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## THE DRUG USE MOTIVATION AMONG MALAYSIAN ATHLETES

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### Abstract

The aim of this research was to identify the usage of drugs on athletes by focusing on gender and different categories level of athletes. The sample, which was chosen randomly consisted of 115 athletes, consisting of national athletes (N=35), state athletes (N=35), district athletes (N=19), and university athletes (N=26). Based on gender, the present research consists of 70 male and 45 female athletes. Drug Usage Questionnaire, were used to collect the data. The result showed that the main motive usage of drugs is to win. This research also showed that male athletes use more drugs than females. National or athletes who represent the country are highest in using drugs. Sport psychologists should play an important role by providing therapies to drug addicts' athletes to curb the usage of drugs. Malaysian government also should prevent athletes who taken drugs from taking part in sport competition.

Key Words: coping strategy , district, drugs, representing national, state.

### Introduction

Sport is a physical activity which is performed for a competition, development of body and mind, intelligence, brilliance, etc. It should be a pleasurable activity, yet most of the athletes use narcotic to help them maximizing their attainments. They

were giving high priority to victory by using narcotic. It is obvious that narcotic has been used freely by a great number of athletes and it has become today's world most depressing issue. Even though there are many prohibitions of consuming narcotic for athlete, but this symptom seems to be increasing instead of decreasing (Catlin & Murray, 1996). Naylor, Gardner and Zaichkowsky (2001), and Ewing (1998) state that athletes tend to use narcotic than those who are not. Coakley (2007) states that one of the reasons why narcotic use keeps increasing is due to the rapid expansion of the industries itself. Narcotic use tends to be more apparent for athletes who are involved in soccer, hockey, boxing, golf, archery, bowling, and shooting (Luetkemeier, Bainbridge, Walker, Brown & Eisenman, 1995; Anshel 1993).

Anshel and Rusell (1997) mention six motivations which prompt athletes to consume narcotic namely, impediments in achieving victory, to show allegiance or solidarity among the association involved, identity as a responsible athlete, to against parties or people in power as an effort or coping so that they can adjust the high phase of anxiety and fear, and the last is the capability of doing anything to win. According to Pragman (1998), the main reasons why the athletes use narcotic to help them facing the competition are high motivation to win, and alleviating fatigue. Anshel (1991) says that narcotic is used as a strategy to win the competition. Weinberg and Gould (2010) state that athletes consume narcotic to improve their achievements by decreasing anxiety phase. High expectations from family, friends, media; fear of certain group of people or rivals and misgivings of being fail are also become another reasons why the athletes keep consuming narcotic (Lamb 1984; Chappel 1987; Williams 1989; Anshel 1993).

Furthermore, Anshel and Russell (1997) use the term "superman complex" as the reasons of narcotic use among the athletes. "Superman complex" is a condition where the athletes feel strong, young, healthy, fresh and fit by consuming narcotic but have no concern to the risks. According to Luetkemeier, et al. (1995), the understanding of narcotic use among athletes is extremely weak. In their opinions, consuming narcotic for competition is legitimate instead of taking it as a deception. They are also cannot assess the negative consequences of consuming narcotic continuously.

Several studies have been conducted to compare narcotic use based on sex. Some of them have shown that narcotic use level among women is higher than men. It is because of narcotic use among women is controlled by men (Denton & O'Malley, 1999). According to Warner, Weber and Albanese (1999) most of societal norms accepting narcotic use for men; however it is not for women.

According to Montgomery and Morris (1994), narcotic use will make the users become addicted as they try to stop consuming it. It is also increasing the risk of suffering AIDS (Montgomery & Morris 1994). Leach (2002), predicts that the amount of athletes who become narcotic user keeps increasing if drugs abuses issues are not handled promptly.

The earliest psychological theory defines, that a person becomes addicted to narcotic if he (she) is experiencing sense of pleasure, excitement or good feelings (pleasurable effects), (Wise, 1980). It is also known as Operant Conditioning theory, which has been introduced by BF Skinner. Skinner states that it is normal for human to repeatedly do something which provides sense of pleasure (Positive Reinforcement). On the contrary, all the things which will affect to unpleasant things (Negative Reinforcement) as well as punishment will be avoided (Akers & Sellers, 2004; Cami and Farre, 2003). In other words, all of the behaviors which provide sense of pleasure as the consequences will be repeated. Meanwhile, for those which are not, will not be repeated (Alberto & Troutman, 2006). It can be seen in table 1. The extent to which a behavior is repeated depends on the reinforcements and consequences. Athletes tend to use narcotic due to the victory and appreciation to which it offers. Narcotic makes athletes feel strong and powerful against the rivals (positive reinforcement). It also keeps them from severe pain and feeling lose (Negative reinforcement). In conclusion, the escalation of narcotic use behavior among the athletes is still continuing.

Table 1:  
Consequence of the Response

<b>(Outcome)</b>	<b>(Stimulus presented as a consequence)</b>	<b>(Stimulus removed as a consequence)</b>
<b>(Behavior Increases)</b>	(Positive Reinforcement)	(Negative Reinforcement)
<b>(Behavior Decreases)</b>	(Punishment)	(Response Cost)

Social learning theory is proposed by Albert Bandura. The theory is also explaining the reasons of narcotic use. According to Bandura (1997), human learns a behavior by doing observation. Human behavior is the result of the interaction between internal (personal) factors (thought, biological and genetic condition) and

external factors (environment) see figure 1. The theory is based on narcotic use behavior related to social structure such as family, school, etc (Akers & Sellers, 2004). It explains about how people get involves in crimes or abnormal behaviors such as consuming narcotic (Wiesner, Capaldi and Patterson 2003). Friends and counterparts brought a great influence for the athletes in consuming narcotic. For example; an athlete who has not yet familiar with narcotic found out that it could help him win the competition for its capability to maintain the stamina. As the consequence, most athletes prefer to consume it and become addicted.

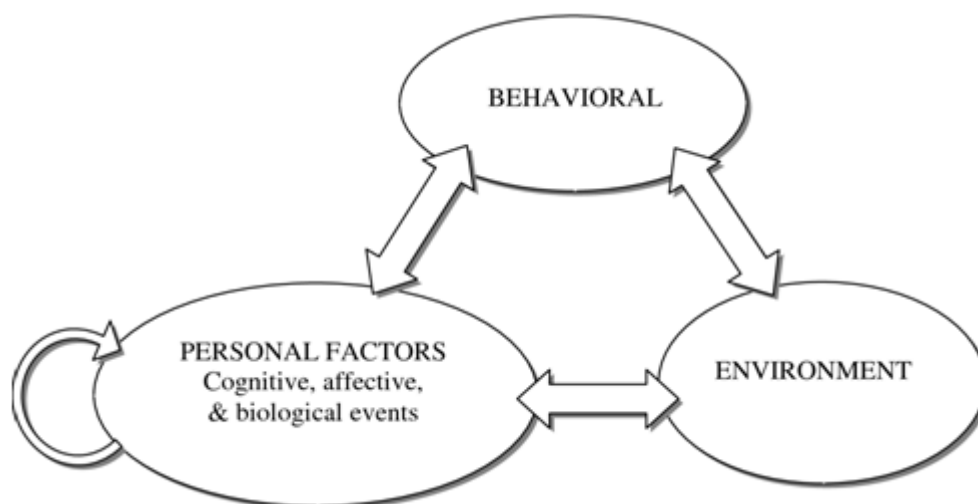


Figure 1: Social Learning Theory

This study is aimed to determine narcotic use among the athletes based on their skills and proficiency. The athletes were representing a range of levels; National, county, sub-district, and university. This study is also aimed to see the differences of narcotic use among the athletes based on sex.

## Research Methods

The populations of this study were the athletes involved in *Majelis Olah Raga Universitas Malaysia* (MASUM). The sampling method was conducted using random sampling technique during sports activities. The names of the athletes were recorded on a paper by the coach of the institution and then chosen randomly.

There are 115 Malaysian athletes. 35 athletes represent the national level, in county level there are 35 athletes as well, for the level of sub-district there are 19

athletes, and 26 athletes represent the University level. Based on sex, the athletes consist of 70 female and 45 male. The data collecting technique of this research was conducted using narcotic use questionnaire, it is aimed to measure narcotic use level and to find out the reasons of consuming it. The questionnaire consists of 20 items and divided into 5 motivations of consuming narcotic, namely as one of coping strategy, to win the game, as an identity of professional athlete, to reduce fatigue and to improve the power.

Majelis Olah Raga Universitas Malaysia (MASUM) is one of annual sport competition among Malaysian universities recommended by the government. Totally, there are 20 universities in Malaysia who are participating in the competition, they are: Universitas Malaya (UM), Universitas Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universitas Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universitas Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universitas Sains Malaysia (USM), Universitas Utara Malaysia (UUM), Universitas Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Universitas Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM), Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Universitas Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Universitas Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Universitas Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Universitas Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), Universitas Technical Malaysia Melaka (UTEM), Universitas Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP), Universitas Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Universitas Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), Universitas Malaysia National Defence (UPNM), and Universitas Malaysia Kelantan (UMK).

## Research Findings and Discussion

Table 2  
Mean of Narcotic Use Motive

Mean of Narcotic Use Motive	Mean	SD
Coping strategy	3.15	1.37
Victory	3.56	1.41
Professional Athlete	2.87	2.12
Alleviating Fatigue	2.93	2.09
Power	2.35	2.19

Table 2 shows the mean of narcotic use motive. Victory becomes the highest motive ( $\bar{x} = 3.56$ ), followed by coping strategies ( $\bar{x} = 3.15$ ), reducing fatigue ( $\bar{x} = 2.93$ ), professional athlete ( $\bar{x} = 2.87$ ) and the last is power ( $\bar{x} = 2.35$ ). Professional

athletes refer to those who completely get the income from being an athlete. In other words, professional athlete is someone who proficient in sports. The result indicates that victory became the main motive for using narcotic. It is supported by National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), where 47% of narcotic use aimed to achieve victory (Cheatham, Hosey & Johnson, 2008). The athletes have assumed that they could not win the competition without consuming narcotic. It can be concluded that the athletes have an avidity to win despite using narcotic. Operant Conditioning theory says that when an action could bring appreciation (positive reinforcement), it will be repeated continuously. Victory not only makes the athletes become popular, but they receive trophies, medals, and money as well. As the consequence, consuming narcotic behavior is still rising. In addition, the government does not give much attention to the athletes who were consuming narcotic during the competition. In fact, they do not enforce urine and blood examinations before the competition due to plenty of sport events yet there is no sufficient fund.

The result of statistical test using T test as in table 3 shows that the phase of narcotic use based on sex is different,  $t(115)=4.50$ ,  $p<.01$ . The mean shows that narcotic use by male athletes is higher than are female athletes.

Table. 3  
T-test Analysis of Narcotic Based on Gender

Concern	Sex	Mean	t-Score	p-Score
Narcotic	Male	3.2271	4.501*	0.000
	Female	1.7011		

The research findings show that narcotic use by male athletes is higher than female athletes (Table 3). It sustains the research by Dodge and Jaccard (2006), Fernando, Claudia and Manuel (2010), which had shown that narcotic were used more by men than is women. The research findings of Ojinnaka, Ejiolor, Emechebe and Ibe (2009) also showed that male uses narcotic more often than female. On the contrary, Anshel (1991) states that narcotic use among female is higher than the males is. Men consume narcotic excessively compared to women. It is because men have a great vogue in sports. Differ from men; women are not giving much attention in sport. It is due to Islam as the majority religion in Malaysia believes that sports

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apparel was not appropriate for women. Most of them are also wearing veil which makes them feel uncomfortable during the activities in competition. Furthermore, men will strive energetically to win. A man would be proud of himself if he could win a match. It will raise his dignity as an athlete. Thus, victory becomes the first priority for a man. Anything would be done including consuming narcotic. Nevertheless, most of women only take sports as a physical activity.

By using one-way ANOVA analysis, it can be seen in table 4 that narcotic use among athletes in representative level is different,  $F(4,115) = 3,812, k < .01$ .

Table 4.  
ANOVA test analysis of Narcotic Use Based on Representative Level

Representative Level	Mean	F-Score	p-Score
National	3.7720	3.812**	0.000
County	3.3621		
Sub-district	2.2017		
University	1.4127		

\*\* P < .01

Post-Hoc Tukey test in table 5 shows that there is equality in narcotic use among athletes in national and county level ( $p > .05$ ), differ from sub-district and University level which is ( $p < .05$ ). The score for narcotic use in national and university level is ( $p > .05$ ) similar to the national level, that is ( $p > .05$ ). Narcotic use in county level somehow is higher than those in university ( $p < .05$ ). Meanwhile in university is lesser than in sub-district ( $p < .05$ ), national ( $p < .05$ ), and county ( $p < .05$ ).

Table 5.  
Post-Hoc Tukey Test Based on Representative Level

	National	County	Sub-district	University	School	N
National						35
County			(-1.515) *			35
Sub-district				(1.248) *	(0.955) *	19
University						26

\*p<.05



It can be seen in table 54 that the highest score is owned by National level and the lowest one is owned by university level. It is in line with Anshel (1993) and Shmuel (1999) research which come to conclusion that mostly, professional athletes use narcotic. It is caused by the high pressure to win and sense of pride of being the winner (Anshel, 1993; Epstein dan Eliakim, 1999). It is also stated that narcotic use among athletes has become a habit. It means that such phenomenon is a common thing for those who are engaged in sports field (Lentillon-Kaestner and Carstairs, 2010). Parnabas, Abdullah, Omar-Fauzee and Nazaruddin (2013) say that the achievement of national and county athletes is higher than those who are in sub-district and university. Commonly public has assumed so. Thus, for those who had lost the game further would not be pride neither by fans, coach or the agency. Baum (2005) puts forward that majority professional athletes suffered from psychoneurotic compared to those who were not. It is of course affected by the defeat. Marcus Trescothick, the world famous cricket player, said that he had experienced the same thing once he became the best player yet lost the game and as a result it affected his life badly. Dusan Pasek, a hockey player, who got a silver medal in Olympic 1984, had committed suicide by shot himself due to his defeat in Olympic 1998 in Nagano (Sport, 2009). He felt humiliated, shy, and could not accept defeat because he was one of world's most favorite players. In conclusion, defeat has become the worst thing in which athletes could not accept it easily. They prefer to use narcotic to help them win the game instead of compete fairly (Sport, 2009). Hence, athletes have become the major group which consume narcotic.

Professional athletes could not accept defeat because it will affect their psychological state whereas, winning and losing is a common thing in competition. Athletes would do anything to win including use narcotic to avoid defeat which has become one of the negative reinforcement.

## **Conclusion**

The research findings showed that most athletes use narcotic in order to win rather than reducing fatigue or anxiety phase, raising the power and coping strategy. It is also showed that most of male athletes who were representing national level had become the major users. As it is disclosed in social learning theory, athletes tend to use narcotic as it can affect their achievements well.

Based on national athletes' achievements, it is believed that victory can be gained easily by taking benefits from consuming narcotic. Besides, men have a great

vogue in sports compared to women. Therefore, it can be concluded that men use narcotic most than women.

The research findings of this study are expected to help Malaysian government in eradicating narcotic use among athletes toward positive coping strategy (without consuming narcotic) of anxiety phase. It is also can be used as a reference for the coach, psychologist, and counselor to encourage the athletes in implementing positive coping strategy so that desirability to keep using narcotic will be decreased. The coping strategies that can be used are; Muscle tension technique by Jacobson, Bio-feed Back, Imagination, Autogenic relaxation technique, Breathing exercise and Meditation.

National sport council, sports institution and university should ascertain the athletes who have the tendency to use narcotic and make sure that they will get clinical services and will be handled by compatible psychiatrist or counselor. Both psychiatrist and counselor have competence in dealing with the issues related to narcotic use.

Urine examination should be performed to the athletes who were involved in the competition. For those who were confirmed to be positive in consuming narcotic should be prohibited of taking part and deserved to be sentenced five to twelve months in penitentiary. It is considered to be an effective way to minimize the amount of narcotic users. The government has to make sure that narcotic could not enter the state by consolidating the immigration surveillance at the airport as well as harbors.

Sports psychologists should play an important role in reducing narcotic use by giving the best and effective therapy. One of which is called Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT). The therapy will determine the main reason of using narcotic (thoughts, feelings, attitudes, confidences, attributes, and situations) and then find ways to reduce or to omit it. The main goal of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is to train users to stop relying on narcotic. The theory believes that the athletes use narcotic due to the erroneous thoughts and behaviors therefore, they will learn how to improve it without consuming narcotic.

This research was done simply to the student-athletes. Thus, the research findings might not be the same with non-student athletes. Moreover, the research was conducted on inter-universities sports competition, so that the students got a high pressure to win. Hence, further research should be conducted to non-student athletes with different type of sports.

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