

# Athletes' beliefs about the legitimacy of anti-doping control procedures. A qualitative study

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# Structure of anti-doping



# Pillars of anti-doping system

- **Strict Control system**

- Not able to refuse
- Supervision during control
- Whereabouts
- Biological passport

- **Strict Liability**

- Athletes are solely responsible for what's in their body despite whether there was an intention to cheat or not



# Are anti-doping policies transparent?

- ***The IOC's True Ideals:  
Corruption and Greed***

EVENT HUB



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FOR HEALTH AND FAIRNESS  
IN SPORT!

# Research evidence

- Competitive and amateur athletes generally support a strict doping control system

Stamm et al., 2014

- In principle anti-doping policies are legitimate

Efverström et al., 2014

- Athletes question the legitimacy of the way the rules and principles are enforced in practice

Efverström et al., 2016

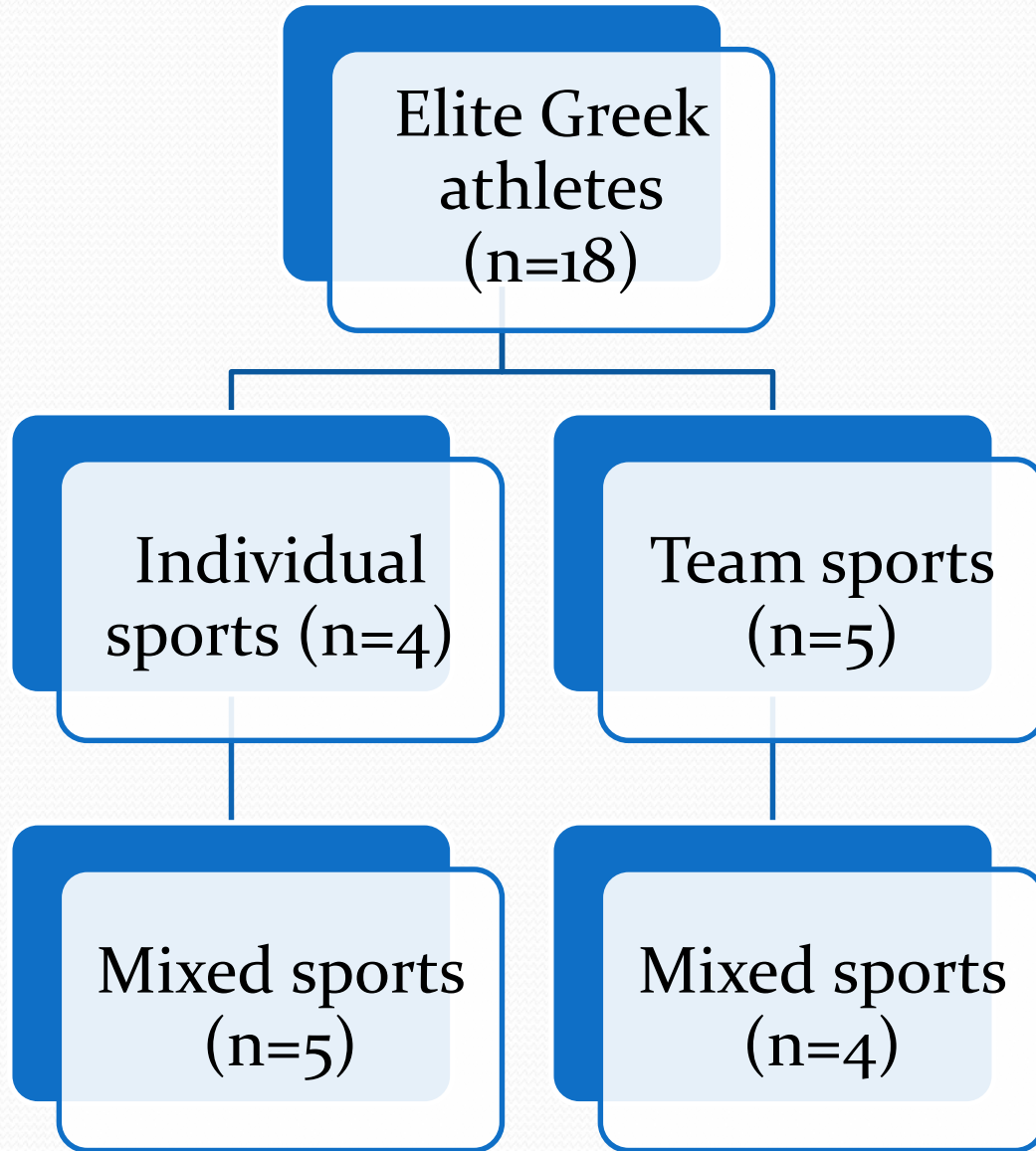
- Doping controls in other countries are not transparent

Overbye, 2015

# Aim of the study

- The purpose of the present study was to investigate athletes' beliefs about the anti-doping policies.
- A qualitative approach with the use of semi-structured interviews was used.

# Method



# Interview

- The questions about the legitimacy of anti-doping policies were based on
  - past research on athletes' perspectives of doping and anti-doping,
  - the psychological perspectives on legitimacy of regulatory authorities.





# Procedure

- Interviews were performed by a trained former elite athlete
  - establishing rapport with participants
  - ensure higher participation rates
- Interviews were audio taped
- Interviews were verbatim transcribed

# Results

- The thematic analysis revealed 2 main themes:
  - Legitimacy of anti-doping policies
    - ADP as prevention tool
    - ADP protect sport values
    - ADP restore image of sports
  - Trustworthiness of anti-doping policies
    - Equal application of ADP
    - Fairness of ADP

# Legitimacy of anti-doping policies

ADP as  
prevention  
tool

Personal  
responsibility

...it is the coach and the athlete  
himself that plays the most important  
role ....

Sport  
authorities'  
responsibility

...it is clearly the federations' and  
the state's responsibility to combat  
doping ...

# Legitimacy of anti-doping policies

ADP protect  
sport values



The values of sport could be preserved, but unfortunately in the way this system exists and operates it seems that they are not protected

# Legitimacy of anti-doping policies

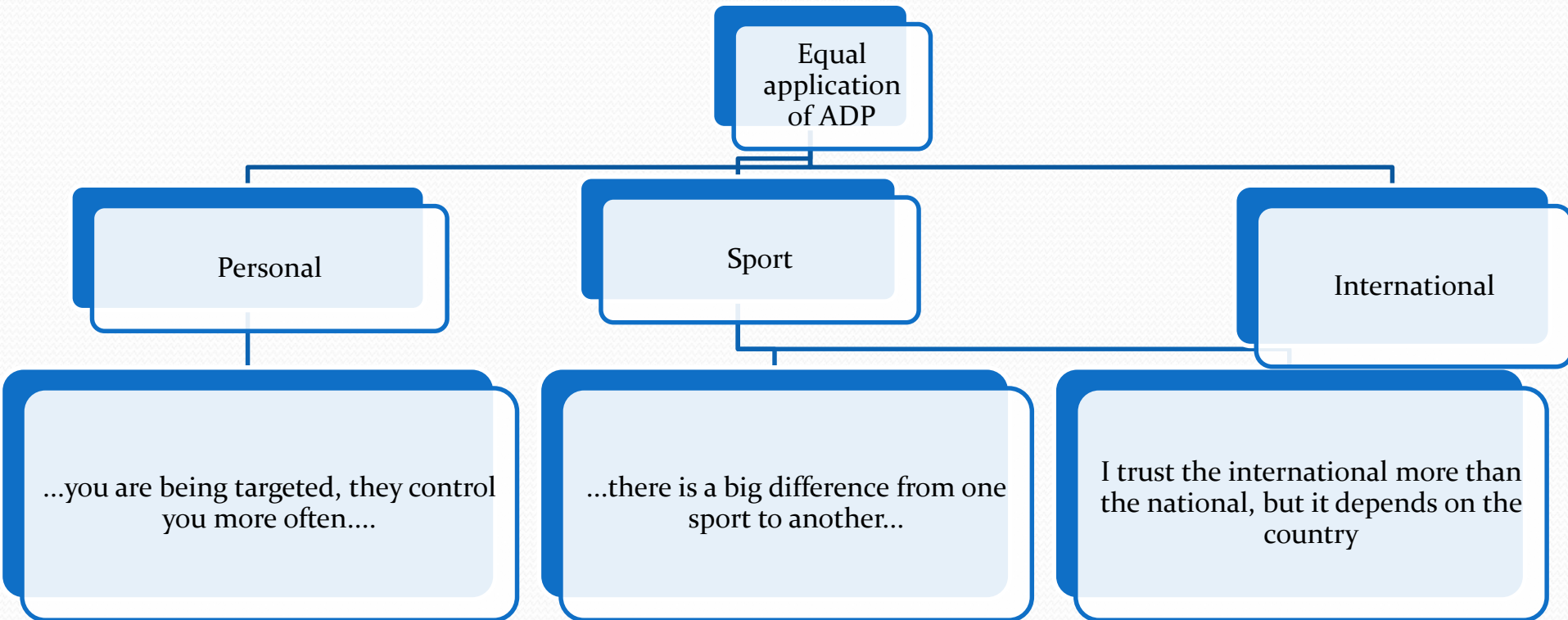
ADP restore  
image of sport



anti doping policies don't help the  
restoration of the image of sports since cases  
of doping continue to exist



# Trustworthiness of anti-doping policies



# Trustworthiness of anti-doping policies

Fairness of  
ADP



I don't trust it because there is always the possibility of unfairness

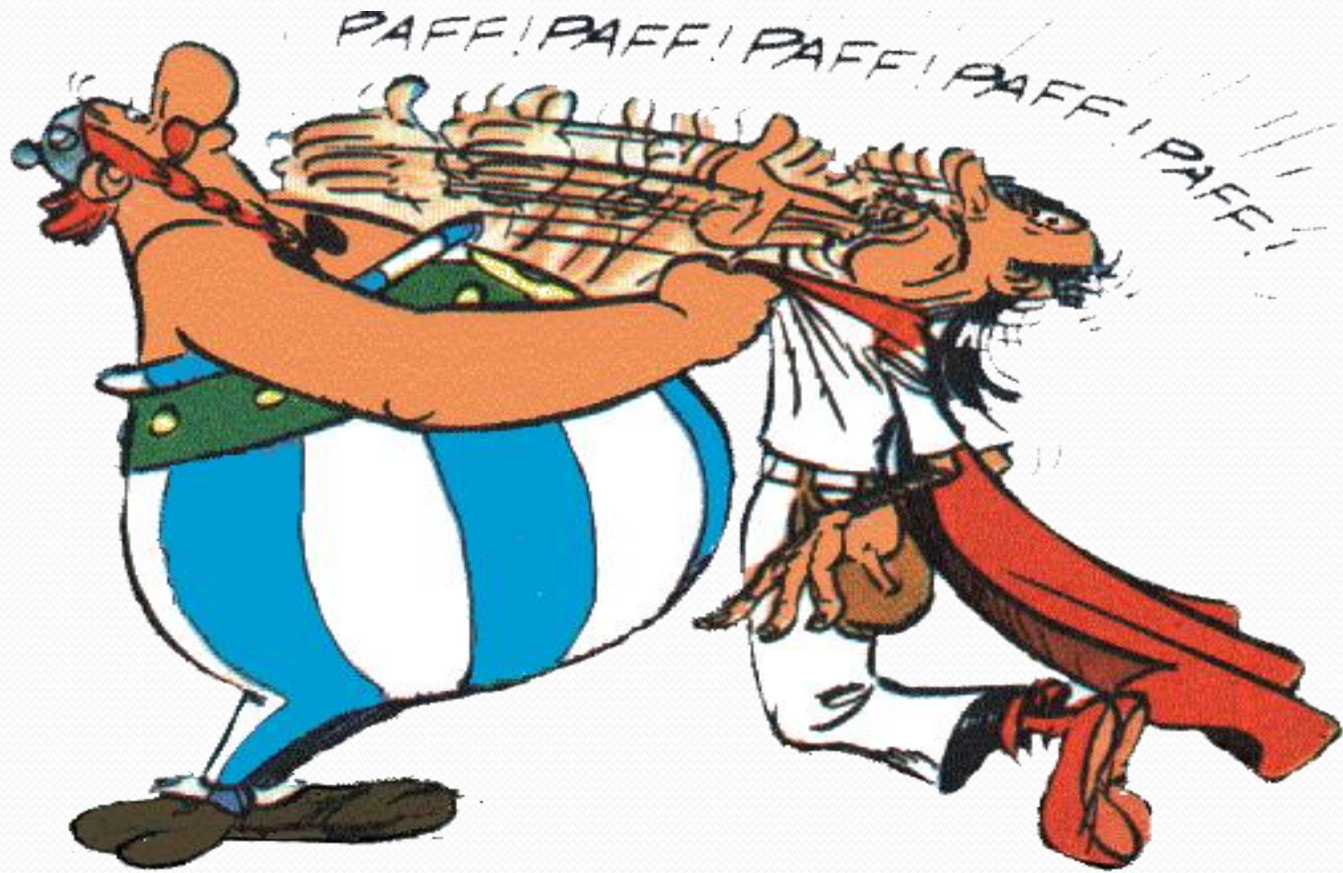


# Conclusions

- Athletes reported rather negative beliefs about the ADP
- Sport authorities should further justify the importance of ADP
- Sport authorities should minimize inequalities in the application of ADP



*Thank you*



for your attention