

## **CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This introductory chapter is divided into ten (10) sections. The first section discusses the study's context regarding the background and issues of the study. Followed by a problem statement which focuses on exploring the case study from the beginning until can analyze the issues properly through the research objective and research questions followed by the potential gap. Besides that, the purpose and significance of the study are also highlighted together with the limitation of the study. Then the final section defines the terms used in this research proposal and concludes the summary of the overall proposal in structure.

### **1.2 Background Of the Study**

According to recent polls and reports in the media, there has been an increase in the usage of performance-enhancing drugs in competitive sports in both their legal and illegal forms (Parkinson & Evans, 2006). This trend has been observed worldwide. The use of chemicals in sports that are prohibited by anti-doping authorities is a significant concern (Lippi, Franchini, & Guidi, 2008). Additionally, the world of competitive sports is frequently shaken by doping scandals that unfold on a national and international scale (Zhang, 2018). Doping in the form of using performance-enhancing chemicals and other forms of cheating is exceedingly frequent not only among the top athletes in the world but also among athletes competing at lower levels of competition.

According to the announcement made by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in

the year 2019, there were 1,595 Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs) in the year 2016, and that number increased by 13% to 1,804 ADRV cases in 2017 (Hong, Henning, & Dimeo, 2020). Therefore, we can say that the number of athletes who are facing some form of anti-doping punishment has been in the region of 1,600–1,800 ADRV cases, and the fact that the trend is upward may mean that the figures for 2018 and 2019 will be higher. If the suspension lasts for more than four years, they also have a lower chance of having career opportunities related to the industry. The athletes have a lower chance of making a comeback to the sport and a lower chance of having career opportunities as a coach or in a role that is related to the industry if the suspension lasts for four years or more.

In Malaysia, several doping cases have been reported by the media (Chiang, Shamsuddin, & Mahmood, 2018). Additionally, lots of athletes have been found guilty of using banned performance – enhancing drugs (PEDs). Although athletes believe that doping is against the spirit of sports and are aware of its consequences, they continue to use these substances. The consumption of banned substances among Malaysian athletes is rising. This study aimed to investigate and explore the abuse performance – enhancing drugs among Malaysian athletes.

Androgenic-anabolic steroids (AAS), which imitate testosterone, are among the most commonly utilised drugs. Human Leydig cells produce this hormone in the testes. One of which is that it promotes the growth of tissues in the body and thus the development of greater muscle mass and power. From a clinical point of view, AAS is widely used for the purpose of providing treatment to patients undergoing abdominal surgery and those who have suffered burn injuries, known as polytrauma patients (Creutzberg, 1999). In addition, the use of AAS also has a positive effect on chronic

pulmonary patients, HIV patients, muscular dystrophy patients, and some dermatological diseases (Hartgens et al., 2004). Despite having various benefits in the medical field, there are a handful of people who have abused AAS in their lives, such as athletes.

### **1.3 History of Performance Enhancing Drugs.**

Since the 1960s, doping has been a violation of the rules set forth by the governing bodies of many sports (Ahmad, 2022) World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) oversees administering something called a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE), which enables athletes to use a limited number of medications. According to Petróczy (2007), this strategy can be implemented by athletes who are presently dealing with a medical problem. Young athletes start using illegal drugs, the most common anabolic steroids, far before they get to the point in their careers where they can reach their peak levels of performance. Because of this, the concept of athletes competing while under the influence of performance-enhancing substances is not an original one. In other words, Doping was one of the many different combinations of treatment procedures that may have been created using opium. Considering recent developments in the concept of definitional expansion, the name "doping" can now refer to a larger variety of energizing beverages.

Doping is the practice of using banned performance-enhancing substances (PEDS) in addition to other performance-enhancing measures. Doping is often referred to as "cheating" (Performance – enhancing medicines (PEMS) ). Aside from the fact that uncooperative behavior is considered to constitute doping, agents are utilized to disguise the presence of PEDS and PEMS, which include blood transfusions and gene change. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), an organization whose mission is

to reduce the use of performance-enhancing drugs in athletic competitions, publishes a list of prohibited medications that can be used to assist athletes each year. These medications include things like anabolic steroids and narcotic painkillers (WADA, 2018). In the context of athletic competition, the term "doping" refers to the practice of utilizing prohibited substances. Doping can take several forms, including the use of anabolic steroids, beta-blockers, amphetamine, and bromance, among other substances. The practice of using "performance-enhancing pharmaceuticals," also abbreviated as PEDs, is referred to as "doping" in the realm of competitive sports. Athletes take these medications to improve their performance in all aspects of their sporting endeavors (Reardon & Creado, 2014). Doping is the practice of using illegal chemicals to enhance one's performance with the intention of getting a competitive advantage over one's opponent. Since the year 1960, all sports governing organizations have made it illegal to use performance-enhancing drugs. It was believed that the use of doping was harmful to the growth of the modern Olympic movement. Ahmad, W. (2022). It wasn't until the 1950s that this risk was identified and given attention for the first time.

### **1.3.1 Types of Performance – Enhancing Drugs (PEDs)**

It is difficult to maintain track of how frequently people take PEDs because there are so many different forms of PEDs to keep track of. The World Anti-Doping Authority has listed more than 192 substances that are banned for their performance-enhancing drugs effects (Carreathers, 2020). Erythropoietin, human growth hormones, anabolic steroids, and blood doping are the four types of performance-enhancing substances that are used by athletes the most commonly (ProCon.org, 2010). According to the results of a survey that was

carried out in 2011 with a significant number of elite athletes from around the world, up to 57% admitted to using performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) in the preceding year (Specktor, 2018). Unfortunately, performance-enhancing substances, sometimes known as PEDs, have become increasingly popular in a wide variety of sports, which frequently compromises the fairness of the competition. It has been reported that anywhere from 5% to 30% of athletes make use of performance-enhancing substances (PEDs). Even more importantly, the use of some of these substances can pose a considerable risk to the health and general well-being of athletes and other athletes who participate in competitive sports. Estes, R. (2015).

### **1.3.2 Usage of Anabolic – Androgenic Steroids among athletes**

Athletes' use of Anabolic–Androgenic Steroids (AAS) is frequently reported in the media. The world's anti-doping agencies are very concerned about the use of AAS in any competition. Although various initiatives have been taken to raise awareness among athletes about the effects of AAS use, many more are reported to be using it. Every time a doping test is done on our country's athletes, there are some that are positive. AAS is frequently reported to be used by athletes from a variety of disciplines, including bodybuilding, weightlifting, racing, and other athletic events, due to its ability to enhance muscle growth and recovery (Lamb, 1984). According to a report from the International Olympic Community (IOC), since the Olympic games began in 1968, there have been 442 positive cases of doping tests resulting in 173 medals having to be withdrawn, involving 57 gold, 66 silver, and 50 bronze, covering 28 sporting

events over 52 years (IOC, 2021). Of all the cases, most athletes from athletics events (track and field) involving 172 people were found to be positive, involving 59 medals withdrawn. The type of androgenic anabolic steroid (AAS) that is often used among athletes is the Turinabol type. All positive doping test results and 54 medals involving an athlete's use of Turinabol. Figure 1 shows the top ten list of types of substances in doping tests that were often used by athletes during the 52 years the Olympic games were held.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

In Malaysia, the agency that is responsible for dealing with and monitoring performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) among athletes is the Anti-Doping Agency of Malaysia (ADAMAS). The issue of PEDs among our national athletes is no exception. Athletes are role models, and they have an important responsibility to protect the integrity of their sport. ADAMAS provides conditions that protect athletes' rights to clean sports and provides complete, up-to-date, and accurate location information that enables any authorized organization responsible for sample collection to locate athletes for testing without earlier notice. The Malaysian Weightlifting Federation (MWF) revealed in September 2021 that two national athletes had tested positive for banned substances. Following a doping test in July 2021, two Malaysian athletes were suspended for four years by Malaysia's anti-doping agency (ADAMAS). Due to WADA's rules, the suspension has been implemented (WADA).

**Table 1**

Examples of the top ten substance types found in 28 Olympic Games

| Drug (s) or Drug Offense          | Positive Doping Results | Medals Stripped                  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Testosterone                      | 10                      | 1 Bronze                         |
| EPO                               | 13                      |                                  |
| Furosemide                        | 13                      | 3 Gold<br>1 Silver<br>1 Bronze   |
| Anabolic Steroid                  | 14                      | 2 Gold<br>1 Silver               |
| Nandrolone                        | 17                      | 2 Gold                           |
| n/a                               | 19                      | 1 Gold<br>3 Silver<br>2 Bronze   |
| Turinabol & Stanozolol            | 23                      | 3 Gold<br>4 Silver<br>5 Bronze   |
| Stanozolol                        | 29                      | 5 Gold<br>3 Silver<br>3 Bronze   |
| Biological passport abnormalities | 34                      | 3 Gold<br>2 Silver               |
| Disappearing Sample               | 43                      | 8 Gold<br>12 Silver<br>1 Bronze  |
| Turinabol                         | 65                      | 4 Gold<br>16 Silver<br>14 Bronze |

Source: International Olympic Community (IOC 2021)

2 athletes pleaded guilty to using the prohibited substance methandienone, which was added to the WADA 2021 prohibited list as an androgenic steroid (Berita Harian, December 20, 2021). Both athletes have been suspended for 4 years from participating in any event in the country or abroad. Apart from them, history shows that from 2005 to 2019 data released by the anti-doping unit of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, a total of 136 national athletes failed the doping tests that have been conducted (ADAMAS, 2021). According to a report from New Straits Time on April 29, 2018, Stanozolol is a common AAS used by Malaysian athletes. Most of those who use this substance are bodybuilders and weightlifters who use it as a performance enhancer. A report from ADAMAS also confirmed that out of a total of 136 cases, a total of 64 cases involved bodybuilding, with most using AAS-type Stanozolol.

In Malaysia, AAS is classified as a Group B poison and can only be sold and supplied by licensed medical practitioners for the sole purpose of treating patients (Rahman, 2013). The maximum penalty for violating Section 19 of the Poisons Act 1952 is a fine of RM5,000 or two years in jail or both. It is also necessary to register steroid-containing products with the Drug Control Authority before they can be created for sale, imported, possessed, or administered, as stipulated by both the Drugs and Cosmetics Control Regulations of 1984 and the Sale of Drugs Act 1952.

As we know, Doping, which refers to the use of performance-enhancing chemicals and other forms of cheating, is extremely common not only among the most elite athletes in the world but also among athletes competing at lower levels of competition and athletes competing in other sports. This is because doping is not just limited to athletes participating in athletic competitions (Goldstein, 2007). This approach is not a new edition regarding issues of doping in world sports. According to a ban that was issued by the World Anti-Doping Agency, athletes who have used chemicals that are

prohibited from usage are not permitted to compete in any sport that is open to the public. This is the case regardless of the type of sport (WADA, 2004). Because it is believed that the use of chemicals that are prohibited for the treatment of sickness will result in an excessive improvement in performance, this practice is restricted because it is considered to result in an excessive improvement. Athletes continue to use prohibited substances even though they are aware of the repercussions of their doping behavior and believe that it violates the standards of ethics that apply to sports. This is true even though athletes are fully aware of the repercussions that will result from their use of doping (Pappa, & Kennedy, 2013). However, we cannot be denied one amateur athlete out of every five who engages in sports as a hobby admits to taking performance-enhancing substances at some point in their athletic careers (Backhouse, McKenna, & Patterson, 2009). Even ADAMAS has requested that the various national sports associations (NSAs) in the country provide their full cooperation to effectively combat doping across the nation. This request was made to fulfill the goals of the agency.

In ensuring the reduction of the cases of PEDs among athletes in Malaysia, ADAMAS has a responsibility to lead the main function with managed the anti-doping tests (urine tests and blood tests) on athletes. ADAMAS has a sample collection procedure. Doping control, which is often referred to as anti-doping, is a mechanism that monitors athletes to identify and deter them from using prohibited drugs or techniques. The gathering of samples is one of the steps involved in this process. Doping Control Officers (DCOs) who have been accredited, trained, and authorized by ADAMAS to carry out testing in Malaysia are the only ones who are permitted to do the sample-collecting process. ADAMAS has strict guidelines regarding who can and cannot collect samples.

The use of drugs to increase the level of athletes' ability in sports not only causes bad side effects either in the short or long term, but athletes risk being removed from participating in competitions if they are found positive for doping due to taking prohibited drugs through random testing.

### **1.5 Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the causes and effects of performance – enhancing drugs among athletes in Malaysia. This study uses a qualitative method by applying a semi-structured interview approach. To gain a deeper understanding of Malaysian athletes' knowledge about the use of prohibited substances and the extent to which the use of these substances affects their effectiveness as athletes, researchers have interviewed 5 athletes as the primary source of the study. While secondary sources are such as mission-end reports, newspapers, articles, and internet references. The sample for this study was taken using purposive sampling. This method is used to obtain solid data through the experiences of these athletes under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. For data analysis, the themes released will further determine the most dominant factor in influencing athletes to take prohibited substances known as performance–enhancing drugs (PEDs).

### **1.6 Research Questions**

This study will answer the following research questions:

- 1.6.1 Why do Malaysian athletes involve in Performance–Enhancing Drugs?
- 1.6.2 What are the issues of Performance–Enhancing Drugs among Malaysian athletes towards their future?

## **1.7 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this research are:

- 1.7.2 To explore the involvement of Malaysian athletes on Performance – Enhancing Drugs in sports.
- 1.7.3 To investigate the issues of Performance-Enhancing Drugs intake in the future.

## **1.8 Significant of the Study**

The findings of this study will contribute a significance and in-depth information to academic knowledge. This research will show why athletes keep on using drugs despite higher awareness and action being taken. In terms of the counselor's view, those counselor handling cases, or practicing client involved in PEDs is needed. It is because those athletes involved in PEDs in any tournament sport either national or international event got punishment and are banned from participating. Doping control in the world of sports is officially overseen by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) (WADA, 2020). In this regard, through this research, can propose to be presented at the Malaysian Anti-Doping Agency (ADAMAS) at the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Athletes who have been suspended by WADA from participating in any sports tournament can be provided with support and counseling services to help them from an emotional, mental, physical and social point of view to be more careful and compete healthily in every sports tournament in the future.

It is hoped that the research findings will help the Malaysian government in eradicating the use of androgenic-anabolic steroids (AAS) by Malaysian athletes to create a sport free of doping. For research purposes, data will be collected from Malaysian athletes who have engaged in PEDs. In addition, the findings of this study

can assist ADAMAS, existing agencies, private organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in developing guidelines, new policies, and new approaches to ensure anti-doping education and awareness among Malaysian athletes and society.

### 1.9 Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this research study has limited to the Anti-doping agency of Malaysia (ADAMAS) and the respondents are Malaysian athletes only. Despite its limitations, the study can be a useful reference and resource for other researchers studying performance – enhancing drugs, and any substance use in sports.

### 1.10 Definition of terms

The following are some of the definitions used in this study:

**Performance Enhancing Drugs (Peds)** are substances that are used to improve any form of activity performance in humans.

**Substance use.** Substance addiction (or drug addiction) is a neuropsychiatric disorder characterized by a recurring desire to continue taking the drug despite harmful consequences. (Zou et al., 2017).

**Cases** are a set of standard criteria for classifying whether a person has a particular disease, syndrome, or other health condition. In this case, referring to the many victims of substance abuse among athletes in Malaysia.

**Athletes** is an individual who is engaged in physical activity and exercise on a regular basis and has psychological conditions leading them to athletic excellence. (Pressler & Niebauer, 2020).

**Anabolic-androgenic steroids (AAS)** are synthetic testosterone analogs legally classified as controlled substances. These hormones increase lean muscle mass and can improve athletic performance. (Pressler & Niebauer, 2020)

**Sport** is one avenue that deserves more consideration on the public health agenda.

**Doping** has been defined as the use of prohibited drugs, methods, or other substances for performance enhancement. It occurs in all age groups, genders, and at all levels of sport competition (Constantinou & Aguiyi, 2022).

### 1.11 Conclusion

Many athletes have been reported to have used illegal Performance – Enhancing Drugs (PEDs). Even though athletes are aware of the negative effects of doping and perceive it to be against the principle of sports, many nonetheless utilize these PEDs. Athletes from Malaysia are increasingly using illegal PEDs. Numerous instances of doping have been reported in Malaysia by the mainstream press. They also have a decreased likelihood of finding employment in the sector if the suspension lasts more than four years. In addition, the athletes have a decreased probability of returning to the sport and a lower likelihood of getting possibilities for a career as a coach or in a position associated with the industry. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate and examine PEDs misuse among Malaysian athletes.