

Should Athletes Be Promoted By The Media As Role Models

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The ethical dilemma is the scenario when you are faced with two choices. But the problem is that none of them solves the problem ethically. Ethical problems or dilemmas are considered complex and troublesome issues that require a solution considering moral values. (Aitamaa, Leino-Kilpi, Puukka, & Suhonen, 2010). These problems can either be unfamiliar or new. However, they may maybe recurring routine day-to-day matters. When finding solutions to these ethical dilemmas, we are supposed to make decisions depending on our feelings and beliefs regarding what is wrong or right fundamentally (Aitamaa et al., 2010). The common ethical dilemma in sports is the use of drugs. The first case of the use of drugs was reported in 1960.

Ever since, this problem has not been fully resolved. These drugs, known as power-enhancing drugs, include steroids, growth hormones and many types of supplements. Many players have to face serious consequences for using these drugs. Lance Armstrong lost his Olympic medal and Tour de France title, and Biogenesis, an American football player, was banned for 20 years when these two tested positive in a doping test. Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens were thrown out of the Baseball Hall of Fame as they used steroids. Another dilemma is that of discrimination. The discrimination can be on the basis of race and gender. The responsibility for cultivating such discrimination mainly lies on the supporters, commentators and, in some cases, the athletes. It requires a lot of social development in the community. Gambling and corruption are also getting out of control at college, regional, national and international levels. The world of sports is not that simple as it looks, rather it is much complicated.

The athletes and their trainers and managers are bonded to make many tough decisions every day about fitness and coaching and the various sports events in which they have to participate. They face many temptations to make money and quick approaches to become the top-ranked place where morals and ethics collide with the shortcuts to instant success and achievement. But sports ethics demand that you maintain good character whatever the circumstances. The unethical attitudes portrayed in the space of coaching are deteriorating the public reputation and image of sports and coaching (DeSensi, 2003).

The ethical dilemmas and unethical actions are increasing in the world of sports. There arises a strong need to develop a system to control such issues. This system should include the rules and principles for guiding the behavior of the athletes, managers, and coaches.

Athletes can be positive role models as they have achieved exceptional fame and glory through their hard work. They can be a source of inspiration for everyone. The achievements of these people are always presented to motivate other people to achieve similar success and goals in life.

Certainly, positive examples behave as role models while inspiring one via illustrating the desired self and ideal, highlighting probable achievements for which one strives, and portraying the way to achieve them (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997, 1999);

Sometimes people also get attracted by negative role models. Goals may require the form of demanding the desirable results or ignoring the undesirable consequences. (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1998; Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; Higgins, 1997). The inspiration for positive and negative role models depends upon the type of roles people are pursuing.

It is a fact that whether athletes win or lose. They exhibit fair play or not; they are role models for others. They get support. Power and admiration from the public. This is the reason that they are treated as celebrities even when they are off the sports field. This fact lays the additional responsibility of the role model on their shoulders. This sometimes results in losing their privacy. A person can have more than one role model. A role model is considered a player who is exceptional both on and off the field. To be included in this catalog, one has to have a clear record. The activities, manners, and conduct of these athletes, who are, in fact, role models, have a direct impact on the behaviors of youth. The values of the coaches influence the athletes which in turn influence. When you are a celebrity, you are always under the curious eyes of the media, and you will always find people wanting to know more and more about you. Even your personal life becomes public. This viewpoint has resulted in transforming some athletes into role models to increase the participation of youth in sports and to lure people into buying different products. Athletes are also projected as a symbol of health to deliver health-related messages to the people.

They are the persons that are looked upon by the people. They can help the youth to make decisions about life. They help them boost their self-esteem and avoid the use of drugs and performance-enhancing medicines. Athletes have a distinct way of influencing the community, but we should not focus on their scandals and their games only. Moreover, we should also focus on the good aspects of their lives. Athletes are distinctive, not only as players for the sport they are playing but also as a product that can easily be marketed. If you look at the [history of the Olympics](#), Victorious athletes were named as heroes, and because of them, their home towns got famous, such as Milo of Kroton and Diagoras of Rhodes (Crane 1996). The game of the Olympics and many other sports competitions continue to produce exceptional athletes. These athletes can be the most suitable contestants as the role model in the media.

Athletes have optimistic uniqueness and character. These qualities are not only very helpful and encouraging for youngsters but also among the constructive characteristics that companies are usually looking for to advertise their products. When companies choose an athlete, in addition to these factors, several other things are taken into consideration. The effect of coupling an athlete with a community can be very beneficial for its promotion and can be damaging as well. Philip Knight, the founder of Nike, was among the first who realized the use of athletes in the publicity of products. The benefit obtained from such a coupling is not easily quantifiable. But it is agreed by all the marketing companies that such a union of an athlete and a product can be helpful to positively boost the item

many times. Such a combination cannot prove very supportive in increasing the revenue or the sales of the company, but it improves the stock market position of the company. “A famous face in the advertisement can help build a recognizable image for a company and its products and has been known to boost the viewer’s recall.”(Sasseen 1994). “, “Indeed, if there is ‘fit’ between the athlete and the product, a celebrity endorser’s stamp of approval can bring added value to a brand’s equity as well as celebrate an emotional bond.” (Bradley) (Zeigler, 1984).

Competition is on the rise in every sphere of life; businesses are no exception. Marketing of products is changing. “Sport is too much a game to be a business and too much business to be a game” (Hums, Barr, & Gullion, 1999). It has become essential for companies to pay attention to what their customers want and provide them with the required facts and knowledge. The new style demands tools like sports marketing. This is a straight and short way to have access to the hearts of the people. It is the source of obsession and enthusiasm that people can’t easily deny. Balboa, a well-known brand, has signed Rafael Nadal. A precious union of a star with their company. (Brecke, 1997). Such a combination can do miracles, but you should know the art of presenting such a legend.

The relationship has monetary worth for both the parties, the athlete and the company. Moreover, it adds strength, influence, and control to the athlete and the brand. The athletes can prove very significant to promote the sports related brands as they can understand the requirements and priorities of athletes in a better way. It has been found through research that people are more likely to recognize a brand and its message when they receive it through social media or athletes. One way is to employ the athlete directly as a spokesperson. In such a case, it is essential that the message is reliable and matches the athlete’s social image. Otherwise, it can prove to be very damaging. Rather, the enhancing. Another crucial factor is the suitability of the athlete with the product and the [advertising campaign](#); if done properly can be very boastful and, if inappropriate, can undermine the whole operation. The athlete plays the role of opinion leader. They have a great impact on the buying decisions of their admirers. Their supporters are more likely to buy a product advertised and recalled through such a campaign.

Over the years, the practice of combining and presenting a product and athlete has remained very common. Through this experience, many companies got boosted. In contrast, other companies realized that there are possibilities of problems that can arise from such a union. It proves very costly, and only well-established companies can afford it. Moreover, the image of an athlete changes with the passage of time. An athlete can be at the top of his career, and after some time, his performance starts declining. To book an athlete who is at the top is not only very expensive, but such a linkage can be very difficult for a company to carry for a very long time. “The cost of maintaining a sponsor relationship with a star athlete could become overly expensive, or the spokesperson who is used fairly often can become overexposed” (Swenson, 1987).

Although the athletes are treated as heroes by the people, they still don’t take their support for a product blindly. “Changing consumer attitudes towards athletes have motivated some marketers to use more realistic advertisements featuring anti-heroes who tell the truth” (Jensen, 1993a). Due to

the various threats concerned, the trend of the presentation of these heroes in advertising is declining, but it doesn't mean that it will become extinct. This discussion brings us to the conclusion that athletes should be promoted as role models for the media.

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