

Project Ndasauka (Malawi)

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Developing an uMunthu-based Anti-Doping Moral Education Framework in Malawi

This is primarily a cross-sectional study. It will comprise an intervention cohort which will be followed up in order to address specific study objective 4. A mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach will be used where quantitative data will mainly be collected from the athletes while qualitative data will be collected from selected athletes, sports directors/managers, and representatives from sports organizations and the anti-doping agency in Malawi. The quantitative data will primarily be used to measure the level of awareness, practices, and attitudes towards doping, and to develop model(s) explaining the association between doping and cultural and environmental factors. Qualitative data will be used to get an in-depth understanding of doping practices.

The study will employ an Umunthu conceptual framework. uMunthu is a variant of the uBuntu value system or a way of life, which emphasizes being human or humanness, as a core value in the sub-Saharan African traditional thought. It is a relational concept that touches on one's ethical responsibility when relating to others. Umunthu is the moral lynchpin of Malawian society. It is an accumulation of values such as integrity, honesty, truthfulness, respect and justice.

Quantitative data will be collected using individual questionnaires while qualitative data will be collected using Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group discussions (FGDs). Document review will be conducted to collect any additional secondary data and institutional data from the sporting bodies across the country.

Qualitative data will be analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Quantitative data analysis will be done using STATA software. Graphical and numerical summaries will be used to describe the data. Inferential statistics will be used to develop models explaining the role of various factors in influencing doping practices among athletes. We will use traditional regression (logistic and/or linear) models to explain factors influencing doping. In addition, structural equation models (path regression analysis) will also be employed.

For the intervention cohort, athletes will be trained on the uMunthu-based anti-doping moral education, and data on the level of awareness, practices, and attitudes toward doping will be collected before and some months after the training. Analysis of this data will be done using Chi-square tests for differences in proportion, t-tests, and analysis of variance.