

# **EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF NATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS IN DOPING PREVENTION AND COMPLIANCE CHALLENGES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Doping in sport is a well-known phenomenon that has been studied by many researchers because the use of drugs to increase performance has long been a concern for sports organizations. In professional sports, pursuit of this high standing victorious over a defeated opponent consumes the world's fiercest competitors. Professional sports are driven by the desire, the need, to win. The World Anti-Doping Agency was created in 1999 to fight the doping phenomenon through the coordination and worldwide harmonization at all levels by developing international sports policies written in the World Anti-Doping Code. Despite the creation of World Anti-Doping Agency code (WADC) to harmonise the fight against doping in sport, concerns exist regarding doping prevention at national level. Challenges exist in the diffusion and implementation of anti-doping education at national level through resistance, lack of commitment, inequalities between sports and confusion regarding the role of anti-doping agencies worldwide. There is therefore need to understand sport federations' role and challenges in doping prevention at national level and reduce the risk of doping behaviour. This study therefore sought to evaluate the role of national federations in doping prevention and their various compliance challenges. This study adopted a descriptive survey design; Purposive sampling was used to

determine respondents who were anti-doping champions, government officers, chairs or directors of sport federations since they were quite experienced in matters sports. The data was collected using questionnaires. Permission to carry out the research was obtained from the relevant authorities as required by law and the principles of research. Contact with respondents was established and a date and time of meeting agreed. Interviews were recorded with the agreement of interviewees and anonymity was guaranteed. The present study found that resources are the major constraint on implementation of anti-doping functions by the federations. To provide the needed additional funds and manpower most cost-effectively, a centralized body could be established to coordinate anti-doping functions, rather than providing funds to underwrite various federations' individual efforts. The present study provides a starting point for the design of assistance as they initiate or strengthen anti-doping efforts to comply with the World Anti-Doping Code. Results are likely relevant, as well, in countries with similar anti-doping experience. They should thus be of use to international federations, national anti-doping organizations, and the World Anti-Doping Agency, in terms of directing effort and resources.

**Key Words:** *anti-doping, roles, challenges, performance enhancing drugs, policy, athletics, elite sport, deterrence theory*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Doping in sport is a well-known issue studied by many researchers because of the use of drugs to enhance performance and has been a concern for sports organizations. One cannot open a major newspaper without reading about human growth hormone, anabolic steroids, or testosterone use

by well-known athletes (Kraska, Bussard & Brent, 2009; Noakes, 2004; Sandomir, 2005). According to Moller, McNamee and Dimeo (2009) doping has become a major problem concerning elite athletes, recreational athletes and young people.

For athletes, success in athletics can provide a high just as potent and addictive as any achieved using narcotics. In professional sports, pursuit of this high standing victorious over a defeated opponent consumes the world's fiercest competitors. Residual notions of fair play, espoused by youth league coaches and well-meaning parents during the athletes' formative years, are replaced by the overriding pursuit of the fruits of victory. Professional sports are driven by the desire, the need, to win. In this scenario the urge to win leads to doping.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was created in 1999 to fight the doping phenomenon through the coordination and worldwide harmonization at all levels by developing international sports policies written in the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC Code, WADA, 2015). These policies are implemented and monitored at national level by National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs) which work together with sport bodies in their country, such as sport federations, to promote doping-free sport. Sports federations within a country are therefore charged with the responsibility of application of the rules and regulations. Sport Federations are thus vital within the context of fighting doping and are governed by the WADC (WADA, 2015).

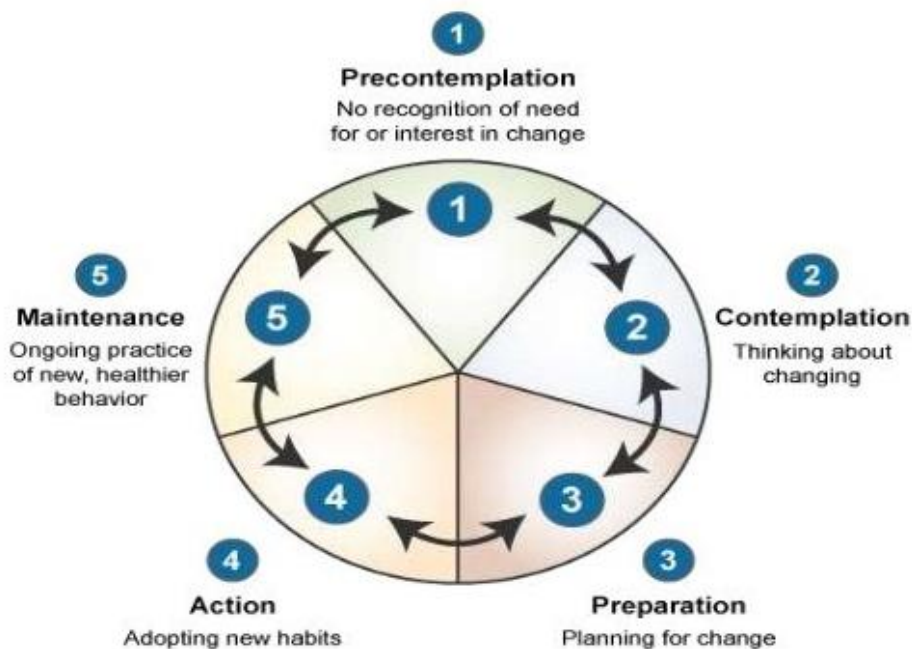
The role of national sport federations is partially recognized in the Code as they are required to report any information on potential Anti-Doping rule violations and to cooperate with relevant anti-doping organisations. National sport federations are also required to conduct antidoping education in coordination with their NADO (WADA, 2015). Despite the creation of WADA to harmonise the fight against doping in sport, concerns exist regarding doping prevention at national level (Hanstad, Skille & Loland, 2010; Houlihan & Garcia, 2012). Challenges exist in the diffusion and implementation of anti-doping education at national level through resistance, lack of commitment, inequalities between sports and confusion regarding the role of anti-doping agencies worldwide (WADC, 2013).

NADOs rely on national sport federations to implement anti-doping education programmes that can reach their members. However, the level of exposure and effectiveness of anti-doping educational activities is questionable. Dimeo et al., (2013) in their study on Scottish athletes showed that a majority of athletes have limited knowledge of anti-doping issues. Allen et al. (2014) in a study asserted that coaches deemed education as mainly directed to athletes and most give low priority to anti-doping education. With scarce resources in their budgets most national sport federations may not see anti-doping as a priority in their sport and disregard their designated role in doping prevention leading to a potential risk of increasing doping behaviour among elite and amateur athletes, including young people. The close contacts sport federations have with athletes of their sport at the very first stage of their development are critical to the fight against doping in sport and its prevention.

There is no previous research regarding the extent of anti-doping education activities implemented by sport federations and their actual role in doping prevention. There was therefore need to understand sport federations' role and challenges in doping prevention at national level and reduce the risk of doping behaviour.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The main purpose of the survey was an evaluation of the role of national sports federations in doping prevention and compliance challenges. The study used Prochaska's transtheoretical model to understand the decision making of individuals (anti-doping champions, government officers, chairs or directors of sport federations). It is a model of intentional change. The TTM (Trans theoretical model) operates on the assumption that people do not behave quickly but rather decisively. According to Prochaska's transtheoretical model, individuals at the contemplation stage have started to acknowledge a target behavior, but they may not be ready to make any change (Prochaska, 2001). Moreover, if pressured about the behavior, individuals in the contemplation stage can be very resistant to change.



**Figure 1: Prochaska's TransTheoretical model**

The respondents considered in the study have been assigned roles in anti doping education and with challenges experienced they are bound to make decisions. They are in the contemplation stage, educational workshops and realistic support with resources is essential to moving them to the next stage, which is the action stage. Studies of TTM suggest that "stage-matched interventions" outperform "action-oriented interventions" (Prochaska et al., 2001); the former

can increase the likelihood of progress to the next stage, action. According to Prochaska et al. (2001), dramatic relief, self-reevaluation, and thinking about commitment are processes of changes that should be emphasized with those in the pre-contemplation and contemplation stages.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. According to Orodho (2012), a survey design gives a description of how things are. In a survey design, data specified in the problem is obtained from a sample selected from a clearly defined population to describe the population in terms of the variables to be studied. This design is found suitable for the study because of its versatility, efficiency and ability to be generalized as recommended by Kothari and Garg (2014). According to Weiss et al (2001), it is the best means of developing a representative picture of the attitudes and characteristics of people, which was part of the objectives of this research. However, for a survey to be successful, two types of errors must be minimized: poor measurement of cases that are surveyed (errors of observation) and omission of cases (errors of non-observation) (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). To overcome these errors, appropriate sampling technique and procedures were used to identify sample. The instrument was subjected to validity and reliability test to minimize errors in measurement of samples.

### **Participants**

Purposive sampling was used to determine respondents who were anti-doping officers, government officers, chairs or directors of sport federations. The study adopted the purposive sampling.

**Table 1: Socio Demographic Characteristics**

(n = 67)		<b>Gender</b>	
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Age	18 - 30 years	7 (15.91%)	2 (8.70%)
	30 - 45 years	19 (43.18%)	16 (69.57%)
	Above 45 years	18 (40.91%)	5 (21.74%)
Job Undertaking	coaches	17 (38.64%)	5 (21.74%)
	anti-doping champions	3 (06.82)	1 (4.35%)
	government officers	9 (20.45%)	14 (60.87%)
	Administrators	7 (15.91%)	15 (60.87%)
	camp directors	8(18.18%)	3 (13.04%)
Years in employment	0 - 5 years	7 (15.91%)	4 (17.39%)
	6 - 10 years	21 (47.73%)	10 (43.48%)
	Above 10 years	16 (36.36%)	9 (39.13%)

In the study, we had 67 respondents who were mainly anti-doping champions, government officers, chairs or directors of sport federations. Of the 67 officers most were in the age bracket 30-45 years (Table 1) thus were quite experienced in matters sports. The majority of the interviewed athletes were male (65.67 %) and females (34.33%) meeting the constitution threshold of 2/3 thirds female representation. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgmental sampling, is the deliberate choice of an informant due to qualities the informant possesses. It is a nonrandom technique that does not need underlying theories. Purposive sampling was used since the officers have knowledge of the population under study. It is useful for situations where one needs to reach a target population quickly and where sampling for proportionality is not a main concern (Orodho, 2012). Therefore for this study a total of 65 respondents took part in the research

### **Instruments**

The data was collected using questionnaires. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that structured questions collect as much information as possible from the limited space form. Therefore, the questions were unstructured to enable the researcher get information, ideas, opinions and thoughts of the various athletes. Besides, unstructured questions gave room to the respondents to give an in –depth response without holding back and revealing as much information as possible. The questionnaire method was used because it provided greater uniformity situations as respondents respond to the same standardized questions. This technique gave the respondents enough time to respond within a certain period of time. The element of anonymity with the questionnaire survey technique enhanced the chance of getting honest answers and therefore, ensured that the study is appropriate and very efficient.

### **Procedure**

Permission to carry out the research was obtained from the relevant authorities as required by law and the principles of research. Contact with respondents was established and a date and time of meeting agreed. Interviews were recorded with the agreement of interviewees and anonymity was guaranteed. Interviews focused on the role and challenges of sport federations regarding doping prevention at national level. In addition to interviews, documentary evidence on anti-doping strategies has been collected from sport federations' policy plans. All ethical issues relating to informed consent and confidentiality were adhered to. The respondents were guaranteed of their confidentiality and thus no respondent was required to give his or her identity. All data acquired from the respondents was managed privately and confidentiality was maintained. Information on the nature and purpose of the study was expounded to the respondents as a means of providing sufficient information before they decide to participate.

**Statistical Analysis**

Data collected from questionnaires was analyzed along the study objectives. The study conducted data cleaning by auditing the data to identify any mistakes or any other wrongly answered or unresponded to items. Data was then sorted, edited, classified, coded and then tabulated using simple descriptive statistics such as distributions in percentages and frequency counts by use of SPSS. Data was recorded from field data, transcribed and reported in themes and sub themes. Descriptions were derived from responses of the questionnaires then put in categories and calculated into percentages of responses from each category and statements was made of each result. The method helped in summarizing the reports and drawing conclusions from the respondents in the study.

**RESULTS**

Respondents were asked about their general knowledge on Sport federations’ role in anti-doping education. The findings are recorded in Table 2. Respondents were asked to rate their doping knowledge using the scale below; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Undecided, D = Disagree, SA= Strongly Disagree. The findings are recorded in Table 3

**Table 2: Role of Sport Federations in Doping Prevention**

Roles of Federations	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\sum f_i$	$\sum f_i w_i$	$\frac{\sum f_i w_i}{\sum f_i}$
						Frequency	Total score	Weighted mean
Organize education or information sessions	8	6	10	8	34	65	250	3.85
Organize educational talk or seminar	12	6	11	9	27	65	230	3.54
Update staff on doping issues, through training	6	8	8	9	34	65	253	3.89
Conduct drug tests during competition	11	14	7	11	22	65	214	3.30
Keep record of all drug tests taken	8	7	16	11	24	65	229	3.52
Update international federation on drug test	8	4	4	32	17	65	242	3.73
Keep records of TUE for your athletes	6	9	11	16	24	65	237	3.65
Cooperate with other federations on drug tests	12	8	7	22	17	65	219	3.37
Include a clause on prohibited substances	7	10	11	5	31	65	239	3.67
Prepare a procedural guideline on anti doping	14	11	6	11	22	65	211	3.24

According to table 2, most sport federations (3.89) had updated their athletes and support staff on doping issues through training and that they are bound by anti-doping rules. The majorities of sport federations organize education or information sessions (3.85), Update international federation on drug test (3.73), include a clause on prohibited substances (3.67) and keep records of TUE for your athletes (3.65). However, only a few (3.37) know they are required to cooperate with other federations on drug tests, conduct drug tests during competition (3.30) and Prepare a procedural guideline on anti doping (3.24). It therefore seems that in as much as doping education is being disseminated through education and occasional updates only athletes competing at the international level are monitored via drug testing. Athletes in local competitions have minimal exposure to drug testing. Responses indicate that most sport federations addressed the issue only indirectly, asking individuals to refer to rules and regulations set forth by international federations.

**Table 3: Challenges of Sport Federations in Doping Prevention**

Challenges	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\sum f_i$	$\sum f_i w_i$	$\frac{\sum f_i w_i}{\sum f_i}$
						Frequency	Total score	Weighted mean
Federations not equally equipped with resources	8	6	10	8	32	65	247	3.80
Lack of knowledge in doping activities.	7	9	9	5	34	65	245	3.77
Federations unable to control some athletes.	8	4	4	32	17	65	242	3.73
federations concentrate on elite athletes only	6	8	10	16	25	65	242	3.72
Staff cautious to avoid legal challenges	7	10	11	5	31	65	239	3.67
Antidoping message repetitive and boring	9	4	4	34	15	65	237	3.65
Antidoping message not clear and relevant	8	6	17	11	23	65	230	3.53
Lack of educational resources for activities.	8	7	16	11	24	65	229	3.52
Materials used are not adapted to federations	12	8	7	22	17	65	219	3.37
Materials used are outdated for federations	12	9	8	20	16	65	215	3.30

According to table 3, most sport challenges in various ways like federations not equally equipped with resources (3.80). A majority of sport federations have lack of knowledge in doping activities (3.77), federations are unable to control some athletes (3.73), federations unable to control some athletes (3.72) and Staff cautious to avoid legal challenges (3.67). However, only a few (3.52) experience lack of educational resources for activities, they have materials they use



that are not adapted to federations (3.37) and also use outdated materials (3.30). The study noted that small federations are not equally equipped as compared to larger ones with resources and staff to run education activities. Therefore, there is a lack of consistency across sports regarding anti-doping education programmes delivered. It is therefore notable that respondents recognize their federations do not have the knowledge, expertise and/or resources required to deliver anti-doping education activities. Some federations are only concerned with athletes at the elite level abandoning amateur sport. The respondents pointed out key anti-doping messages can be general, but it is important that anti-doping education programmes and materials are specific to the needs and requirements of their sport.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The main purpose of the survey was an analysis of the role and challenges of sport federations in doping prevention in Kenya. Data collected and analyzed suggest that the majority of federations were at the contemplation stage in terms of the implementation of anti-doping functions. According to Prochaska's transtheoretical model, individuals at the contemplation stage have started to acknowledge a target behavior, but they may not be ready to make any change (Prochaska & de Clemente, 2013). Moreover, if pressured about the behavior, individuals in the contemplation stage can be very resistant to change. At this stage educational workshops and realistic support with resources are essential to moving them to the next stage, which is the action stage. The present study found that resources are the major constraint on implementation of anti-doping functions by the federations. To provide the needed additional funds and manpower most cost-effectively, a centralized body could be established to coordinate anti-doping functions, rather than providing funds to underwrite various federations' individual efforts. The present study provides a starting point for the design of assistance as they initiate or strengthen anti-doping efforts to comply with the World Anti-Doping Code. Results are likely relevant, as well, in countries with similar anti-doping experience. They should thus be of use to international federations, national anti-doping organizations, and the World Anti-Doping Agency, in terms of directing effort and resources.

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