

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses in detail the findings of the study, which are based on theories, interviews with research participants, and previous studies as supporting evidence. This chapter also discusses the contributions of the study to specific fields.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Discussion of Findings from Research Question 1

According to the research result, it can be summarized that there are few factors that contribute to the use of PEDs among athletes in Malaysia as shown in figure below.

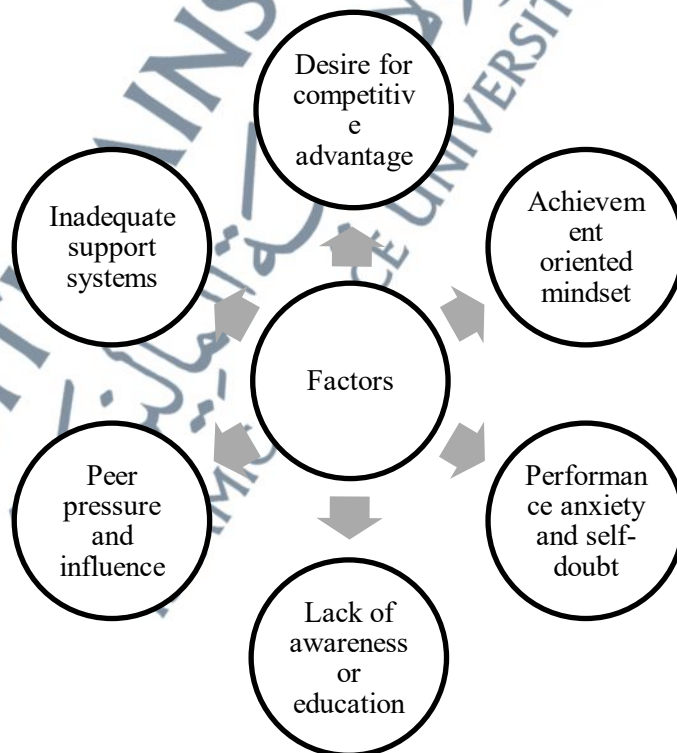


Figure 3. Factors that influence the use of PEDs among athletes in Malaysia.

Athletes may feel pressure to gain a competitive edge over their opponents, particularly in high-level competitions. The desire to enhance performance and achieve better results can be a strong motivator to resort to PEDs. Athletes who have a strong drive for success and are highly goal-oriented may be more inclined to use PEDs to improve their performance and reach their targets quickly. The pursuit of personal excellence and records can push athletes towards PEDs use. Athletes may experience performance anxiety and self-doubt, especially in highly competitive sports environments. The fear of underperforming or not meeting expectations can lead some athletes to turn to PEDs to alleviate their anxiety and boost their confidence. Some athletes may be unaware of the potential risks and consequences associated with PED use. A lack of education on the subject, including the potential health risks and the importance of fair play, may contribute to the decision to use PEDs. Athletes might be influenced by their peers or teammates who are using or advocating for PEDs. The desire to fit in, gain acceptance, or conform to a group norm can be a significant internal factor in the decision to use PEDs. Athletes who feel unsupported or lack access to proper coaching, training facilities, and medical guidance may be more likely to turn to PEDs to compensate for these deficiencies. The absence of comprehensive support systems can create an environment where PEDs seem like a viable solution.

5.2.2 Discussion of Findings from Research Question 2

a) Impacts of PEDs Usage

The use of PEDs can have various effects on Malaysian athletes, like athletes from other countries. While the specific impact may vary depending on the individual, sport, dosage, and duration of PEDs use, below are some general effects to consider.

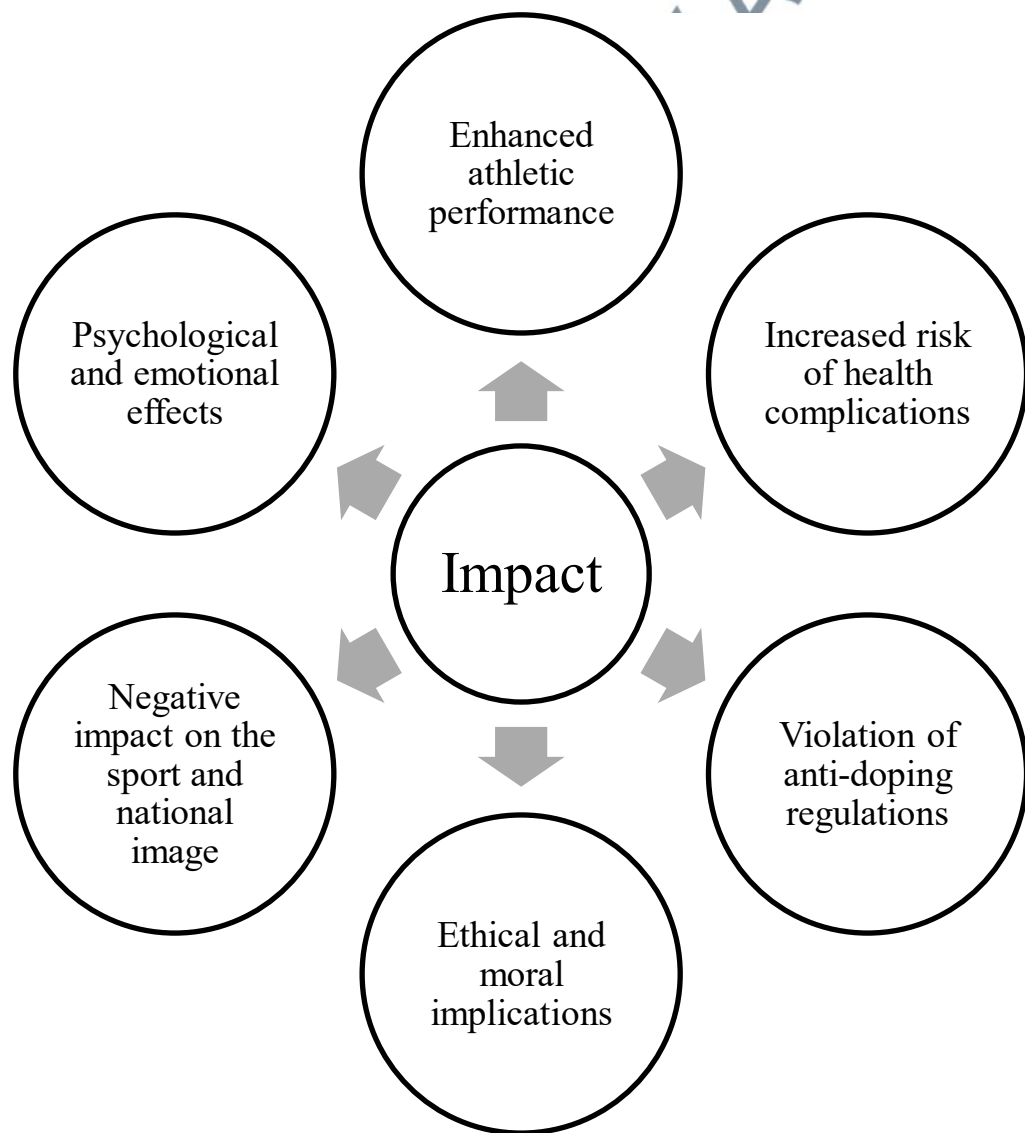


Figure 4: Impact of PEDs usage among athletes

PEDs are designed to improve an athlete's physical capabilities, such as strength, endurance, speed, and recovery. By increasing oxygen-carrying capacity, muscle growth, or reducing fatigue, PEDs can potentially enhance an athlete's performance in their respective sport. Many PEDs come with potential health risks and side effects. These can include cardiovascular problems (e.g., high blood pressure, heart disease), liver damage, hormonal imbalances, increased aggression, infertility, and psychological disorders. The misuse or abuse of PEDs can amplify these risks. The use of PEDs is against the rules of most sports organizations and is considered cheating. If athletes are caught using PEDs during drug testing, they can face severe consequences, including suspensions, bans from competitions, loss of medals or titles, and damage to their reputation. The use of PEDs undermines the principles of fair play, integrity, and equal competition. It creates an unfair advantage over clean athletes who adhere to the rules and rely on their natural abilities. Engaging in doping practices can lead to a loss of trust and respect from fellow athletes, fans, and the sporting community. When athletes are involved in doping scandals, it can tarnish the reputation of their sport and the image of the country. It can diminish public interest, sponsorship opportunities, and the overall integrity of sports in Malaysia. This can have long-term consequences for the development and support of sporting initiatives. The use of PEDs can have psychological implications on athletes. They may experience guilt, anxiety, and stress associated with the fear of being caught, the pressure to maintain results, or the potential health risks. Dependence on PEDs can also lead to psychological addiction and an inability to perform without them.

b) **Raising Awareness**

The awareness regarding the use of PEDs among athletes, coaches, and parents in Malaysia is a critical aspect of promoting clean and fair competition. Figure 3 below provide some general insights on how awareness is typically promoted based on the respondent's answer.

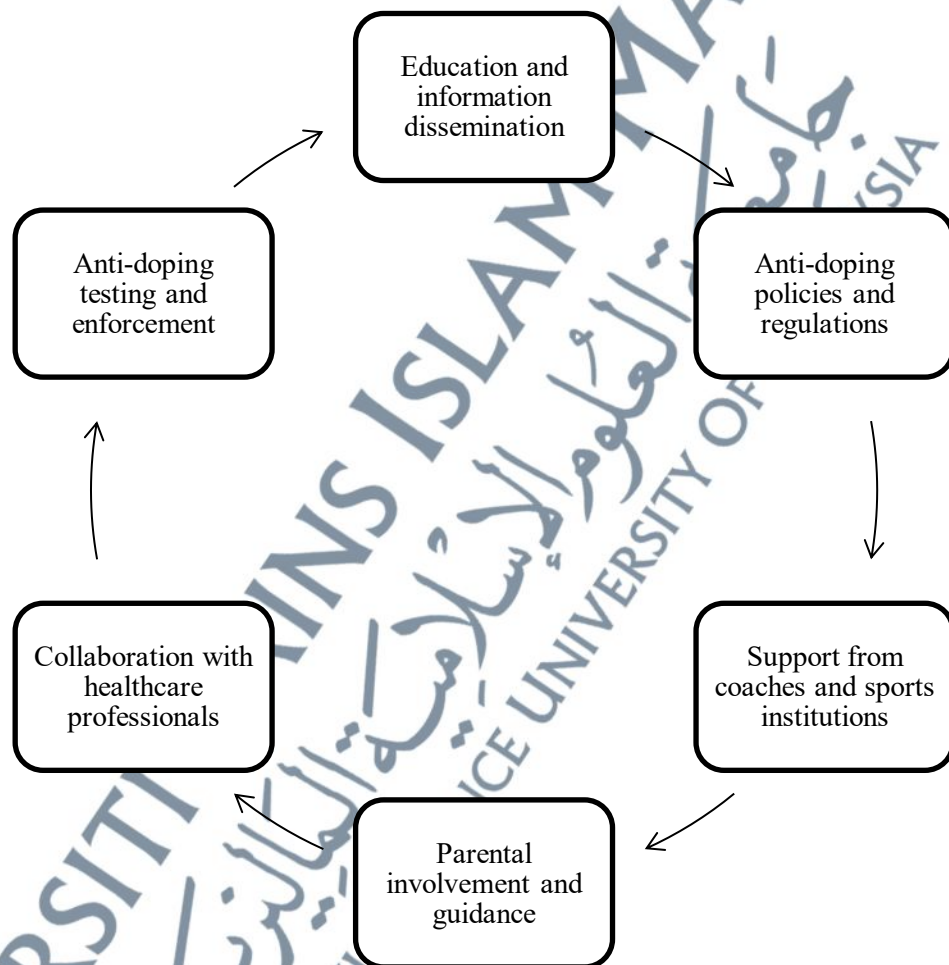


Figure 5: How awareness is typically promoted

Raising awareness starts with providing accurate and comprehensive education on PEDs. Sports organizations, national anti-doping agencies, and governing bodies can conduct educational programs, seminars, workshops, and distribute informational

materials to athletes, coaches, and parents. These initiatives can cover topics such as the risks associated with PEDs, the ethical implications, the importance of fair play, and the consequences of doping. Having robust anti-doping policies and regulations in place is crucial for promoting awareness. Malaysian sports organizations and governing bodies should establish clear rules, guidelines, and consequences for doping violations. This information should be readily available and easily accessible to athletes, coaches, and parents, ensuring that they understand the expectations and consequences related to PEDs use. Coaches play a vital role in shaping the attitudes and behaviours of athletes. It is important for coaches to prioritize the development of their athletes' skills, knowledge, and character while emphasizing the importance of clean and fair competition. Coaches should be well-informed about the risks and consequences of PEDs, ensuring they can guide athletes appropriately. Parents play a significant role in shaping the values and beliefs of young athletes. Parents should be educated about the risks and ethical concerns associated with PEDs and actively engage in discussions with their children about the importance of fair play and the consequences of doping. Parental support and guidance can have a profound impact on an athlete's decisions and behaviors. Collaborating with healthcare professionals, such as sports doctors and trainers, can help raise awareness about the health risks associated with PEDs. These professionals can provide guidance on safe and legal methods of performance enhancement, such as proper nutrition, training techniques, injury prevention, and recovery strategies. Conducting regular and thorough anti-doping testing is crucial to deter athletes from using PEDs. The implementation of testing programs and the enforcement of anti-doping regulations send a strong message about the commitment to clean sport and can help raise awareness among athletes, coaches, and parents.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS OF PRACTISE

The study on the experience of PEDs (Performance-Enhancing Drugs) usage among Malaysian athletes has made several contributions. These include contributions to future athletes, involved organizations (ADAMAS, KBS, MSN), and to the counsellor.

5.3.1 Implications towards future athletes

The study raises awareness among future athletes about the experiences and challenges associated with PEDs usage. It provides valuable insights into the risks, ethical considerations, and potential consequences of using PEDs, which can help guide informed decision-making. By highlighting the experiences and perspectives of athletes who have used PEDs, this research contributes to the prevention and deterrence of PEDs usage among future athletes. It sheds light on the potential negative effects, both on performance and overall well-being, thereby discouraging the use of PEDs. Overall, this research makes a significant contribution towards future athletes by fostering awareness, prevention, support, and informed decision-making regarding the use of PEDs in the context of sports in Malaysia.

5.3.2 Implications towards involved organizations.

The research provides valuable insights into the experiences, challenges, and perspectives of athletes regarding PEDs usage. This information can assist

organizations like ADAMAS, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the National Sports Council in making informed decisions about policies, regulations, and educational initiatives related to PEDs in Malaysian sports. The findings of the study can contribute to the development and refinement of policies and guidelines concerning PEDs usage. This research can serve as a basis for creating evidence-based policies that address the specific issues and concerns highlighted by athletes in Malaysia. The research sheds light on the experiences of athletes regarding PEDs usage, including the factors influencing their decisions and the challenges they face. This information can guide the development of support programs aimed at educating athletes, promoting clean and fair competition, and aiding for athletes who may be dealing with the pressures or temptations related to PEDs. Finally, the insights gained from this study can foster collaboration between the involved organizations. ADAMAS, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the National Sports Council can work together to implement the research findings effectively, share resources, and collaborate on awareness campaigns, educational programs, and initiatives to combat PEDs usage in Malaysian sports.

5.3.3 Implications towards counsellor

An exploratory study on the experiences of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) among athletes in Malaysia can have several research implications for counsellors. The study can help counsellors gain a deeper understanding of the prevalence, motivations, and experiences of athletes using PEDs in Malaysia. This knowledge can be used to develop targeted educational programs and interventions to raise awareness among athletes, coaches, and sports organizations about the potential risks and consequences

associated with PEDs use. By exploring the factors contributing to PEDs use among athletes, the study can inform the development of prevention and intervention strategies for counsellors. These strategies may include early identification of at-risk individuals, providing evidence-based information on the harmful effects of PEDs, and offering counselling services to athletes struggling with substance abuse or the pressures of performance enhancement. The study can contribute to discussions on ethical decision-making in sports and provide counsellors with insights into the ethical dilemmas faced by athletes who consider or use PEDs. This understanding can help counsellors guide athletes in making informed choices and developing strategies to cope with the pressures of competition while maintaining their integrity. Performance-enhancing drug use can have profound psychological and emotional consequences for athletes. The study can shed light on the psychological impact of PEDs use, including issues such as body image, self-esteem, and identity. Counsellors can use this knowledge to provide appropriate mental health support to athletes who may experience distress or negative emotions related to PEDs use. For athletes who wish to discontinue PEDs use, the study can provide valuable insights into the challenges they may face during withdrawal and recovery. Counsellors can utilize this information to develop tailored interventions to assist athletes in managing the physical, psychological, and social aspects of withdrawal and to support their long-term recovery.

5.4 Research Limitations

This part of the study outlines the constraints of this study. In research, limitations and delimitations play a crucial role in defining the boundaries, exceptions,

reservations, and qualifications (Creswell, 2007). Essentially, limitations refer to the circumstances that narrow down the scope of the research and potentially influence the outcomes. These limitations are factors that the researcher cannot control. While conducting a study on the experiences of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) among athletes in Malaysia, there are several research limitations faced.

First is sample size. The study's sample size is limited due to constraints such as time, resources, and access to athletes' willingness to participate. A small sample size may not fully represent the diversity of athletes in Malaysia or provide a comprehensive understanding of their experiences with PEDs. Next is there might be a potential bias in participant selection. Athletes who have used PEDs may be hesitant to disclose their experiences due to the social stigma or legal implications associated with such drug use. Conversely, athletes who have not used PEDs may be more willing to participate, leading to a biased sample that does not adequately represent the entire population of athletes in Malaysia. Other than that, findings from this study may not be generalizable to athletes outside of Malaysia. Cultural, social, and contextual factors specific to Malaysia might influence athletes' experiences with PEDs, making it challenging to apply the findings to other countries or regions.

Next is limited access to information. The study's findings may be limited by the availability and accuracy of information regarding PEDs use among athletes. Obtaining comprehensive and accurate data on the prevalence, types, and patterns of PEDs use in Malaysia may be challenging due to the secretive nature of drug use and the difficulty in obtaining reliable information. Lastly, the study might not account for external factors that could influence athletes' experiences with PEDs, such as sports

regulations, education programs, or anti-doping initiatives in Malaysia. These factors could affect the prevalence, attitudes, and motivations related to PEDs use among athletes.

5.5 Future Research Recommendations

Based on the study on the experiences of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) among athletes in Malaysia, there are some future research recommendations. First, future scholars should conduct a longitudinal study to track athletes' experiences with PEDs over an extended period. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of patterns, motivations, and changes in PEDs use among athletes in Malaysia. Longitudinal data would allow researchers to examine factors influencing initiation, cessation, and long-term effects of PEDs use. Other than that, future academicians should compare the experiences of athletes in Malaysia with athletes from other countries or regions. This would help identify similarities and differences in attitudes, prevalence, motivations, and consequences of PEDs use across different contexts. Comparative studies can provide valuable insights into cultural, social, and regulatory factors that shape athletes' experiences with PEDs.

Future studies should expand the scope of the study to include coaches, trainers, and other support staff involved in Malaysian sports. Understanding their perspectives, knowledge, and involvement in facilitating or discouraging PEDs use among athletes would provide a more comprehensive picture of the ecosystem surrounding PEDs use in Malaysia. Besides, future studies should evaluate the effectiveness of educational

programs and interventions aimed at preventing PEDs use among athletes in Malaysia. Assess the impact of anti-doping education initiatives, policy interventions, and support systems in promoting clean sports and deterring PEDs use. This would inform future prevention strategies and policies.

Researchers should explore advancements in doping detection methods and their implications for athletes in Malaysia. Investigate athletes' knowledge, attitudes, and strategies regarding doping detection, as well as the challenges they face in evading detection. This research can contribute to the improvement of anti-doping efforts and the development of more effective testing protocols. Last but not least, researchers can examine the effectiveness of existing policies and regulations related to PEDs use in Malaysia. Evaluate the implementation, enforcement, and impact of anti-doping regulations in sports organizations and at the national level. This research can inform policy changes and enhance the effectiveness of anti-doping measures.

5.6 Research Conclusions

In conclusion, the exploratory study on experiences of Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs) among athletes in Malaysia sheds light on several important aspects. The study aimed to understand the prevalence of PEDs usage, the motivations behind their use, the perceived benefits and risks, as well as the potential impact on athletes' physical and mental health.

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the use of PEDs among athletes in Malaysia is not uncommon. Several factors were identified as motivators for athletes to turn to PEDs, including a desire for competitive advantage,

pressure to perform, and the influence of peers and coaches. The perceived benefits reported by athletes included enhanced strength, endurance, and overall performance, which they believed would increase their chances of success in their respective sports.

However, the study also revealed that athletes are aware of the potential risks associated with PEDs usage. These risks include negative health effects, such as cardiovascular problems, hormonal imbalances, and psychological issues. Despite this awareness, some athletes were willing to take the risk in pursuit of their athletic goals.

The findings of this study have important implications for various stakeholders, including sports organizations, policymakers, coaches, and athletes themselves. It highlights the need for comprehensive education and awareness programs targeting athletes at all levels to discourage the use of PEDs and emphasize the importance of fair play and long-term health. Additionally, sports organizations and policymakers should implement rigorous drug testing protocols and enforce strict penalties for athletes found to be using PEDs, to maintain the integrity of sports competitions.

Further research is warranted to delve deeper into this issue, exploring the specific types of PEDs commonly used, the sources of these drugs, and the long-term consequences on athletes' physical and mental well-being. It is crucial to continue monitoring and addressing the challenges associated with PEDs to maintain a level playing field for all athletes and promote the ideals of fair competition and sportsmanship.