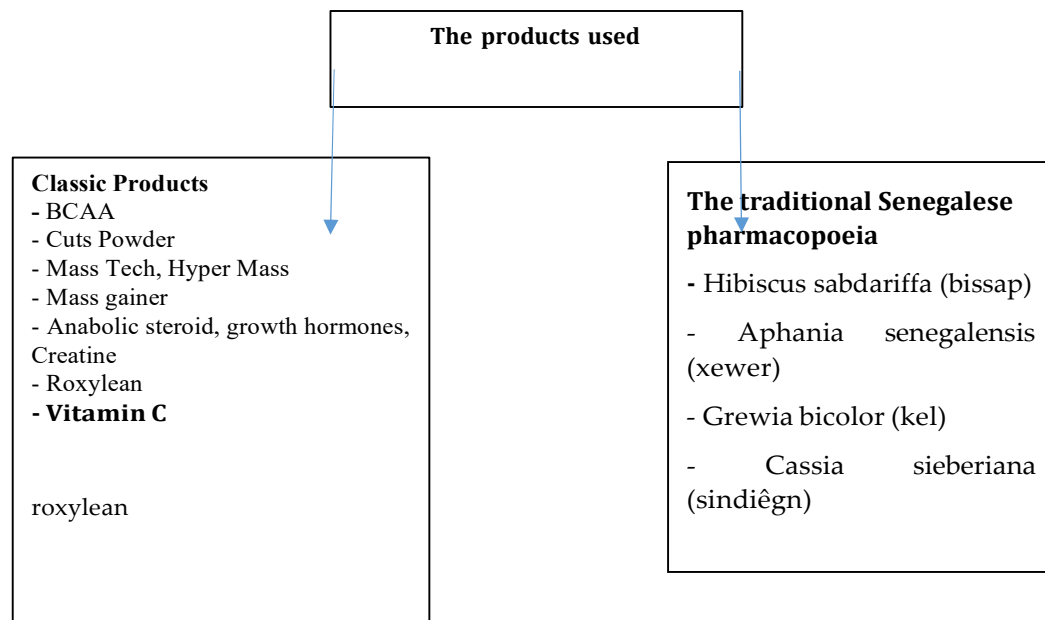
time. Given the way of wrestling, corpulence counts a lot, the stronger and more corpulent you are, the more you can defeat your opponents and start to receive VIP fees. If by winning a fight, I believe that my fee could increase by 15 to 20%, a wrestler does not hesitate to resort to all the means allowing him to achieve his goal. The people around you tell you that you have to gain weight all the time. This is the state of mind that drives wrestlers and leads them to want to gain weight and muscle mass at all costs" (wrestler 9).

The data analysis shows that wrestlers' use of products is motivated by increasing muscle mass, achieving a sporting performance and a social accomplishment that results from it. These considerations are reinforced by social pressure exerted on wrestlers forcing them to dope. Among those close to them, friends, parents, technical staff, those who insist and push for the consumption of doping products are the supporters. They encourage you because they equate the absence of significant muscle mass gain with the absence of strength, while strength does not necessarily match with a morphological increase in the human body.

"The pressure from supporters is also unbearable. When you weigh 70 or 80 kilos, they tell you that you are not a wrestler because they consider that a wrestler must be strong, big and strong. So the fans think that any wrestler who wants to succeed should look like them to have their level. A wrestler at a certain level is no longer responsible for himself. When you fall, the fans tell you that you did not bring a state of form."

4.2. PRODUCTS USED BY WRESTLERS

Traditionally, the products used by athletes are stimulants to increase attention and reduce fatigue, growth hormones to increase muscle mass, endurance and the ability to resist fatigue. To these are added erythropoietin (EPO) to promote endurance and performance, anabolics to increase muscle mass, diuretics to reduce weight, beta-agonists to improve respiratory capacity and reduce recovery time and finally auto-transfusion to increase muscular endurance and performance (AMA, 2021). The exploitation of the results confirmed the adoption of doping behaviors and the use of doping among wrestlers. The products consumed by the latter can be classified into two categories: classic products and products from the traditional Senegalese pharmacopoeia.





Cassia sieberiana (Sendiëgn)



Grewia bicolor (Kel)



Aphania senegalensis (Xewer)



Hibiscus sabdariffa (Bissap)

As indicated above, the doping products used correspond to steroids, mainly anabolics while doping behaviors are based on the consumption of vitamin C and traditional plants. This is also illustrated in the words of wrestler 4:

"They often use "kel", "bouille" and "bissap". There is also a toothpick that wrestlers often have, it is to boost the body, to stay awake and conserve energy. If you watch the fights, you often see it. It is an energy toothpick. Marabouts often give this to wrestlers. Now, traditional pharmacopoeia products are adopted to improve performance but the real doping products are anabolics. Traditional products help more with fatigue caused by training".

Wrestler 3 who uses BCAA, which is from the branched chain amino acid family, claims to do so to increase his weight and to fight against stress. This use of BCAAs can be understood because amino acids have several functions, they allow the stimulation of muscle protein synthesis and fight against muscle catabolism. As a source of energy they can allow muscle development. They also facilitate recovery and protection of muscle fibers from stress.

"I have a jar of BCAA, I take it regularly, my coach suggested that I take it before, during and after each training session, taking BCAA allows me to reduce stress and suddenly I protect my muscle fibers so as to be able to recover very quickly".

Other wrestlers talk about Mass Tech, Mass Gainer and Hyper Mass which are doping products in so far as they are in the anabolic class even if they think they are food supplements. This wrestler highlights the effects of these food supplements which are weight gain, muscle building, rapid strength gain by promoting anabolism. For some wrestlers, the consumption of products from traditional pharmacopoeia aims to increase muscle mass and combat fatigue.

"I sometimes take Mass Gainer, sometimes Mass Tech. These dietary supplements will allow me to increase my muscle mass and quickly gain strength. And you know, having strength and muscle mass are important elements for a wrestler" (wrestler 7).

"The real doping products are yellow-red tablets whose package costs 25,000 francs. They are called "elephant sons" because they easily develop muscle mass. Whoever takes them will look like an elephant. These are tablets that can allow you to gain 10 to 15 kilos in a month of training" (wrestler 8).

Regarding doping behaviors, they are characterized by the consumption of products from traditional pharmacopoeia. These are plants, leaves, roots, fruits associated with a high energy content as evidenced by the words of wrestler 4 and 9:

"I regularly consume Bissap, kel and xewer because these products will allow me to be very strong, to be awake and to have weight" (wrestler 4).

"I use products from traditional medicine. I drink "sindiègn" powder that I mix with water or juice. I also drink Xewer herbal teas. These products help me in physical preparation and facilitate my recovery" (wrestler 9).

These explanations leave us perplexed because they consume these products without real knowledge of the effects. These products, considered to be doping products, certainly modify the wrestler's capacity by fighting fatigue and stress, by promoting muscle relaxation and recovery according to the study by Ba (2002), but their effect on increasing muscle mass is not confirmed by scientific studies.

4.3. CIRCULATION SPACES AND DISTRIBUTION LOGICS

While products from traditional pharmacopoeia are available and accessible to all wrestlers, doping products are generally sold clandestinely on the black market and not in shops or pharmacies. The results of the study show, from this perspective, that two types of logic (internal and external) are used and that gyms, stables and certain training locations such as beaches have become spaces for the circulation of "classic doping products" used by wrestlers. Products such as Mass-Tech, Mass Gainer, BCAA and hyper Mass, which are food supplements considered to be doping products that act on muscle mass, are sold over the counter in gyms. The words of wrestler 10 illustrate this reality well.

"I buy BCAA and Mass Tech in the gym. I find them over the counter at the reception of the gym where I train. I can also get them through my friends if they are out of stock in the gym."

Other wrestlers interviewed explain that they can also get these products on online sales websites or through friends.

"Since I do my training on the beach, I buy my supplements and other products on the internet without having to travel to increase my muscle mass, reduce stress and be able to recover quickly, I can also find these products through the friendly network. In case of shortage I can ask my friends to help me out."

The words of these wrestlers prove the use of an internal (gym) and external (internet) logic and the friendly network to obtain the products. For anabolics, growth hormones, the external network and the stables are preferred. Their friends established outside or their friends who travel as part of physical preparation, will bring them back the products that they cannot find in Senegal. They themselves take advantage of trips abroad to renew their stock. The wrestler confirms this analysis by saying "I take advantage of my trips abroad to buy products that I cannot find in Senegal or else, I contact my friends who are abroad to ask them to buy products that are difficult to find in Senegal.

Some wrestlers also state that they can get those products that are not legally available in their wrestling hall or in the black market. The products are hidden in second hand cars bought from the USA and or Canada. It is in those cars that they are kept and once in Senegal, they are given to some people for the sale. There are also products sold in pharmacies such as the creatine that some wrestlers confess buying in drugstores.

"He has shops in Parcelles, in Rufisque that are known. There are others who sell them via WhatsApp with statuses, others in weight rooms. There is a sales network well known by wrestlers."

As for traditional pharmacopoeia products, markets and family spaces are places of circulation. Wrestler 6, who

claims to consume "bissap", "kel" and "xewer", buys these products at the markets where there are often stands of traditional medicinal products on sale over the counter or he asks his cousins who live in his parents' village of origin to bring him these products when they come to Dakar.

"I buy "sindiègn" and xewer at the market. These products can be found in all the markets in Dakar. The family can offer them to us as gifts. They have many virtues, they cure illnesses and for us athletes they help to be efficient."

5. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

This study shows that wrestlers' behaviors are quite similar to other athletes and individuals in human societies in perpetual quest for performance (Ehrenberg, 1991). Wrestlers adopt doping behaviors in the sense of Laure (2004) and dope themselves in the literal sense of the term. Like other athletes, these attitudes are part of the logic of improving performance, sporting success but also and above all socio-economic success. The financial stakes related to the professionalization of wrestling constitute the goal sought through the consumption of doping products as shown by Bourg (2016). The doping products used are well defined in the list of prohibitions of the World Anti-Doping Agency (2021). On the other hand, doping behaviors are carried out with a majority consumption of products from traditional pharmacopoeia but whose effects are perfectly consistent with the search for performance (2013). Their spaces return to clandestine markets as it is the case in the field of high-level sport (2015).

CONCLUSION

This reflection has shown the existence of doping behaviors among Senegalese wrestlers. We were able to see two categories of products used. Products that fall under the traditional pharmacopoeia and products that fall under the pharmacy that I called in this work classic products. With this work, it is clear that some wrestlers use products from the traditional pharmacopoeia without really knowing the effects. This study shows that the rooms, stables, beaches, markets, family space have now become spaces for the circulation of doping products. In addition to these spaces, with the development of ICT, the internet is also used by wrestlers to obtain doping products that can have harmful effects on health. In this quest for harmful substances, wrestlers use the family network, the friendly network by relying on two distribution logics: an internal logic and an external logic.

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