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ANTI-DOPING – A LEGITIMATE EFFORT?  
Elite athletes' perspectives on policy and practice



# Anti-doping - a legitimate effort?

Elite athletes' perspectives on policy and practice

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# Abstract

The global anti-doping enterprise in sport is a comprehensive system in which the athlete is at the centre of regulation, scrutiny and control. There is limited knowledge about the implications of this extensive control system for athletes and about how athletes perceive the system; little is known about possible consequences of these implications and perceptions for the legitimacy of the system. The overall aim of this thesis is to analyse the legitimacy of global anti-doping policy and practice from the perspectives of international elite athletes.

Four articles are included in this compilation thesis. The first illustrates, based on a discourse analytical approach, how claims for legitimacy of the anti-doping system are produced in policy documents aimed at athletes. The second explores the perceptions and legitimacy of anti-doping policy and practice through a survey aimed at elite athletes in different sports and from different regions of the world. The third article examines, through an interview study, how athletes in different contexts experience the practice of anti-doping and what consequences this may have for the system's legitimacy. The interview study was also the basis for the fourth article, focusing on the athletes' experiences and perceptions of their opportunities for compliance and how this is related to their view of the system's legitimacy. Using the four articles as a basis, the analysis of legitimacy within the anti-doping system is expanded in the thesis through an overarching analytical framework inspired by David Beetham.

The results show that the legitimacy of the policy documents is based on essentially authoritative, but also rational, arguments for justifying the anti-doping enterprise. Elite athletes are generally in favour of anti-doping policy and the principle that doping should be prohibited. However, when the rules are implemented into practice, problems to do with lack of procedural justice arise which may have an impact on the system's legitimacy. Procedures in the system are perceived as having a negative effect on sportspersons' private life, and as ineffective and unequally implemented across the world; also, athletes have little influence over decision-making processes. Anti-doping practice is moreover perceived to cause structural inequalities due to inequality in access to technology, education and knowledge as well as supportive systems. Most athletes wish to comply with the rules, but many struggle with lack of control and have

limited scope for taking responsibility regarding compliance with the doping rules. Even when athletes are dutiful and perform acts that confer legitimacy to the rules and the authorities, some experiences and perceptions could endanger the legitimacy of anti-doping, as seen in the overall legitimacy analysis of the thesis. Athletes' perceptions of inequality, ineffectiveness and lack of leeway can be interpreted as a lack of rule conformity to the anti-doping authority. There also appears to be a lack of shared normative beliefs between sportspersons and the anti-doping authorities, as many athletes feel that their opinions are not taken into account. Decision-making processes that do not pay attention to the perceptions of those involved can result in a discrepancy between the rules and the norms.

The international anti-doping system is a major international enterprise with comprehensive rules that need to be applied equally around the world, and that also need to be legitimated in different countries where athletes have different conditions to comply with the regulations. In this thesis, I have shown that these different conditions have consequences for the ability to comply with the rules and also for the application of the regulations. The far-reaching rules mean that procedures within the system are experienced as causing a number of negative consequences. I have shown that this poses a risk to the legitimacy of the system if these problems are not addressed.

# Articles

- I            Qvarfordt, A., Hoff, D., Bäckström, Å., & Ahmadi, N. From fighting the bad to protecting the good: legitimization discourses in WADA's athlete guides. Manuscript.
  
- II           Efverström, A., Ahmadi, N., Hoff, D., & Bäckström, Å. (2016). Anti-doping and legitimacy: an international survey of elite athletes' perceptions. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 8(3), 491–514.
  
- III          Efverström, A., Bäckström, Å., Ahmadi, N., & Hoff, D. (2016). Contexts and conditions for a level playing field: elite athletes' perspectives on anti-doping in practice. *Performance Enhancement & Health*, 5, 77–85.
  
- IV          Qvarfordt, A., Ahmadi, N., Bäckström, Å., & Hoff, D. Obligations and opportunities: elite athletes, anti-doping and compliance. Submitted.





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# 1. Introduction

*'We're prepared to chip our dogs, so why aren't we prepared to chip ourselves?'*

Mike Miller, chief executive, the World Olympians Association (the Guardian, Oct 10<sup>th</sup> 2017)

This statement by a leading representative of an international sports organization is a call for more far-reaching measures in the work against doping in sport. The statement suggests that data chips implanted in athletes' bodies would enable closer monitoring and better control of the use of prohibited performance-enhancing substances and methods. The idea of chipping for control has been proposed in different sporting contexts. One of several increasingly comprehensive measures for monitoring athletes' doping that are already in place is the Whereabouts reporting system obliging athletes to submit detailed information on their whereabouts. The system was introduced to facilitate doping controls outside of the competition (e.g., Møller, Waddington, & Hoberman, 2015).

My starting point in writing this thesis emanated from a curiosity about how elite athletes experience and perceive these measures within the anti-doping system, and further, about implications for the legitimacy of the system. The question of how to handle doping in elite sports has been discussed by stakeholders and scholars for many decades. In line with the growing socio-economic importance of sports in society, increasing professionalization and also medicalization of sport, the use of performance-enhancing drugs has undergone a steep development curve (Møller et al., 2015; Waddington & Smith, 2009). The long-standing amateur ideal in sports has been replaced by dealings that have gained importance at political and economic as well as personal levels. Winning has become more important as it can be measured in terms of both money earned and prestige gained. The emergence of the doping phenomenon can be seen in the light of this increasingly competitive situation. Doping use can be seen as a logical consequence of the demands in today's sport and of the exploration of the limits of humans' ability to perform (Coakley & Pike, 2014; König, 1995; Petroczi, 2007). Sports organizations have responded to the increasing use of performance-enhancing drugs and methods by

developing an anti-doping system that includes preventive work, doping controls and sanctions for offences. The organized anti-doping work can be said to have started when the International Olympic Committee began to conduct doping controls at sports competitions in the late 1960s and established a list of prohibited preparations (Hanstad, Waddington, & Smith, 2008; Hunt, 2015). Since then, anti-doping efforts have grown in scope and magnitude. In 1999 the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was formed by the sports movement and governments of the world to create a common and regulatory framework and guidelines for this global enterprise.

The anti-doping system today is a relatively extensive and resource-intense enterprise that affects athletes in terms of integrity, privacy, regulation and control (e.g. Dimeo, 2010; Kreft, 2009; Møller, 2011; Park, 2005). The work is largely directed at athletes, who are required to adhere to anti-doping rules. Each athlete is responsible for informing themselves about WADA's list of prohibited substances and methods that are updated annually. The strict liability principle applies to this list, which means that athletes are held liable for any substances found in their own body, regardless of intent.

A large part of the anti-doping work is the testing activity conducted both during and outside of competition. Specially trained doping controllers perform these tests under circumstances that can be seen as an intrusion of privacy (Waddington, 2010). An athlete must be prepared to give a doping test on demand "at any time and at any place" (WADA, 2015, p. 37). Every year, nearly 300,000 tests are conducted globally under WADA's direction (WADA, 2017a). In addition, a significant number of tests are conducted by international and national sports federations and anti-doping organizations. Doping controls also require access to advanced analytical methods at specific laboratories and samples are saved to allow for renewed tests when the analytical methods have improved.

Another part of the work against doping that raises questions about integrity is the introduction of the Athlete Biological Passport, which involves the collecting and storing of information on various physiological parameters, such as blood and hormone values of athletes. The Whereabouts reporting system introduced in 2003 brought a major change in elite athletes' daily lives, by requiring them to report information on their whereabouts all year round (Waddington, 2010). The system was intended to make it possible to systematically conduct doping controls outside

of competitive situations. In practice, this means that athletes at the highest levels, 3 months in advance, need to report, for each day, their place of rest, training, work, studies and competitions throughout the day and for each day specify an hour and the place where they can be reached during that hour for a so-called “out-of-competition test” (WADA, 2017b). Another feature of anti-doping work is intelligence activities, whose function is to collect information and apply an investigative approach towards sports and athletes (WADA, 2018a). Therefore, the anti-doping system within the sports world is a comprehensive enterprise with methods and measures that have a substantial impact on the lives of athletes. To introduce any other, similar system of regulation, scrutiny and control in any other part of society would presumably be challenging (cf. Dimeo, 2010; Kreft, 2011; Waddington, 2010).

The question of power is an inherent part (Beetham, 2013) of a rule-governed system such as the anti-doping system. The regulations put forward by the ruling authority in this specific social order entail government of, and to a certain extent also control over, its members. The anti-doping authorities and athletes are part of a power relationship that can take different directions dependent on the perspective on the exercise of power and the subordinates’ role in this relation.

It could be argued that athletes take part in a voluntary activity (sports) and, therefore, that they simply have to adhere to regulations. Under threat of punishment they are, according to this perspective, to comply irrespective of their own perceptions of the rules. Taking a different stance, the existence of legitimacy of the anti-doping system would imply that its members, i.e. primarily the athletes, perceive the regulations decided upon and pursued by the sports authorities as reasonable and desirable and therefore comply with the rules, regardless of threat of penalties for errors, inadvertent or otherwise (Tyler, 2006). Therefore, it is possible to take diverging positions on rule governing, while it seems that the question of legitimacy plays a key role in almost every modern society (Beetham, 2013; Tyler, 2006). If the social practice of anti-doping would be perceived as illegitimate, the authorities would be entirely dependent on monitoring, sanctioning and imposing of penalties in order to maintain the order, an approach requiring large power resources. Accordingly, a sustainable anti-doping system is most likely dependent on the fact that the athletes, the ones primarily targeted, accept the power relations and experience the system as legitimate (cf. Sköldberg, 2014; Suchman, 1995). A key question, for me, in writing this thesis is the implication of this system at the

athlete's level, and how this affects the extent to which the anti-doping enterprise is viewed as legitimate.

There is limited knowledge on how athletes experience the system of anti-doping (Overbye, Elbe, Knudsen, & Pfister, 2015), one reason being that athletes have had few possibilities to make their voices heard in policy making (Dimeo, 2010; Kreft, 2011; McDermott, 2016; Schneider, 2009). The existing literature, reporting research conducted in specific countries and specific sports, suggests that athletes support the idea of anti-doping (e.g. Dunn, Thomas, Swift, Burns, & Mattick, 2010; Elbe & Overbye, 2013; Sas-Nowosielski & Świątkowska, 2007; Striegel, Vollkommer, & Dickhuth, 2002), but that some measures in practice can be experienced negatively (see, e.g., Bourdon, Schoch, Broers, & Kayser, 2014; Elbe & Overbye, 2013; Hanstad & Loland, 2009; Overbye & Wagner, 2014; Valkenburg, De Hon, & Van Hilvoorde, 2014). What is less common is research that includes athletes from diverging contexts and that includes an evaluation of the legitimacy of the anti-doping system from the sportsperson's perspective.

Possibly, the anti-doping system in the sports world risks to lose legitimacy if its scope and design would not be perceived as desirable, proper and appropriate by the members (cf. Suchman, 1995). The width of the regulations aimed at athletes could conceivably lead to a decrease in support for the system if the application of rules by anti-doping authorities was distrusted, if the execution of regulations was perceived as problematic or if compliance was too demanding. Furthermore, loss of legitimacy would demand large resources to uphold the anti-doping principle. Notwithstanding the sport- and region-specific literature on athletes' experiences and perceptions of anti-doping, there still is a lack of theoretically framed empirical studies based on wide samples informing the discussion on athletes' perspectives of the system's legitimacy. The purpose of this thesis is therefore to fill that gap by exploring the legitimacy of the policy and practice of the anti-doping system based on the perspectives of elite athletes globally.

# Aim

*The overall aim of this thesis is to analyse the legitimacy of global anti-doping policy and practice from the perspective of international elite athletes.*

The examination of legitimacy within the anti-doping system consists of an analysis of both how anti-doping authorities justify their anti-doping measures from a so-called “top-down” perspective, and how the athletes experience and perceive anti-doping work from a “bottom-up” perspective. The initial step in this thesis is to examine how the anti-doping system justifies its existence. Based on the theories of legitimacy developed by Beetham (2013), I will assess the *claims* for legitimacy that anti-doping authorities communicate to athletes. Analysis of legitimacy claims from a top-down perspective allows for an analysis of the social order of anti-doping at large (Beetham, 2013). Accordingly, the first research question in this thesis is:

- What claims for legitimacy do anti-doping authorities direct at elite athletes?

Thus starting with investigation of top-down legitimacy claims, I thereafter switch focus to the athletes. The bottom-up perspective of legitimacy within the anti-doping system seeks to assess to what extent athletes’ experiences and perceptions of the social practice confirm these legitimacy claims (cf. Beetham, 2013). The analysis of the system’s legitimacy from the athletes’ perspective has been guided by three research questions:

- How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping authorities’ conformity to rules?
- How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping as a principle and practice?
- How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping regulations in relation to their own responsibilities and possibilities to be compliant with the rules?

In the following section, I will outline my approach to the research questions and describe the design and structure of the thesis.

## Design and structure

My work towards the present compilation thesis therefore stems from an overarching interest in the legitimacy of the anti-doping system from the perspectives of elite athletes. I have addressed the aim of the thesis through analysis of three empirical materials: a text analysis, a survey and an interview study, which provided the material for the included four studies. In addition to the analysis of legitimacy made in each article here, in the body of the thesis<sup>1</sup> (hereafter referred to by the Swedish term, *kappa*), I aim to conduct a synthetic analysis of legitimacy, supported by a theoretical framework elaborated mainly from Beetham (1991b; 2013). This overarching analysis, to which the results of the four studies cumulatively contributed, aims to deepen the understanding of legitimacy in the social order of anti-doping. An overview of the layout of the thesis is given below.

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<sup>1</sup> In the body of the thesis, the *kappa*, I introduce the topic, give a background to the research area, and provide an analysis of the work, before the four articles are presented.



Table 1. Structure of the thesis, with the logic for the legitimacy analysis outlined in the kappa and the four studies included.

Overall aim of the thesis	The overall aim of the thesis is to analyse the legitimacy of global anti-doping policy and practice from the perspectives of international elite athletes.			
KAPPA OF THE THESIS				
Overarching theoretical framework of the thesis	Analysis of the legitimacy of the anti-doping system, based on the four articles of the compilation thesis, and discussed in relation to Beetham's (1991; 2013) model of legitimacy dimensions and theories of procedural justice (Tyler, 2006). The model includes analysis of the grounds for legitimacy claims (using a top-down approach: Article I) and of the perspective emanating from the athletes (using a bottom-up approach: Articles II-IV).			
	Top-down analysis	Bottom-up analysis		
Research questions of the thesis	What claims for legitimacy do anti-doping authorities direct at elite athletes?	How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping authorities' conformity to rules? How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping as a principle and practice? How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping regulations in relation to their own responsibilities and possibilities to be compliant with the rules?		
THE INCLUDED ARTICLES				
Articles	Article I	Article II	Article III	Article IV
Title	From fighting the bad to protecting the good: legitimization discourses in WADA's athlete guides	Anti-doping and legitimacy: an international survey of elite athletes' perceptions	Contexts and conditions for a level playing field: elite athletes' perspectives on anti-doping in practice	Obligations and opportunities: elite athletes, anti-doping and compliance
Research aim	To analyse legitimat- ion discourses in the three editions of WADA's anti-doping guide for athletes (WADA, 2004; 2009; 2014a).	To analyse whether there is a generalized perception among elite athletes that the actions within the anti-doping system are desirable, proper and appropriate, i.e. legitimate with regard to both anti-doping as a principle and anti-doping in practice.	To qualitatively examine how elite athletes experience anti-doping procedures and to analyse the legitimacy of anti-doping practice.	To examine how elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping regulations with regard to their own responsi- bilities and possibilities to be compliant with the rules, and to draw conclusions about what these perceptions could mean for the legitimacy and sustainability of the anti-doping system.
Theoretical approach / legitimacy analysis	Discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992; 2003; 2010) of legitimization strategies (Van Leeuwen, 1996; 2007; Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999) in text documents aimed at athletes.	Analysis of (1) the legitimacy of anti-doping as a principle based on the indicators of obligation to defer to the authority and the existence of voluntarily agreement (Weber, 1978); and (2) the legitimacy of anti-doping work practice through the indicator of procedural justice (Tyler, 2006).	Analysis of experiences and perceptions of anti-doping through the framework of pro- cedural justice (Tyler, 2006).	Analysis of experiences and perceptions of anti-doping through the framework of procedural justice (Tyler, 2006).
Method	Text analysis	Survey study	Interview study	Interview study
Data collection period	November to December 2016	April to August 2014	December 2014 to April 2015	December 2014 to April 2015
Selection/ sample	The three editions of the athlete guide (WADA, 2004; 2009; 2014a) produced to give athletes an overview of the rules in the WADC.	261 elite athletes from 51 countries, affiliated to the International Sports Federations of Athletics, Basketball, Skiing and Volleyball.	13 elite athletes from five different continents, affiliated to the International Sports Federations of Athletics, Basketball and Skiing.	13 elite athletes from five different continents, affiliated to the International Sports Federations of Athletics, Basketball and Skiing.

The work is presented as follows: in this *Introduction* I have specified and delimited the research questions. In the chapter titled *Background and previous research*, I deepen the topics raised in the Introduction and elaborate on issues of concern for

the overarching discussion on legitimacy. The *Theoretical framework* is thereafter outlined in a chapter by that title, in which I present my assumptions and considerations concerning theories on legitimacy, as well as presenting the analytical framework for the thesis as a whole. Under *Methodology*, I describe the approaches to and course of action in the study of legitimacy of the anti-doping system from both a top-down and a bottom-up perspective. In this chapter, I also pay attention to methodological and ethical concerns about the choices I have made during the process of the thesis. A *Summary of the articles* is then provided as an introduction to the separate research studies to facilitate the reading. Then follows a *Discussion and analysis*, a chapter that is structured according to the research questions where I initially discuss my results in relation to previous knowledge on the topic. Subsequently, I turn to the theoretical framework elaborated in the chapter by that title for an analysis of the results in relation to the aim of the thesis as a whole. Under *Concluding remarks and implications*, I sum up the potential contribution of knowledge by my thesis and discuss implications and consequences of the results. Lastly, the four articles included in the thesis are presented in full.

## Concepts and delimitations

This thesis concerns the regulation of doping in elite international sport. It does not take into account the other main domain of doping – the increasing phenomenon of fitness doping for aesthetic purposes. Doping in elite sports is a matter of gaining better performance in competition against others in an inadmissible manner and is regulated by the global governing authority, WADA.

To give a conceptual construction of *doping* in sports is not a straightforward task. In its policy documents, WADA does not provide a conceptual definition. It merely defines doping as a violation of a set of rules in the regulatory framework, the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC). In the first article in that document, it is stated that: “Doping is defined as the occurrence of one or more of the anti-doping rule violations set forth in Article 2.1 through Article 2.10 of the *Code*.” (WADA, 2015 p. 18). The article describes a series of circumstances and behaviours constituting doping offences, including: the presence of a prohibited substance in samples taken; the use or attempted use of a prohibited substance or method; evading sample collection; Whereabouts failure; tampering or attempting to tamper in connection with doping controls; possession or trafficking of a prohibited substance or method;

administering a prohibited substance or method to athletes; and associating with a person who engages, or has engaged, in prohibited doping activities. Therefore, the article gives detailed descriptions of violations of the rules but no real conceptual definition of “doping” as stated by the global authority regulating doping in sports.

The rationale behind the work against doping in sports – the anti-doping system – is, according to the WADC, grounded in the moral value of sports, which includes aspects such as what sport stands for and how it can positively contribute to society. It is stated in the regulations that it is the intrinsic values of sport – referred to as the “spirit of sport” – that the anti-doping programmes are seeking to preserve. This concept is described as a “celebration of the human spirit, body and mind, and is reflected in values we find in and through sport” (WADA, 2015 p. 14). That a substance or a method can potentially harm the spirit of sport is one of three criteria for consideration of prohibition. The other two criteria are that a substance or method could enhance performance, and that it could harm the health of the athlete (WADA, 2015). If two of these three criteria are met, the substance or method could be included on the list of “doping substances” that are prohibited in the sports world. As the objective of the present thesis was to study the anti-doping system regulated by the WADC, which provides no conceptual construction of the term “doping”, the definition of “doping” in this thesis is aligned with the WADA definition. To describe the organized effort against doping in sports, which is central to this thesis, I use the concepts “anti-doping work”, “anti-doping effort”, “anti-doping system” and “anti-doping enterprise”. The first two terms indicate a focus on developing “work in progress” while the last two indicate of more fixed, large-scale system. The variation in terms increases readability; but using terms that indicate either developments in practice or more static and rigorous structures also provides a way of communicating the ideas present in the theory and empirical material.

The term “elite” used to describe a sport and athletes as done in this thesis also requires some clarification. The research interest is primarily directed to athletes who are at the highest level in their respective sport and who are therefore subject to the most wide-ranging anti-doping regulations. The inclusion criterion in the studies in this thesis was that athletes should belong to the so-called “international registered testing pool” in their sport. Athletes in these testing pools are high-priority subjects for testing, both during and out of competitions, and are required to file whereabouts information (WADA, 2015). In other words, “elite” refers to sports and athletes at the top level who are subject to the highest level of activities in the anti-

doping system. My thesis focuses on anti-doping efforts in the elite sport context, with the definition of “doping” aligned with the regulations. To expand on the background to the anti-doping enterprise today I will in the following give an overview of how the system has evolved.

## 2. Background and previous research

### Development of organized work against doping in sports

It is only fairly recently that doping in sports has been considered a problem that needs to be regulated. Until the 1960s doping in sport was not a concern for most people (Houlihan, 2002). Modern sport emerged during the first half of the 20th century, when use of both amphetamine and anabolic steroids for performance enhancement in sportspersons was not unheard of, but it was neither regulated nor prohibited (Dimeo, 2007). During the second half of the 20th century, the use of performance-enhancing drugs and methods was increasing, primarily because of the intensified competitive situation related to processes of politicization and commercialization, which characterizes modern sport (Møller et al., 2015). A cycle race during the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome is often marked as a turning point in attitudes towards performance enhancement in sport (Møller, 2005). During the race, the Danish cyclist Knud Enemark Jensen died due to the presumed intake of amphetamine during very hot weather conditions. The fact that this happened on television in front of the whole world in one of the first widely broadcast games contributed to the great attention this case received. Even though the use of amphetamine was never proven, this incident is often acknowledged as contributing to the emergence of the anti-doping system of today (Ritchie, 2015). In 1966, official doping controls were carried out for the first time and before the Olympic Games in Mexico City in 1968, a list of prohibited substances was issued. At that time, the International Olympic Committee had responsibility for the anti-doping efforts, which during the first decades focused on conducting random doping controls during competitions. Sports federations and other organizations set their own regulations against doping, which resulted in a diversity of rules for athletes from different regions and sports (Houlihan, 2002). During the 1980s and 1990s several internationally renowned athletes were found to have doped, which attracted much attention worldwide. These high-profile doping cases contributed to questioning the anti-doping leadership. Other forces were gaining momentum,

resulting in a coordination of actors both inside and outside sports (Hanstad et al., 2008). In 1999, WADA was formed by the sports movement and international governments and in 2004 the first edition of the global regulatory framework, the WADC, came into effect (WADA, 2003). The rules have since then been revised twice by stakeholders such as governments and sports organizations. A fourth edition is planned to come into effect in 2021. With the revisions of the regulations, the number and scope of activities and measures within the system have increased. The purpose of the anti-doping regulatory system today is, as outlined in the WADC, twofold. Firstly, it aims to “protect *athletes*’ fundamental right to participate in doping-free sport and thus promote health, fairness and equality for *athletes* worldwide”. Secondly, it aims to “ensure harmonized, coordinated and effective anti-doping programs at the international and national level with regard to detection, deterrence and prevention of doping” (WADA, 2015 p. 11).

Today, the steering document, the WADC, encompasses two other elements that are also applicable worldwide: a set of International Standards that prescribe technical and operational procedures, and Models of Best Practice and Guidelines that have been developed to “provide solutions in different areas of anti-doping” (WADA, 2015 p. 13). Together with the WADC these two items form what is called the “World Anti-Doping Programme”. The governing structure developed to implement the programme consists of organizations at the international, regional and national levels. These include, apart from WADA, the international and national Olympic Committees, the international and national Paralympic Committees, international sports federations, regional and national anti-doping organizations and major event organizations. As well as outlining the regulations, activities and measures, the regulations include commitments for governments and the responsibilities of athletes and athletes’ support personnel in the anti-doping programme (WADA, 2015). Furthermore, connected to this structure of organizations are laboratories that are accredited by WADA to analyse doping control samples. The policy framework for anti-doping is, in addition, strengthened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) “International Convention against Doping in Sport” which supports the WADC (UNESCO, 2007). Hence, the management of the anti-doping enterprise spans over a series of organizations and stakeholders from the global level all the way down to the level of the athletes. It can be concluded that the anti-doping organization with its purpose to protect the athlete and create harmonization has grown into a broad worldwide system. In the

following, I will elaborate, in more detail, on the development of policy within the system and report some related issues and discussions.

## Anti-doping policy making

The formation of anti-doping policy has, during its development, been affected by the view on the role of sport in society and also by the construction of the “problem” of doping, which has gone through changes over time (Dimeo, 2016). The work has, at various stages, been justified and legitimized through discourses about preserving the ideals of amateurism and protecting the athletes’ health, and ethical justifications for protecting the alleged pure and good sport from immoral cheaters (see, e.g., Dimeo, 2016; Ritchie, 2013; Wagner & Pedersen, 2014). Irrespective of underlying justifying principles, one aim of the anti-doping enterprise has since the formation of WADA been to create globally implemented common rules. Two critical issues connected to the supranational anti-doping enterprise (cf. Palmer, 2013), which are of concern in this thesis, are the question of harmonization and the policy orientation that can be described as athlete-centred.

### Global policy and harmonization issues

The worldwide anti-doping effort includes coordinating and harmonizing regulations and procedures in order to provide sportspersons in all countries and sports with equal conditions in their sporting practice (WADA, 2015). Both the sports movement and the anti-doping movement have been influenced by a globalization process in which international policies are formulated in supranational agreements that go beyond the limits of the regulation for the respective nations (Palmer, 2013). However, the harmonization effort has not led to a completely equivalent system so far, and it has been shown in various studies that there are differences in, for example, how anti-doping organizations deal with test pools, the whereabouts reporting system, and testing and sanctions (Dikic, Samardzic, & McNamee, 2011; Hanstad, Skille, & Loland, 2010; Houlihan, 2014; Mazanov & Connor, 2010). Athletes have also been found to distrust equivalence in application of regulations in different countries and sports (Bloodworth & McNamee, 2010; Christiansen & Møller, 2007; De Hon, Eijs, & Havenga, 2011; Hanstad, Skille, & Thurston, 2009; McDermott, 2016; Overbye & Wagner, 2013).

That the harmonization work has not resulted in equal conditions globally can be explained by different stakeholders' lack of ability or interest to fulfil their responsibilities as stated in the WADC, for example because of differences in countries' domestic policy conditions, organizations' differing resources, and stakeholders' devotion to the task and degree of competence (Houlihan, 2014). It is less common that underlying assumptions in policy design are discussed as a reason for divergences. However, policies are designed by people, each with their own agendas, values and assumptions in the process of making the rules (Palmer, 2013). The creation of policy is not value-free and neutral; yet these processes are often invisible, which may entail that the rules are seen as obvious and given (Palmer 2013). Some researchers have pointed out that perspectives and practices based on Western values have had a decisive impact on the design of anti-doping efforts (Henne, 2015; McDermott, 2016; Palmer, 2013; Park, 2005).

Thus, global policy making regarding anti-doping is complex and its consequences are not always easy to predict. The body of research on this topic elucidates several harmonization issues, such as variation in the implementation of regulations and the perception (of athletes) that conditions are unequal. Addressing the issue of harmonization by paying attention to constraints at the practical level when implementing rules, combined with legitimacy analyses, could enhance the understanding of the conditions for athletes in different contexts and, in the long run, contribute to an anti-doping effort that is perceived as legitimate globally.

#### Athlete-centred anti-doping policy

While anti-doping is often considered an issue at the individual level, elite sports have come to be an important enterprise on the global political arena, where the national sporting success is often seen as prestigious (Haut, Grix, Brannagan, & Van Hilvoorde, 2017). In this global "sports arms race", individual athletes could become pawns in a game that takes place outside the competition arenas, even though the performance of the individual is important for a nation's success and status (see, e.g., Norberg, 2012; Waddington, 2000). The urge for national success that this arms race is part of, and contributes to, could affect the leeway of the individual and could in radical cases even influence athletes to use prohibited substances and methods (cf. Henne, 2015; McDermott, 2016). Historical examples of states involved in doping incidents are the systematic doping programme in former East Germany (Dimeo, Hunt, & Horbury, 2011; Franke & Berendonk, 1997) and in the former Soviet Union



(Kalinski, Dunbar, & Szygula, 2003). More recently, allegations of Russian state-sponsored doping led to suspensions of Russian athletes from the Winter Olympic Games in 2018. In addition, there have been high-profile cases of team-mandated doping in, for example, the cycling sport, such as the Festina and Fuentes affairs (Møller & McNamee, 2011).

These are examples of institutionally or collectively induced use of performance-enhancing means that elucidate a complex situation for the athlete. The majority of anti-doping measures are aimed at the individual, who is liable and obliged to have full knowledge of regulations, procedures and prohibited substances. Furthermore, it is primarily the individual sportsperson who is punished if the rules are not followed. The individual athlete is also placed at the forefront of campaigns run by anti-doping authorities with slogans like “play true” and so-called “athlete outreach programmes” aimed to “raise awareness while ensuring athletes are involved and part of the solution” (WADA, 2018b). Møller et al. (2015) emphasize that the authorities’ efforts to curb the use of drugs in sports have followed the same pattern as efforts to deal with recreational drugs in society: to prohibit substances and to punish the user. The individual-centred approach of the anti-doping regulations is rarely questioned, according to Henne (2015), because doping in the general debate is seen as clearly morally condemnable. This has meant that there has been little room for questioning whether the anti-doping work conducted is desirable, reasonable and appropriate, from the perspective of the sportsperson. A one-sided focus on control and punishment of individuals risks overlooking the effect of organizational structures (Henne, 2015; Waddington & Smith, 2009).

Therefore, the athlete-centred approach in anti-doping efforts has been discussed and criticized but there are few empirical studies informing the discussion on the athletes’ experiences and perceptions and, furthermore, on how their understanding can affect the legitimacy. One assumption is that a unilateral focus on the individual in terms of control and punishment could affect the athletes’ perceptions of procedural justice and, by extension, the legitimacy of the anti-doping system. Hence, the issue of individual versus structure in anti-doping would benefit from being addressed from the athlete’s point of view. Global implementation of an athlete-centred anti-doping policy is therefore a complex issue, with variation in outcome in different contexts and with perceived unequal conditions as a result. In the following, I will elaborate on the athlete’s perspective of the worldwide policy and regulations.

## The athlete's perspective

The imposition of (for the athlete) fairly extensive anti-doping measures can be discussed from an ethical viewpoint. Are the measures justified in terms of athletes' autonomy, personal privacy and integrity? It has been argued that anti-doping rules are close to the limits of the extent to which an authority ought to take responsibility for issues such as protection of the health of athletes (Anderson, 2013; Dixon, 2008; Kayser, Mauron, & Miah, 2005; Tamburrini, 2006; Tangen & Møller, 2017). The criticism concerns the measures taken within the anti-doping system that constrain the freedom of individuals, and asks whether it is justified to restrict the use of doping agents, since grown-up athletes should be able to judge the consequences of their actions themselves.

The ethical considerations for doping prohibition and regulations have also been reviewed from the perspective of surveillance and discipline (Møller, 2011; Pappa & Kennedy, 2013; Park, 2005; Sluggett, 2011) as many of the measures aimed at athletes entail reporting obligations and expectations of self-governing. Many procedures in anti-doping, for example urine sampling, doping controls at any time and place, and the Whereabouts reporting system, have also been evaluated in light of their potential intrusiveness in the personal sphere as they can interfere with the integrity and privacy of the athlete (Elbe & Overbye, 2013; Kreft, 2009; Overbye & Wagner, 2014; Schneider, 2004; Valkenburg et al., 2014; Waddington, 2010). However, it can be argued that the potential intrusion of privacy comes with the role of being an elite athlete. The athlete can be seen as a public figure and a role model who participates in a voluntary activity that can lead to financial profit. In return, the athlete should accept extensive regulations and controls. However, it can also be argued that elite athletes' professional lives are characterized by special social and psychological conditions including pressure from sponsors, the media and the public (cf. Dimeo, 2010). Often their economic status is dependent on sportive success. As Kreft (2011) points out, it is a complex situation for the elite athlete who needs to make the difficult choice between practising the "volunteer activity" and leading a "normal life". Athletes have to take into account their own investment in sports, in most cases made for the greater part of their lives, and commitments to their social environment.

It can be concluded that the elite athlete's situation in the anti-doping system has been recognized regarding issues of intrusion on integrity. Specific measures within

the system have been deemed to possibly cross that line; however, to date there is limited knowledge of athletes' perceptions of the anti-doping measures in general, particularly concerning possible consequences for legitimacy.

#### Athletes' experiences and perceptions

Athletes' influence over decision making and procedures of their concern is an issue which anti-doping policymakers have not addressed to any significant extent (Dimeo, 2010; Kreft, 2011; McDermott, 2016; Schneider, 2009). An important component for a social order to be perceived as fair and legitimate is that its members should feel that they are part of decision-making processes by making their voices heard, having the opportunity to argue and having their arguments taken into account (Tyler, 2006). It has been stressed that athletes have been marginalized in decision making about anti-doping, and the importance of the sportsperson's influence for, among other things, democratic reasons has been emphasized (Christiansen & Gleaves, 2013; Paul Dimeo, 2010; Houlihan, 2004; Kreft, 2011; Valkenburg et al., 2014; Waddington, 2010). In the literature about sports policy, a debate about the democratization of governance in sport is generally ongoing (see, e.g., Donnelly, 2015; Geeraert, Alm, & Groll, 2014; Thibault, Kihl, & Babiak, 2010). Questions about athletes' influence in the field of anti-doping are part of this debate (Palmer, 2013). In addition, the formation of trade union organizations for sportspersons, such as EU Athletes, that have anti-doping issues on their agenda can be seen as a sign of athletes' previous lack of influence in decision making (EU Athletes, 2018). Recognizably, there are athletes who feel a need to find ways of joining forces to work for their situation and fight for their rights. It has furthermore been stressed that democratic practices in sports governing bodies, with the influence of those most concerned, would enhance the understanding of the consequences of decisions and policies at the practical level (Henne, 2015).

The development of anti-doping policy has therefore taken place largely without the involvement of athletes. Studies that examine athletes' perceptions have not been frequent, which means that knowledge about their views is limited (Elbe & Overbye, 2015). The existing literature regarding athletes' views of anti-doping in general suggests that athletes support the principle of the work against doping (Dunn et al., 2010; Elbe & Overbye, 2013; Overbye & Wagner, 2014; Sas-Nowosielski & Świątkowska, 2007; Striegel et al., 2002). However, athletes' support of and conformity to the anti-doping norms, communicated by governing bodies, have also

been interpreted as an internalization of responsibilities and norms prevailing in the sports movement (Pappa & Kennedy, 2013). Implemented at the practical level, the doping regulations have consequences that are experienced negatively by athletes. Doping testing has been reported to be experienced as intrusive on personal integrity and causing fear of a positive doping test due to a substance taken inadvertently (Elbe & Overbye, 2013). The Whereabouts reporting system, with its daily reporting obligations, has been found to negatively affect the everyday lives of athletes and to be distrusted for its lack of global equivalence in application (Bourdon et al., 2014; Hanstad & Loland, 2009; Hanstad et al., 2009; Overbye & Wagner, 2014; Valkenburg et al., 2014). Furthermore, the anti-doping Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE), which gives the possibility to use otherwise banned substances, is a measure distrusted regarding its global equivalence, leading to perceptions that other athletes might gain unfair advantages (Bourdon et al., 2014; Overbye & Wagner, 2013). Low levels of trust have also been shown regarding the punishment system and some athletes consider the sanctioning of doping offences to be inefficient (Pitsch, Emrich, & Klein, 2007).

In sum, athletes' views of anti-doping have hitherto been found to be supportive of the work against doping in sports. However, anti-doping actions can cause negative consequences and distrust. These results mainly come from studies reporting athletes' experiences and perceptions with regard to a specific anti-doping measure in a specific country. Overarching studies of the entire anti-doping system are rare and it is even rarer to find studies that include sportspersons from different sports and regions of the world. Typically, athletes' distrust of equivalence and their negative experiences of anti-doping procedures are suggested to threaten the legitimacy of the system (Overbye & Wagner, 2013; Waddington, 2010), but there is a lack of studies with an explicit, theory-grounded legitimacy perspective.

### 3. Theoretical framework

This thesis is based on the analysis of the legitimacy of the anti-doping system, with a focus on elite athletes. The various analyses in the included articles were conducted using theories on legitimacy suited for each research focus. In the present section, I will describe the theoretical assumptions, considerations and framework for and construction of the thesis as a whole.

The analysis of the legitimacy of social systems, authorities, and regulations can be viewed from different standpoints, simply put as two extremes. On the one hand, emphasis can be put on the positive consequences, for a social order, to be viewed as legitimate, while on the other hand, legitimacy can be seen as providing a basis for justifying oppression and the harm of others (Tyler, 2006). With the former standpoint, there is an underlying assumption of consensus; that everyone within a specific social order is served by political and social stability. The stability is enhanced if the authorities and institutions are seen as legitimate and there is no societal conflict behind the study of legitimacy. Legitimacy is viewed as a valuable asset for an institution when it contributes to the acceptance of rules and decisions made by the authority. From the latter viewpoint, which emanates from a conflict perspective of society, different groups contest over valuable possessions and positions within a social order. To be in control of these beneficial assets means to have command over institutional power and legitimating ideologies (Tyler, 2006). This conflict stance regarding society and legitimacy argues that processes of legitimation benefit one group over the other. The strive for legitimation would only be in the interests of the authority since it enhances the maintenance of their superior and privileged role.

The theoretical approach I have taken to the study of legitimacy in this thesis includes an awareness of these diametrically different views while outlining a framework that will create conditions for exploring *what makes athletes follow anti-doping regulations* and not, *why they should, or should not, follow regulations*. Inherent in every rule-governed system are questions of power (Beetham, 2013). In

the anti-doping system, the different organizations with their staff (the superior group) have power over the athletes (the subordinate group) who are to adhere to regulations and procedures determined and executed by the authority. Even if the concept of power does not constitute the primary focus of my thesis, the legitimacy of the rule-governed anti-doping system inevitably concerns power-related issues.

## Power and legitimacy

It is important for most societies, organizations and other social orders to regulate the access to, and exercise of, power (Beetham, 2013). The organization (or social order) of anti-doping in elite sports, where power is given to the authorities regulating doping in sports to control mainly the athletes, is not an exception in this regard. It is the rule-governed nature of the social order that gives the authorities the right to exercise power (Beetham, 2013). The anti-doping authorities' power over the athletes implies an ongoing power relationship, with the risk of sanctions if the power is not obeyed. The power relationship has elements of superiority and subordination and involves restriction of freedom for the (subordinate) athlete. Even if this restriction is not caused by self-interest of the (superior) authority, the constraints on the subordinate are the reason why power relationships stand in need of justification and legitimation (Beetham, 2013).

In power relationships, normative dimensions of ideas and practices give those in power their moral authority and trustworthiness (Beetham, 2013). Translated to the context of this thesis, athletes judge the validity of the rules of the anti-doping system, and discuss whether these rules are justified, according to their normative beliefs, and whether to act in line with the regulations. This suggests that the anti-doping authorities, to obtain legitimate leadership, need to pay attention to normative features of the exercise of power. It could possibly be argued that legitimacy is of secondary importance in the sports world where participation is voluntary. The athletes *could* be said to willingly take the position of the subordinate by participating in the voluntary activity of sport, and with such an approach, questions of power and legitimacy can be seen as irrelevant.

However, there are several arguments against the view that athletes need to obey the authority regardless of whether they find it legitimate. Firstly, the voluntariness of partaking in elite sports can be problematized. As suggested previously, by the time

an athlete has reached the top level of sport and become subject to the most comprehensive anti-doping activities, they and their support persons such as parents, clubs, trainers and sponsors have invested considerable amounts of time, money, commitment and hard work into their participation in sports (cf. Dimeo, 2010; Kreft, 2011). At this stage to say that they can leave the sports world if they do not want to conform to the system is a simplification of a complex issue. In addition, for many athletes, the income from a sports career can be the difference between a decent life and a life of relative poverty.

A further argument for the importance of legitimacy in the anti-doping context is that creation of regulations and treatment of people in a way that is seen as desirable, reasonable and appropriate (cf. Suchman, 1995) is an ethical and democratic issue. To treat people with respect, give them a voice and pay attention to their perspectives and values is fundamentally different from forcing people to obey under threat of punishment. Furthermore, not paying attention to what people find justifiable is an inefficient way to govern. Power could, presumably, be upheld by rewards and threat of punishment, from a so-called “instrumental perspective”, which would, however, require massive resources for surveillance and punishment systems (Tyler, 2006). In such a power relationship, the rulers approach power from a conflict stance, directing attention to how opposition can be overcome through coercion and threat of punishment (Sköldberg, 2014). Conversely, taking a normative view of legitimacy means that the power relation is characterized by a regulatory system consistent with the values of the people involved. This provides conditions for acceptance of regulations and rule following of free will in contrast to fear of disciplinary actions. In this case, the power relationship is characterized by a view of consensus and rests upon the consent of the subordinate (Sköldberg, 2014).

Legitimacy is therefore of importance in a power relationship as it impacts subordinates’ attitudes and actions and provides conditions for long-term stability of a social order (Beetham, 2013). Legitimacy is upheld by the superiors’, i.e. anti-doping authorities’, respect for the limits of power set by the rules of the system and their underlying principles. In Beetham’s words, “Legitimate power [...] is limited power; and one of the ways in which it loses legitimacy is when the powerful fail to observe its inherent limits.” (2013 p. 35). From a consensus view of legitimacy (Tyler, 2006), the long-term stability, effectiveness and enhanced order that a legitimate power relationship is characterized by are of significance for both the superior and the subordinate. Stable and predictable conditions favour the individual

members of a social order as they provide usefulness and functionality to a system. Legitimacy for a social order such as the anti-doping system entails that athletes can agree to follow regulations also when it is not in their own interest to comply, or even when they have a different opinion about certain features of the enterprise. Beetham (2013) emphasizes that people are moral agents who judge the validity of the rules, have opinions about common interests and, in a legitimate social order, feel obliged to act according to the rules.

In sum, power and legitimacy are closely linked in that power is in need of legitimation to be able to operate. The power, the rules and the norms and actions that legitimate the power are related elements that all affect each other. Although not explicitly focusing power, but legitimacy, the framework elaborated below therefore implicitly encompasses power relations. Furthermore, it seeks to aid the explanation and understanding of the criteria, norms and values of legitimacy that apply to the specific setting of anti-doping, that is, legitimacy in context (Beetham, 2013).

## Analytical framework

The analytical framework of this thesis draws on a multidimensional view and a broad approach to legitimacy (cf. Beetham, 2013). In the following, I will outline the construction of the framework combining three different approaches to legitimacy, as well as give a brief overview of the areas of application of each.

In the first article of this compilation thesis, an analytical model of *legitimation strategies* based on Van Leeuwen (1996, 2007), Van Leeuwen & Wodak (1999) and Fairclough (2003) was used to analyse how authorities justify, and claim legitimacy for, the anti-doping system. The framework emanating from a discourse analysis tradition mainly stemming from Fairclough (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 2003; 2010; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) has been elaborated in areas such as political science (see, e.g., Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999), organization studies (e.g. Vaara, Tienari, & Laurila, 2006) and media studies (e.g. Sadeghi & Jalali, 2013).

The remaining three articles focus primarily on how the procedures within the anti-doping system are experienced and perceived by athletes. In these studies, theories of *procedural justice* provided the basis for analysis (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 1990; 2006). This approach offered insight into athletes' norms and values in the



elite sport context and how these can be understood in relation to the concept of procedural justice and legitimacy. Theories of procedural justice have been developed in the field of law studies mainly by Tyler, whose early work concerned empirical studies of police legitimacy and why people obey the law (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012). The concept has subsequently been recognized and developed in areas like jurisprudence, politics, management and working environment research (Tyler & Jackson, 2014; Tyler, 2006).

To evaluate the overall legitimacy of the anti-doping system from the athlete's perspective, Beetham's *three-dimensional theory* on legitimacy (Beetham, 1991b; 2013) will, together with the concept of procedural justice (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 1990; 2006), form the basis of this chapter. Beetham is a social theorist, whose key work, on the legitimation of power (1991b; 2013), has been regarded as highly influential in sociological thinking on power and legitimacy (Bauman, 1992). In this kappa of my compilation thesis, Beetham's different dimensions of legitimacy, in combination with the concept of procedural justice, form the basis for the analysis of the four articles, separately and cumulatively. The purpose of the application of this overarching perspective is to deepen the understanding of legitimacy in the social order of anti-doping. The analytical framework will allow for interpretation and analysis of power relations, the empirical consequences of the system and the extent to which athletes can be expected to comply with the regulations (cf. Beetham, 2013). While the concept of procedural justice focuses on the interaction between the governing and the governed, Beetham's three-dimensional theory on legitimacy offers a wider analytical framework. According to Beetham (1991b; 2013), an authority gains legitimacy by acting in a certain way – as also suggested by Tyler (2006) – and also by being seen as representing specific norms and ethical positions. Further, Beetham's wider approach to legitimacy analysis also includes whether acceptance of the authority and rules is shown in actions from the governed. Thus, the employment of Beetham's theories extends the framework for analysis when the findings of the studies in this thesis are aggregated. I will use the framework elaborated here as an overarching analytical tool to assess legitimacy within the social order of anti-doping from the perspective of the athletes.

### Legitimacy claims

The analysis of legitimacy of a social order includes an examination of the grounds for legitimacy claims, and an assessment of whether these grounds equal reality,

from a so-called “top-down” perspective (Beetham, 2013). In the present thesis, the authorities’ legitimacy claims within the anti-doping system are assessed via discourse analysis of text documents aimed at elite athletes, namely the athlete guide to the WADC that has been published in three editions since 2004 (WADA, 2004; 2009; 2014a). Through the study of language, with analysis of the texts in relation to surrounding discursive and social practice, it is feasible to gain an understanding of power relations in different structures (Fairclough, 2003). The anti-doping discourse can be said to consist of texts including the documents studied here, the sports context in which these texts are produced and used, and the entire surrounding social practice of sport. Language is used to construct legitimacy; however, not always in a conscious or strategic process (Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). By analysing how claims for legitimacy are constructed in the anti-doping discourse it is possible to understand the anti-doping authorities’ explanations for why the social practice of anti-doping exists and why it looks the way it does (cf. Van Leeuwen, 2007).

#### Dimensions of legitimacy, and procedural justice

When, and on what grounds, will power be viewed as legitimate? According to Beetham (2013), there are three dimensions of legitimacy that successively and cumulatively give power legitimacy: rule conformity, shared normative beliefs, and appropriate actions. The theoretical approach to legitimacy from a bottom-up perspective in this thesis is based on Beetham’s three dimensions combined with Tyler’s concept of procedural justice (Tyler, 1990; 2001; 2006) to put emphasis on the anti-doping practice affecting elite athletes’ everyday lives, which is a central feature of this thesis.

*Rule conformity* is the first of these three dimensions of, or criteria for, legitimacy. The meaning of this criterion is that power is exercised in accordance with established rules. Concerning this thesis, this means that the anti-doping rules are applied by the rulers of the system. An authority that neglects the rules in the wielding of power becomes an *illegitimate* ruler (Beetham, 2013). To acquire power against the rules or to exceed the limits of regulations in the exercising of power would entail illegitimacy. In the context of this thesis, illegitimacy could, for instance, be the result of anti-doping authorities neglecting, or acting in a way that goes beyond, what is prescribed in the WADC.

The second dimension, *shared normative beliefs*, concerns judgements about the rightness of the rules and authority. For an order to be legitimate, the rules must be justified in terms of norms and values accepted and shared by the involved parties (Beetham, 2013). The acquisition and exercise of power, stated in the anti-doping regulations and pursued in practice, should be in line with accepted norms within the specific social context of sport. The justification of the rules/authority can vary between different social contexts, and has to do with whether the power is based on a valid authority, whether the rules are constituted in such a way that power is given to the best suited authority, and whether the structure of power serves the common good and not just the interest of the superiors. In the setting of this thesis, this could mean that athletes find that the anti-doping rules give power to the best suited authority and that WADA is that authority, as well as that athletes perceive that WADA representatives serve their common good and not just themselves. The absence of shared norms and values that justify the rules and authority – for instance, if athletes should find that WADA has normative standpoints not shared by themselves – would result in *legitimacy deficit* and a decrease in moral authority for the ruler (Beetham, 2013). A legitimacy deficit can negatively affect the support for the authority and the willingness to comply with rules. A discrepancy between the rules and the norms could be the result of a decision-making process that did not initially take into account the normative beliefs of the involved parties or a process where beliefs had changed over time.

Beetham's second dimension of legitimacy, that power is exercised in accordance with the norms and values of the involved, can be closely linked to theories of *procedural justice*, a concept mainly developed by Tyler (Tyler, 1990; 2001; 2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002). In fact, theories of procedural justice rely on Beetham's conception of legitimacy (Harkin, 2015). While Beetham takes an overarching sociological perspective on legitimacy, Tyler focuses on the interaction between the superiors and the subordinates, mainly by emphasizing that the processes within a system must be perceived as just to obtain legitimacy. Fairness of procedures are just as significant as, or even more significant than, the outcome of procedures for a system to be viewed as legitimate, according to theories of procedural justice. This would entail that a legitimate anti-doping system is dependent on the athletes' viewing the procedures within the system as fair and just. By inserting Tyler's concept within Beetham's three-dimensional framework for legitimacy, I aim to place particular focus on the processes within the specific social order of anti-doping.

The concept of procedural justice has mainly been elaborated by Tyler (Sunshine et al., 2015; Tyler, 1990; 2001; 2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002), building on earlier work by Thibault & Walker, in the 1970s, and Leventhal, in the early 1980s (see Nagin & Telep, 2017). Explanations as to why people follow regulations are central to Tyler's work which emphasizes the relationship between authorities and subordinates in the procedures within a regulatory system. More specifically, legitimacy for policy and authority is strongly connected to perceptions of justice and fairness in procedures within a regulatory system. Furthermore, the perception of procedural justice, and, by extension, legitimacy has an impact on people's motivation to act according to the rules (Jackson et al., 2012; Levi, Sacks, & Tyler, 2009; Murphy & Cherney, 2012; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tom R. & Jonathan, 2014; Tyler, 2006; Tyler & Huo, 2002).

Tyler (2006) describes a number of non-instrumental factors, which he denotes as *relational criteria*, that are important for people's favourable perception of how they are treated and how they judge the actions within a system. *Interpersonal treatment* is an aspect, or criterion, meaning that people perceive that they are being treated with dignity and respect and that their civil rights are respected. An example is that it is possible for an individual to be heard in processes of concern to them. The aspect *trustworthiness of authorities* denotes that the authority's intentions are perceived as good and that they appear credible and reliable by, for example, the authority acting in the best interests of the people involved. A third aspect is *neutrality of decision making* and this implies that the authority is perceived as impartial (Tyler, 2006) and that decisions are being made in a neutral, transparent and rule-based fashion (Levi et al., 2009). Opportunity to *participate in decision making* is a fourth aspect, or criterion, emphasizing that people find that their perspectives are being considered in decision-making procedures, that they can have a voice and that they are being listened to. A group that is underrepresented in decision making may feel a decreased sense of ownership and an increased sense of partiality in the determination of policy (Levi et al., 2009).

Thus, these criteria of procedural justice communicate a message that the members of a community, for example athletes in the sports community, are respected and valued and that practice is formed in accordance with the norms and values of those involved. Procedures perceived as fair and just are, as mentioned above, linked to legitimacy and, in turn, to motivation to meet requirements. This means that athletes' experience of a procedurally just system is an important component of

perceptions of the system being legitimate and, in turn, of compliance. Theories of procedural justice are linked to the legitimacy dimension of shared normative beliefs because they both share a focus on perceptions of the rightness of the rules and authority, as shown in practical procedures. Both Beetham's second dimension and Tyler's conception acknowledge the importance of the exercise of power emanating from shared norms and values in terms of legitimacy claims.

The third dimension of legitimacy outlined by Beetham is *appropriate actions* and relates to whether acceptance of the authority and rules is shown in actions. The criterion of this dimension is fulfilled when the subordinates act according to the rules and thus show their acceptance of the superiors' authority. The behaviour of subordinates can be seen as "performative acts" that enhance the legitimacy of the superiors and function as a recognition of their position (Beetham, 2013). The actions could be to show support for the authority in different ways, such as swearing an oath of allegiance or participating in elections. One example from sport settings in general is the oath that a representative of the athletes takes during the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games:

We promise to take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules and in the spirit of fair play. We all commit ourselves to sport without doping and cheating. We do this, for the glory of sport, for the honour of our teams and in respect for the Fundamental Principles of Olympism.  
(Olympic.org, 2017)

Taking this oath is a performative act that confers legitimacy to the Olympic Movement. In the anti-doping setting this could mean that an athlete visibly conforms, or even overconforms, to anti-doping regulations by being clear about the importance of "playing true", and engaging in anti-doping education for other athletes. Another example of a performative act is participation in consultations and negotiation processes with the powerful, by being involved in an athletes' committee, and thus confirming the anti-doping authority's power. These acts can have a binding force, internally, on the ones performing them, irrespective of their motives for doing so, since they add a moral component and a normative engagement for the ones acting (Beetham, 2013). Performative acts can also be general symbolic actions with explanatory force, confirming the subordinates' acceptance of the power of the authority. Such visible actions can be used to confirm the legitimacy of the authority towards a third party, who is not part of the relationship or who has not yet shown support for the authority. It is of specific

importance for the authority to be able to show the support given by the most significant persons within the particular context. Accordingly, the performative acts of an athlete confirm legitimacy to the anti-doping authorities and will not only have a binding force on the athlete performing them, themselves, but will also have a legitimating effect towards other athletes and the general public. The more high-profile the athlete performing these acts, the greater the confirmation of the legitimacy of the anti-doping authorities. In the example above from the Olympic Games, a prominent, well-known athlete who takes the Olympic oath will be of great value for the legitimation of the movement. A decrease in support for the authority, through widespread alternative actions to the ones showing acceptance and support, for example open criticism of the anti-doping principle or an increase in the number of doping cases, could by contrast lead to *de-legitimation* (Beetham, 2013). Actions that show signs of no cooperation or resistance will, to various degrees, undermine the legitimacy. The more people resist, the larger the de-legitimation.

My purpose, in combining Van Leeuwen's legitimation strategies, Tyler's theory on procedural justice and Beetham's model of legitimacy dimensions, is to build a theoretical framework that will aid the analytical process in this thesis by focusing on the particular example within the general structure. An overview of the framework is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Schematic overview of the theoretical framework of the thesis. Elaborated from Beetham (2013 p. 20).

	Top-down legitimacy analysis	Bottom-up legitimacy analysis		
<b>Research question</b>	What claims for legitimacy do anti-doping authorities direct at elite athletes?	How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping authorities' conformity to rules?	How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping as a principle and practice?	How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping regulations in relation to their own responsibilities and possibilities to be compliant with the rules?
<b>Analysis of/in terms of:</b>	Legitimation strategies (Van Leeuwen, 1996) and legitimacy claims (Beetham, 2013).	First dimension: Rule conformity (Beetham, 2013).	Second dimension: Shared normative beliefs (Beetham, 2013), in combination with theories of procedural justice (Tyler, 2006).	Third dimension: Appropriate actions (Beetham, 2013).
<b>Denotation</b>	Analysis of the authorities' justifications and claims for legitimacy.	Analysis of perceptions of accordance between the exercise of power and the existing rules.	Analysis of perceptions of the justifiability of the rules and authority in terms of shared beliefs, with special focus on procedures.	Analysis of whether acceptance of the authority and rules is shown in actions.
<b>Risk</b>		Illegitimacy; breach of rules (Beetham 2013).	Legitimacy deficit; discrepancy between rules and supporting beliefs (Beetham, 2013).	De-legitimation; withdrawal of consent (Beetham, 2013).





## 4. Methodology

The overarching aim of this thesis is to study the legitimacy of anti-doping within international elite sports with a focus on the athlete's situation. One of the first methodological questions to pose is, therefore, *How can legitimacy be explored?* According to Weber, individuals can "give legitimacy to" a social order, or "believe" an authority "to be legitimate" based on a threefold typology: traditional legitimacy, rational-legal legitimacy, or charismatic legitimacy (Weber, 1978). However, Beetham (1991a; 1991b; 2013) is critical both of Weber's definition of the concept, and towards how it would be possible in social science to "make a report [...] about other people's beliefs" (2013 p. 8) in legitimacy. It is not about *beliefs*, Beetham emphasizes, as this would distort the relationship between legitimacy and people's beliefs. A power relation will not be legitimate because people believe it to be so, but because the relationship can be *justified* in accordance with their beliefs. It is possible for the social scientist to judge to what extent a system of power corresponds to the values and expectations that justify the system. Hence, it is not possible to gain knowledge about the legitimacy of a system by asking people whether they believe it to be legitimate; instead, it is viable to try to find evidence of legitimacy in the social context in order to be able to make an assessment of the legitimacy (Beetham, 2013). Using Beetham's theories of the legitimation of power gives direction to the methodology of this thesis.

Following Beetham, my search for evidence of legitimacy in the anti-doping context, with a focus on elite athletes, was carried out using an approach consisting of various methods. According to Beetham (2013), empirical studies of legitimacy require a multidimensional and broad approach. This approach includes analyses of the grounds for legitimacy claims from a so-called "top-down" perspective. It also includes a bottom-up perspective emanating from the subordinates, adopted in order to assess to what extent the perceptions and social practices confirm the legitimacy claims (Beetham, 2013). In this thesis, the authorities' grounds for legitimacy claims have already been described in part in the Introduction, while in the first included study, I give a more in-depth analysis of top-down legitimacy by conducting a

discourse analysis of legitimation strategies used by anti-doping authorities. A bottom-up perspective is taken in the remaining three studies, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate athletes' perceptions and experiences of the social practice of anti-doping. Below, I outline the methods used in the top-down and also the bottom-up analysis of legitimacy. I conclude this Methodology chapter by describing methodological and ethical considerations.

## Top-down perspective

A top-down perspective, with focus on claims for legitimacy, was adopted by a discourse analysis of policy documents (presented in Article I) to investigate what legitimation strategies anti-doping authorities use when addressing athletes in written text. The methodology was grounded in critical discourse analysis (CDA) based on Fairclough's work (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 2003; 2010; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). The study of language in a wide sense, in texts aimed at athletes, allowed for an analysis of legitimation discourses in the anti-doping context. The studied texts were the athlete guides that have accompanied every edition of the WADC in 2004, 2009 and 2015 (WADA, 2004; 2009; 2014a). The guides have been produced to give athletes an overview of the rules listed in the WADC, although stating that they are not a substitute for the original source (WADA, 2014b). The selection of texts was based on my interest in the athlete's perspective since the guides can be assumed to reflect what the authorities view as essential for athletes to know as well as how they should optimally assimilate the information. Therefore, the chosen texts allowed for an analysis of legitimacy claims specifically directed at the athletes. Moreover, the study of different versions of the document enabled a comparison of legitimation strategies over time. An analytical framework, developed by Van Leeuwen (1996), of strategies used in legitimation was employed. The three versions of the athlete guide were analysed based on an analytical model of legitimation strategies, which has been empirically tested and elaborated in fields such as history, management, and educational studies (see, e.g., Gustafsson, 2009; Vaara & Tienari, 2008; Van Leeuwen, 2007). The strategies for legitimation included in the model are: authorization, rationalization, moral evaluation, and mythopoesis (see Fairclough, 2003; Van Leeuwen, 1996; 2007; Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). *Authorization* is a strategy through which legitimacy is claimed by referencing to an authority that receives power through law and custom (Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). That authority can also be impersonal, such as laws or,

for that matter, anti-doping rules. The strategy of *rationalization* means that legitimacy claims are based on arguments of rationality, functionality and effectiveness, emanating from accepted knowledge in the given context (Fairclough, 2003). With a *moral evaluation* strategy, legitimacy is claimed by referring to specific value systems and moral principles (Fairclough, 2003). The *mythopoesis* strategy implies that storytelling and narrative structures are part of the legitimization claims, for example by including stories about the past or future of an organization or an issue to provide sense and create meaning (Van Leeuwen, 2007). The use of this analytical model aided the systematic analysis of legitimacy strategies. The first step in the analysis included structuring of the text and images by examining the content, form and use of language in the three versions of the athlete guide. In the next step, the discursive dimension was in focus through analysis of the findings in relation to the analytical model for legitimization strategies, which also allowed for comparisons over time. The third step in the process involved consideration of the results in relation to the social practice dimension of the anti-doping discourse (cf. Fairclough, 2003).

The first step of my analysis in this thesis was to explore legitimacy claims from a top-down perspective to examine how anti-doping activities are discursively legitimated when anti-doping authorities address athletes in text.

## Bottom-up perspective

I have employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection in the exploration of the bottom-up perspective on legitimization in anti-doping. These data constitute the empirical material for Articles II, III and IV and have made it possible to assess the extent to which social practice and perceptions confirm the top-down legitimacy claims (Beetham, 2013).

To be able to study legitimacy from the athletes' perspective within the global anti-doping system, data were collected with the participation of international sports federations. To obtain a selection that included elite athletes from different parts of the world and from various sports, nine international sports federations were invited to participate in the study. They were chosen to achieve variation (cf. Bryman, 2012) regarding the size of these sports bodies and the scope of their doping control activities; the selection was also based on accessibility. The objective was that the

final sample should represent a mix of individual and team sports. Four sports federations agreed to participate in the study, the International Federation for: Athletics (IAAF), Basketball (FIBA), Skiing (FIS) and Volleyball (FIVB). Despite non-response from the other five federations, the final sample was considered to reflect the diversity in the field, in that it included both individual and team sports as well as federations with various degrees of activity and scope in conducting doping tests.

The quantitative data collection presented in Article II consisted of online surveys with 261 elite athletes belonging to the international registered testing pools of the four international sports federations. The data collection via the internet allowed access to athletes from different sports with no geographical limitations (cf. Gratton & Jones, 2010), and the final sample covered sportspersons representing 51 different countries, and consisted of 46% women and 54% men. The sample included 99 athletes from IAAF, nine from FIBA, 141 from FIS, and eleven representing FIVB. The response rate for the total sample was 28%, distributed among the federations as follows: 21% for IAAF, 18% for FIBA, 39% for FIS and 21% for FIVB. While the response rate can be considered low, the sample, given its size and distribution, provided insights into how anti-doping work is perceived by a wide range of elite athletes, which is rare in the research on sportspersons' perceptions of anti-doping work and its legitimacy. The questionnaire was developed based on regulations in the WADC and inspired by Hanstad et al. (2009) and Overbye (2013). The questionnaire was organized into seven sections covering the following areas: the athlete's background; doping controls; the Whereabouts system; the TUE; results management; biological passports; and anti-doping work in general. Further, it was possible for the respondents to expand their answers to open-ended questions in each section. The analysis was conducted using statistics that described both the athletes' perceptions of anti-doping as a principle and their views on the practical work. Calculations were made for the whole sample and smaller groups based on relevant background variables. Differences between different subgroups' perceptions were examined using cross-tabulation and chi-square test, supplemented with logistic regression to analyse relationships. The use of a quantitative method offered the opportunity to gain broad knowledge of elite athletes' perceptions of anti-doping policy and practice, which gave the possibility to distinguish patterns and variations through statistical calculations (see, e.g., Bryman, 2012).

The quantitative study also provided the basis for the design of the second data collection, which was done through interviews with 13 athletes who were recruited in connection with the survey. This qualitative approach enabled us to proceed with findings from the survey to deepen the insight into athletes' perspective on anti-doping (Articles III and IV). The purpose of using qualitative interviews was to gain more elaborate understanding of the athletes' experiences and perceptions, their conditions in different processes and their insights into anti-doping as a social phenomenon (see, e.g., Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Bryman, 2012; Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The purposive sampling resulted in a group of respondents from five regions of the world and from the IAAF, FIBA and FIS. The sample was therefore varied regarding both region and sport. Due to the geographical dispersion of the interviewees, ten interviews were conducted via video call while three were carried out face to face. The interviews on average lasted about 1 hour and followed a semi-structured design to allow for flexibility during the interview while ensuring that all interviews covered the same topic areas (cf. Bryman, 2012). Thematic analysis was used to explore the data, and the coding process formed the basis for the structuring of themes and subthemes. In relation to the survey study, the interview study allowed for a deeper understanding of the athletes' experiences and perceptions of anti-doping in principle and practice. The interviews involved direct contact with the athletes, mostly including visual contact and the possibility to read each other's expressions. Furthermore, the interview often developed into a conversation, rather than being just a formal interview, where athletes elaborated their views on the various topics. The qualitative approach following the quantitative study provided a comprehensive basis for bottom-up interpretations of legitimacy in the anti-doping system.

In sum, the methodology I have employed to assess the legitimacy of the anti-doping system is therefore multidimensional. It consists of discourse analysis to evaluate legitimacy claims from anti-doping authorities, a quantitative survey to examine athletes' perceptions in a broad sense, and a qualitative interview study to gain a detailed understanding of the sportspersons' experiences and perceptions. In line with the described theoretical framework, these are the methods I have used as a basis for the evaluation of legitimacy within the social order of anti-doping employing a top-down as well as a bottom-up approach.

## Methodological considerations

Work on a doctoral thesis involves the process of becoming an independent researcher. Throughout this process, I have strived to develop my autonomy as a researcher and, based on my initial ideas about the subject of this thesis, have elaborated the content and design of the thesis work with support from my supervisors. I am the first author of the included articles, while my supervisors have contributed to the design, analysis and interpretation in the working process of the four articles. The co-authors, in descending order, share responsibility for the text; however, all authors have contributed to, approved and are responsible for the work as a whole. I am the sole author of this kappa; however, the methodological considerations have been thoroughly discussed and evaluated among the four of us through all parts of the thesis. With this said, I will here elucidate and discuss critical concerns that may arise from the choices made.

Using the methodological approach I have employed to study the legitimacy of the anti-doping policy and practice from elite athletes' perspectives may raise questions such as: *Have I used the most suitable study design for my research object?*, *How trustworthy are the results of this thesis, in terms of validity and reliability, and how generalizable are they?* and *What can the possible relevance of this research be* (cf. Bryman, 2012)?

### Study design

The intention with the study design, including both quantitative and qualitative methods, has been to gain breadth as well as depth in the understanding of legitimacy from athletes' perspectives (cf. Bryman, 2012). I consider the survey reported in Article II to be the quantitative part of my thesis, while the qualitative features are the theoretical interpretation of the quantitative survey (Article II), as well as the text analysis (Article I), interview studies (Articles III and IV) and the overarching theoretical analysis in the kappa. However, the application of an approach that includes various different methods needs some consideration. It has been argued that because quantitative and qualitative research methods are entrenched in their respective positions and perspectives, they can hardly be combined (Bryman, 2012). Another contention, of a more practical kind, is that each of the used methods requires specific expertise, and that combining methods could therefore lead to some research being conducted with less skill. Nevertheless, I

would argue that during work on my compilation thesis consisting of four studies, the use of different methods has contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of my research area. The quantitative work has provided the advantages of access to a larger, geographically dispersed sample providing structured data that allowed for statistical analyses and the possibility to make comparisons (Bryman, 2012). The qualitative text analysis has enabled an analysis of the anti-doping discourse as it appears in documents aimed at athletes, while the interview study has offered multifaceted insights into the perspective of the athlete, as well as allowing for unexpected data to emerge (cf. Gratton & Jones, 2010). I recognize and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each of the methods, while at the same time I use the strengths of the respective method in relation to my research purpose.

#### Validity and reliability

The quality of the results of this thesis can be discussed in relation to various criteria for assessment. Important criteria in quantitative studies are reliability and validity, while the relevance of these criterion in qualitative studies is discussed (Bryman, 2012). Alternative assessment criteria for qualitative research include trustworthiness and authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) or altered interpretations of the concepts of reliability and validity (see, e.g., LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Silverman, 2013). Since my thesis has both quantitative and qualitative elements, I choose to adhere to the logic of reliability and validity in a wider sense, providing alternative interpretations for the qualitative studies based on Silverman (2013).

One of my methodological reflections is whether, using the methods I have chosen, I am measuring/observing/interpreting what I want to measure/observe/interpret, and whether the conclusions I have drawn from these measurements/observations/interpretations are therefore valid (cf. Silverman, 2015)? Concerning the quantitative study in this thesis, this question concerns, among other things, the questionnaire construction and evaluation. The questionnaire was developed building on previously tested questions in published studies and was subject to a pre-test. The questionnaire was appended to the article concerned (Article II), with the aim of increasing the transparency in evaluation of the method.

Regarding the qualitative methods, I have striven for transparency in the research process by describing the processes. I have provided details of the procedures and analyses to allow for external assessment (see, e.g., Gratton & Jones, 2010). In the

presentation of the results of the text analysis (Article I) and interview study (Articles III and IV) my aim has been to provide information-rich, illustrative examples and quotes to achieve as thick a description as possible (Bryman, 2012). For theoretical transparency (Silverman, 2015), I have sought to explain my theoretical stance and have shown how this stance has led to the interpretations reported here.

A critical point concerns how my interpretations correspond to the social phenomena in question (Silverman, 2015). In other words, to what extent do my results correspond to athletes' actual experiences and perceptions? Also, to what extent does my text analysis represent the discourse in the studied documents?

Recognizing, and being reflexive regarding, my pre-understanding has been an ongoing endeavour for me during the process of this thesis. I have tried to critically evaluate my own role and position in relation to my research subject, which may possibly have contributed to less biased results. I have further attempted to perform my analyses in line with what is called "comprehensive data treatment" (Silverman, 2013), with constant comparisons and active efforts to search for alternative views, contradictions, deviant cases, and alternative explanations.

Some attention must also be paid to my view of what the respondents' answers in the interview study reflect. Is it the "real reality" of the athletes? Is it what the athletes think? Alternatively, is it what the athletes say they think? Can their statements, as Silverman (2015) puts it, "be treated as a direct expression of their 'experience'" (p. 172)? I have during the thesis work come to view the respondents' statements as indirect representations of their experiences, views and opinions. My intention has been to interpret these accounts of the athletes' experiences and perceptions, bearing these considerations of representativeness in mind. To get really close to the athlete's perspective, an ethnographic approach, for example, could have given a more direct representation. However, this methodology would have limited the sample and it would not have been feasible to cover different sports and regions of the world.

### Generalizability

A methodological question of concern is, how can the results from my studies be applied to athletes, situations, events or cases that were not a part of these studies (cf. Bryman, 2012)? To begin with, I want to direct attention to the samples of this



thesis. Regarding the top-down perspective for the analysis of legitimacy claims, I chose to study the athlete guide, a text document that is a comprehensive WADA guide to anti-doping regulations, containing information on what the authorities find most important for the athletes to know. Possibly, a study of the WADC itself could have given a sterling account of the overall legitimization discourse in the anti-doping system. Since my interest, however, was directed at legitimacy from the perspective of the sportsperson, I found it more valuable to analyse anti-doping authorities' legitimating strategies where they specifically address the athletes.

The sample for the analysis of the bottom-up approach to legitimacy consisted of 261 elite athletes who participated in the quantitative survey, and 13 sportspersons who took part in the qualitative interview study. One limitation is the 28% response rate in the survey. In a similar vein, the low number of interviewees in the qualitative study can be questioned. In a strict statistical sense, I cannot claim generalizability of the results across all sports settings (cf. Smith, 2018). However, considering that the sample of elite athletes represent different sports and regions of the world – rare in studies on athletes' perceptions – and that the anti-doping system is a worldwide enterprise, the results are of empirical value and give an indication of athletes' perspectives. My intention to analyse the legitimacy in a global system that includes nearly all sports and countries of the world required a multi-national and multi-sports approach. This, however, meant having reduced control of the study sample, partly due to complex organizations, but partly also to physical distance and language differences. My belief is that the results can contribute to the knowledge about conditions for and consequences of the anti-doping system in different contexts.

Further, regarding generalization, the wider implications of my results can be assessed in line with criteria for qualitative research. Social phenomena, such as the anti-doping system with its different actors, are changeable and varied and depend on the context, which makes the issue of generalization more complex than just a matter of statistics (cf. Bryman, 2012). Analytical generalizability involves a well-considered judgement of how the present results can be used as guidance on what may happen in another situation (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Smith, 2018). I have aimed for an approach that includes rich descriptions of contexts and research processes, and that is characterized by reasoning and problematizing to provide a *perspective* on the issue rather than “the truth” (cf. Fejes & Thornberg, 2015). The theoretical conclusions in qualitative research are also important for the assessment

of its wider potential (Bryman, 2012). In the articles of this thesis as well as in this kappa, my aim has been to describe my theoretical analyses in a rich and transparent way for assessment of their quality and to enable theoretical generalization.

## Relevance

The above methodological considerations concern the design, quality and generalizability of the research I have conducted. In this section I briefly want to discuss the relevance and possible potential of my studies (cf. Silverman, 2015). For whom could this thesis be relevant, and in what way? Primarily, readers that this thesis could be relevant for are the practitioners as the research can contribute to an anti-doping system that athletes find desirable, proper and appropriate when policies are created in consideration of their perspectives. A system that is concerned with legitimacy would potentially be useful and provide functionality to the athletes in it (cf. Beetham, 2013). In fact, the actual starting point for me in writing this thesis was an interest in, and concern about, the situation of the athlete under the anti-doping rules. A prerequisite for potential relevance for athletes is that policy makers and sports organizations will find my studies relevant in providing knowledge and understanding about athletes' perceptions, as well as the implications of these perceptions with regard to the legitimacy of anti-doping. This research could presumably also be of relevance to the public as it might, by extension, provide one small piece of the puzzle of the function and legitimacy of sports in society. Lastly, I hope that there might also be an interest in my work among academic colleagues in sports studies as it may contribute to insights on theoretical approaches to the legitimacy of policies from the perspective of athletes.

## Ethical considerations

Social science research ethics concerns, among other things, a consideration of the potential benefit to participants and society in relation to individual protection requirements (UNESCO, n.d.). I believe my studies relate to important issues of, for example, equality and influence, and therefore have the potential to enhance the life conditions of individuals and groups. At the same time, the research is of the kind that could cause ethical concern arising from the relationship between the researcher and the participants (cf. Bryman, 2012). I have responsibilities towards the athletes who have participated in my studies, both in terms of protecting them from harm,

and preserving their rights and integrity, and in terms of providing, as accurately as possible, a description of the results to which they have contributed (Gilbert, 2008).

In order to conduct ethically justifiable research and protect the participants in my studies I have given careful consideration to several aspects, starting from an ethics review done initially in my thesis work. The studies were approved by the Regional Ethics Board in Uppsala, Sweden, and throughout the process, from planning to data collection and reporting of the studies, the research complied with ethical principles of research. To ensure the anonymity of the athletes partaking in the studies, and minimize the risk of harm or invasion of privacy, the results of the interview and questionnaire studies have been reported in such a way that no individual can be identified, with responses changed where necessary to minimize the risk of privacy infringement (Swedish Research Council, 2017) . Names and other conditions that could potentially reveal a participant's identity have been changed, without affecting the results or interpretation. Results of statistical analyses have been reported only at the group level. Informed consent for the quantitative survey was collected via a cover letter sent out in connection with the survey and providing information about the study, informing athletes of the voluntary nature of participation, of participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time, and about measures taken to ensure secure handling of data (Bryman, 2012). The athletes were further informed that by answering the questionnaire they gave their consent to participate. For the qualitative interview study, information about the study was sent to the participants via e-mail and consent was obtained prior to the interview. To protect the data, I have de-identified the material so that no personal data can be recognized. The data from the survey study, the audio recording of interviews and the transcripts were encoded. The data are stored and securely locked at an archive for research material at the University of Gävle and no unauthorized persons can access the material, in accordance with the university policy. Code lists and other materials are kept separate. The data will be stored for at least 10 years after publication, whereafter they will be destroyed.



## 5. Summary of articles

### Article I: From fighting the bad to protecting the good: legitimization discourses in WADA's athlete guides

*Background and aim:* The global anti-doping effort in sport is based upon the assumption that the system is generally seen as desirable, proper and appropriate and is, therefore, considered legitimate. The legitimacy of the anti-doping system has in previously been researched in bottom-up studies, based on the views of athletes. In order to gain a greater understanding of the legitimization processes, it is also important to conduct a top-down study of the legitimization strategies – in other words, the strategies used by decision-making and governing bodies. The aim of this study was to analyse legitimization discourses in texts aimed at sportspersons in the specific context of elite sport and thus to contribute to the understanding of processes of legitimization of the anti-doping discourse in relation to athletes.

*Methodology and theoretical framework:* A discourse analytical approach based on Fairclough (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 2003; 2010) was employed to analyse WADA's three editions of a guide (WADA, 2004; 2009; 2014a) to anti-doping rules aimed at athletes. The athlete guide has accompanied every edition of the WADC, published in 2004, 2009 and 2015. The analysis was directed at what content, in the WADC, the anti-doping authorities have thought essential for athletes to know and at the authorities' views on, and attitudes towards, the athletes. The analysis was performed based on Van Leeuwen's (1996; 2007) four specific legitimization strategies. *Authorization* is a legitimization strategy that involves legitimization by reference to an authority that has power through tradition, law and custom, and persons in whom institutional authority is vested. *Rationalization* legitimization occurs through reference to the utility/functionality of specific actions based on knowledge claims that are accepted in a specific context. The legitimating strategy of *Moral evaluation* involves establishing legitimization by referring to specific value systems and moral principles. Lastly, *mythopoesis* is a legitimating strategy that involves storytelling and narrative structures.

*Results and conclusions:* Our analysis showed that the anti-doping discourse as expressed in all versions of the athlete guide was characterized by legitimization of the system through authorization. There was a change in the later editions towards a more rational and athlete-centred stance. A shift could be seen in the legitimization of the anti-doping discourse, simplistically put as, “from fighting the bad to protecting the good”. We discuss the moral evaluation strategy as a way to legitimate anti-doping efforts in sports in general towards a wider public. In the light of the results of this study, we conclude that policymaking in relation to doping issues should be based on awareness of legitimization processes if the goal is to create a sustainable anti-doping system.

## Article II: Anti-doping and legitimacy: an international survey of elite athletes’ perceptions

*Background and aim:* The anti-doping system is an extensive enterprise that entails significant obligations for athletes at the elite level. Its extensiveness and its possible effect on athletes’ lives and integrity could risk the legitimacy of the system. The purpose of this article was to explore elite athletes’ perceptions of anti-doping policy and practice and, furthermore, to investigate whether the enterprise is seen as desirable, reasonable and appropriate – and, therefore, as legitimate (cf. Suchman, 1995).

*Methodology and theoretical framework:* Altogether 261 elite athletes from 51 different countries and four international sports federations participated in a survey that considered the sportsperson’s perceptions of anti-doping policy and practice based on a legitimacy perspective. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the material and differences between different groups were statistical analysed using chi-square test and logistic regression analysis. A theoretical framework with indicators of agreement (Tyler, 2006; Weber, 1978; Zelditch, 2001) and procedural justice (Tyler, 2006), enabled analysis of the legitimacy of anti-doping policy and practice.

*Results and conclusions:* The results showed that elite athletes generally have positive perceptions of anti-doping policy. However, in practice the policy can have some negative consequences for the sportspersons. In other words, while the athletes

do not seem to question the legitimacy of the rules, legitimacy may be at risk because of the way the rules are applied in practice. Perceptions that could endanger legitimacy related to *everyday life, privacy, efficiency* and *equal conditions* in anti-doping work globally, as well as the degree of *involvement* of athletes in decision-making processes. The lives of many athletes were negatively affected by the Whereabouts reporting system. Athletes reported concern about inadvertently committing mistakes that could lead to a doping sentence. The athletes found their integrity infringed with regard to giving urine samples. Four out of ten men and half of the women felt uncomfortable when asked to provide urine samples under supervision. About half of the respondents also stated that they felt monitored by doping control officers who knew their whereabouts. Ineffectiveness in anti-doping work involved, among other things, experiences that athletes using prohibited means can avoid detection, as reported by 60% of respondents. Nearly half of the athletes also believed that the Whereabouts reporting system did not work equally in all countries. Concerning the influence of athletes, almost nine out of ten respondents felt that athletes should have greater involvement in decision making on anti-doping. The analysis of athletes' perceptions of anti-doping practices showed that legitimacy is at risk because the anti-doping work is not perceived as procedurally fair. It was concluded that if decision makers want to focus on legitimacy in the work against doping in sport, they need to take the athletes' perspectives into account to a greater extent.

### Article III: Contexts and conditions for a level playing field: elite athletes' perspectives on anti-doping in practice

*Background and aim:* The imposition of globally applicable anti-doping regulations was aimed to attain a level playing field for athletes worldwide. However, studies have shown that the worldwide harmonization of rules has not been entirely successful. For instance, considerable variation has been found in how anti-doping organizations implement anti-doping regulations, and it has been shown that athletes distrust the equivalence of the worldwide rules in practice. The purpose of this article was to examine how elite athletes from different contexts experience anti-doping procedures, and to analyse the legitimacy of anti-doping practice.

*Methodology and theoretical framework:* Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 elite athletes from five regions of the world, representing the three international sports federations IAAF, FIBA and FIS. A theoretical framework on procedural justice (Tyler, 2006) guided the research process and was used in the analysis of the legitimacy of the anti-doping system from the perspective of athletes.

*Results and conclusions:* The results show that athletes were often vague about whether the anti-doping effort is being carried out equally across the globe, while the analysis of the interviewees' ability to abide by the rules shows that the conditions varied in different contexts regarding infrastructure, knowledge and support. With regard to infrastructural factors, some athletes, mostly from the Western world, had access to computers, the internet and written regulatory documents in their own language while athletes from the rest of the world found it more complicated to meet the anti-doping requirements, as they often lacked access to technology and information channels providing information in their own language. Language barriers were also perceived as a limitation preventing athletes from participating in decision-making processes regarding anti-doping. These infrastructural factors may be relevant to perceptions of legitimacy as they can be seen as unfair. Knowledge of, and access to, anti-doping education was perceived differently by athletes in different contexts. Some had good access to information and annual updates (for example on prohibited substances), while others had no access to information on doping control procedures, the Whereabouts reporting system and other requirements imposed on the athlete. This lack of information and the perceived lack of knowledge may have an impact on the ability to abide by regulations; and it may increase the risk of unintentional doping and, furthermore, risk the legitimacy of the system as there is a perceived lack of fair and equal conditions.

The level of support from organizations and the entourage was also found to vary between athletes depending on context. Since several of the anti-doping rules at the elite level are relatively demanding on the athlete, good support is important for the ability to comply with the rules. Some athletes had adequate support systems, with access to doctors with knowledge of the rules, as well as telephone support and assistance, which facilitated Whereabouts information filing, etc. By contrast, others experienced a lack of support although as elite athletes, they were expected to deliver both sporting success and know about, and handle, anti-doping activities. The results of this study show that the playing field is uneven from the outset.



Athletes from different parts of the world live in different contexts with regard to possibilities and conditions, also relating to the anti-doping system. These different conditions may have an impact on the legitimacy of anti-doping work as the system's procedural justice can be questioned. One conclusion is that decision making on global anti-doping policy must be based on consideration of the various prerequisites for implementing rules as well as awareness of the perspectives on which decisions are based.

## Article IV: Obligations and opportunities: elite athletes, anti-doping and compliance

*Background and aim:* Many of the anti-doping measures are aimed at athletes at the individual level, who are expected to adhere to the regulations and, also, who bear most of the blame and get punished and publicly shamed in case of a doping offence. Previous research has shown that even if athletes are generally supportive of anti-doping, various unintended negative outcomes of the regulations occur in practice that can affect athletes' ability to follow the rules. Little is known about the athletes' perceptions of their conditions. The aim of the article was to examine how elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping regulations with regard to their own responsibilities and abilities to be compliant with the rules, and to draw conclusions about what these perceptions could mean for the legitimacy and sustainability of the anti-doping system.

*Methodology and theoretical framework:* Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 elite athletes from five different regions and from the three international sports federations IAAF, FIBA and FIS. A theoretical framework on procedural justice (Tyler, 2006) guided the research process and was used in the analysis of the legitimacy of the anti-doping system concerning compliance. Additionally, the analytical process involved a perspective of legitimacy including the concept of appropriate actions.

*Results and conclusions:* The thematic analysis of the interviews showed that the situation of the elite athlete vis-à-vis the anti-doping system is in many ways complex and ambiguous. While the interviewees' situation could often be characterized by lack of leeway and control over their circumstances, they found themselves obliged to promote anti-doping rules and comply with various demands,

some of which they were unsure about because of lack of information. This rather complex situation for the athlete was interpreted and presented as two opposing images, of *the limited athlete* and *the dutiful athlete*. Results that contributed to the picture of the *limited athlete* were perceptions of lack of control, partly due to insufficient information and knowledge, which made the athletes dependent on others. Athletes' leeway seemed also to be restricted because of the organization around them, where much of the control lay in the hands of the entourage, and also because they appeared to have no part in decision-making processes.

The image of the *dutiful athlete* is based on results showing that elite athletes perceived that they had certain duties to fulfil: to contribute to the anti-doping system, to be disciplined, and to take the blame in case of failures. This contradictory image of the dutiful athlete was discussed in relation to the concept of appropriate actions, which are actions that confer legitimacy to the anti-doping system and reinforce the authorities' power and regulations.

Consequently, some factors were perceived to make the athletes' compliance challenging even though they themselves showed a dutiful attitude towards anti-doping authorities and rules. And while the perceived restrictions make compliance a challenge, most anti-doping regulations and sanctions are aimed at the athlete. This has resulted in a system that can be seen as procedurally unjust, which fact could, in turn, affect the system's legitimacy and the athletes' willingness to comply.

## 6. Discussion and analysis

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the legitimacy of global anti-doping policy and practice from the perspective of international elite athletes. The process has been guided by four research questions, which I will here discuss in sequence. The top-down perspective, with an analysis of legitimacy claims, will be analysed and discussed primarily in connection with the results of the first article. The findings of Articles II–IV are the main source for the analysis of the bottom-up perspective reflecting the athletes' views.

The analyses of the three dimensions of the bottom-up perspective each start from a recapitulation of the empirical material and related earlier research. Thereafter, I will turn to the theoretical framework, elaborated in this chapter summarizing the articles constituting the thesis, for an analysis of the results in relation to the aim of the thesis as a whole. In the concluding section, I will sum up the findings and discuss implications and consequences.

### Legitimacy claims

The first research question posed in this thesis was, *What claims for legitimacy do anti-doping authorities direct at elite athletes?* To address this question, the claims for legitimacy were examined using discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1989; 1992; 2003; 2010; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) to identify legitimization discourses in the athlete guide in its different editions (WADA, 2004; 2009; 2014a). By directing attention to language, we were able to gain an understanding of the anti-doping authorities' explanations as to why the social practice of anti-doping exists and why it looks the way it does, i.e. the legitimacy claims (cf. Van Leeuwen, 2007). These athlete guides are specifically written for the athlete and are considered to reflect the core of the WADC and aim to give information about the authorities' views on, and attitude towards, the athlete.

The analysis in Article I shows that the system has been justified in three major ways: through the legitimization strategies of authorization, rationalization, and moral evaluation. The main claim to legitimacy for anti-doping in the athlete guides is based on an authoritarian justification (cf. Fairclough, 2003; Van Leeuwen, 1996; 2007; Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). Using descriptions of the powerful role vested in the authorities, through their attitude towards athletes, through rule making, and through terminology and word choice, anti-doping efforts are legitimated in an authoritarian way, without anchoring in any overarching moral order (cf. Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). This strategy of authorization, with its language of power, indicates an adversarial position between the authorities and the athletes, where the latter are expected to follow rules imposed through instrumental governance, including controls and sanctions (cf. Tyler, 2006). Legitimation by authorization relates to earlier discourse analyses of anti-doping efforts. Jedlicka (2014) reports that the WADC uses an authoritarian discourse that helps maintain the power position of the anti-doping authorities. The early anti-doping work has also been described as belonging to a “warfare genre” where terms and means of power play a crucial role (Wagner & Pedersen, 2014). It can be concluded that an authoritarian approach, with use of a language of power, has been persistent in anti-doping over time.

However, the authorities’ grounds for legitimacy claims have shown a partial shift over time to a more rational stance, even if the authoritarian approach endures. The shift from “fighting the bad to protecting the good” is a sign of a justification originating in a rationalization perspective (cf. Fairclough, 2003; Van Leeuwen, 1996; 2007; Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). Claims for legitimacy are now based on showing that the anti-doping work is carried out in a serious, athlete-centred and more balanced way. The shift towards a softer rhetoric in the texts corresponds in practice to WADA campaigns and slogans such as “play true”, emphasizing the creation of equal conditions for, and the protection of, “clean” athletes (WADA, 2018b). This can be seen as a shift from disciplining the sports collective to a more rational and individual-centred approach, and corresponds to shifts in larger society where an intensified individualization is considered to be one of the main features of society today (cf. Ahmadi & Svedsäter, 2016). Furthermore, the discerned legitimization discourses can also be linked to the authorities’ view of the power relation with the athletes. The authoritarian approach can be seen as representing a relation characterized by conflict, with the purpose to overcome resistance and force compliance (Beetham, 2013; Tyler, 2006). The change showing a more rational

stance could possibly be a result of a shift of the anti-doping authorities' approach towards a consensual relation where power rests on consent (cf. Sköldberg, 2014).

Notably, these legitimacy claims that are based on rational justifications are occurring parallel to processes of the anti-doping enterprise becoming more comprehensive and, sometimes, being more intrusive for the athletes. During the study period, several far-reaching measures were introduced, including a stricter whereabouts reporting system, biological passports and a programme for intelligence and investigations. Hence, a contradiction can be seen between the legitimacy claims and the extent to which these claims reflect reality (Beetham, 2013): the quest for legitimacy is based on a softer rhetoric while the anti-doping system is becoming an "expanding technocratic system" (Jedlicka & Hunt, 2013; Meier & Reinold, 2018). It is possible that the rhetoric is softer and clarifies the rationality in the design of the anti-doping work, simply because the system is expanding to include increasingly severe measures for the athletes. The legitimacy claims for anti-doping are also based on moral grounds. For example, reference is made to specific value systems and moral principles that the athletes are supposed to live up to in order to contribute to the status and legitimacy of sport in the wider society. This morally grounded rationale behind the work against doping in sports has long been scrutinized and discussed (see, e.g., Dimeo, 2007; Loland & Hoppeler, 2013; McNamee, 2012; Ritchie, 2013) and in this thesis it is found to play an essential role in the legitimation of the system.

Thus, language is used to construct legitimacy (Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). The top-down perspective in my analysis shows that the authorities' legitimacy claims directed at athletes are built on legitimating strategies of authorization, rationalization and moral evaluation. By relating language analyses to the surrounding practices we can, according to Fairclough, increase the understanding of "how power relations work across networks of practices and structures" (2003 p. 16), which leads me to the next stage. The next step in the analysis of legitimacy within a social order is to take the bottom-up perspective (Beetham, 2013), in this case by focusing on the athletes, in order to assess to what extent their perceptions and the social practice of anti-doping confirm the legitimacy claims.

## The application of anti-doping regulations

The second research question posed was, *How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping authorities' conformity to rules?* To answer this question, I will begin by discussing the empirical material in relation to earlier studies. I will subsequently turn to the theoretical framework for the kappa in the analysis of rule conformity, which is the first dimension in the bottom-up analysis of legitimacy (Beetham, 2013).

There were findings in both the quantitative data and the qualitative material pointing to athletes' distrust concerning rule enforcement in certain aspects of the anti-doping work. A finding in the quantitative study was that some athletes thought that rules were not uniformly enforced in different parts of the world, resulting in injustice. For example, almost half of the respondents believed that the Whereabouts reporting system did not work properly in all countries and 70% felt that a request for a TUE was not handled in the same way for all athletes applying. These views can be seen as signifying that respondents felt that the rules are not conformed to by the authorities across the board, that is, by all anti-doping organizations at different levels and in different regions. Consistent with the results of earlier studies (Bloodworth & McNamee, 2010; Christiansen & Møller, 2007; De Hon, Eijs, & Havenga, 2011; Hanstad, Skille, & Thurston, 2009; McDermott, 2016; Overbye & Wagner, 2013), athletes' distrust of a globally harmonized enterprise seems to endure. In addition, another finding of the quantitative study regarding authorities' conformity to the rules was that many athletes mentioned a lack of efficiency; 58% of respondents thought that some individuals who used prohibited substances or methods escaped detection. The perception of lack of equivalence and efficiency in the anti-doping work shows a distrust towards authorities' application of rules.

As for own experiences of procedures, many athletes, mainly from Western countries, did not criticize the way power was exercised. Rather, as reported in Articles III and IV, they were satisfied with the enforcement of the regulations. They reported support from authorities for the practical execution of procedures within the system, which suggests favourable perception of anti-doping authorities' application of the rules. For instance, such support took the form of access to technology, education and an assisting organization. Their responses showed satisfaction with how the anti-doping rules were applied.

As opposed to Western athletes' positive attitude towards the rule conformity by the authorities, athletes from other parts of the world expressed the opinion that anti-doping organizations do not conform to regulations. As reported in Article III, many athletes found that they were not provided with the conditions, as set out in the rules, that are supposed to create "a level playing field". Areas of neglect included the provision of education as well as written information in their own language. An essential consequence of these omissions is highlighted in Article IV, where athletes were reported to have limited leeway to gain control over the anti-doping procedures, but at the same time were held liable in case of rule breaking. In the interviews, it was evident that some athletes experienced support from their entourage that exceeded into governance, which made the athletes themselves powerless. In concordance with earlier studies (Donovan, Egger, Kapernick, & Mendoza, 2002; Huybers & Mazanov, 2012; Jalleh, Donovan, & Jobling, 2014), support personnel were found to have a substantial impact on athletes' sporting lives. An athlete's entourage can, to some extent, be seen as "the authority" who is supposed to provide knowledge and support regarding anti-doping. Some athletes felt powerless, especially when the authority operated beyond the limits of regulations in exercising power. Even if this is not a matter that is regulated by WADA, the athletes' powerlessness in relation to (what they perceived as) the authority, and simultaneously the fact that they were held responsible for any rule violations, can be considered procedurally unjust and therefore a legitimacy issue (cf. Tyler, 2006).

Therefore, some perceptions among and experiences of athletes relating to the authorities' actions may have caused doubts about the authorities' conformity to rules. According to Beetham (2013), the bottom-up legitimacy analysis of a social order starts with an examination of whether power is exercised in accordance with established rules. So, is there sufficient evidence that the power in the anti-doping system is exercised in accordance with established rules to be able to say that the first condition for a legitimate anti-doping system is fulfilled? Based on parts of the quantitative study and answers from some respondents (largely from Western countries) in the qualitative study, the answer could be affirmative. Nevertheless, reports by other respondents suggest that the execution of power may be viewed as *illegitimate*. Divergence in implementation and enforcement of rules, the system's lack of efficiency to reveal "cheats", and non-provision of prerequisites for compliance could be seen as power that is being exercised against the rules. A legitimate ruler does not neglect the rules, acquire power against the rules or exceed

the limits of regulations (Beetham, 2013). Where athletes find the execution/implementation of the rules to be inefficient to the extent that the application of rules cannot be controlled, legitimacy is put at risk. In addition, athletes who perceive themselves in the hands of their entourage could possibly experience the power to exceed the limits of regulations. The question of illegitimacy is an important one, considering that the anti-doping system and its main authority strive to be a global gathering power. For a long time, WADA has been struggling with harmonization efforts (Houlihan, 2014) which have proved far from successful (Dikic et al., 2011; Hanstad et al., 2010; Houlihan, 2014; Mazanov & Connor, 2010). That athletes from some parts of the world are experiencing a lack of rule conformity by the authorities must be considered a risk that they will regard the rules as illegitimate. Possibly, the findings of this thesis can shed light on the risks of perceptions of a non-harmonized anti-doping system as these perceptions can affect how the power is understood.

Most social orders, including the anti-doping enterprise, are dependent on rules that regulate the order. For the individual, the anti-doping regulations create predictability regarding the actions of others and describe the expectations for own behaviour (Beetham, 2013). Rules prescribe one's responsibilities and the entitlements which one can expect others to acknowledge. They also describe who has the power and, accordingly, the rules can give protection to the powerful. For an authority to claim that the subordinate should abide by and have respect for the law, regardless of its content and design, is an authoritarian claim. Within the framework of this thesis, such a claim would mean that the athletes should be compliant "because that is how it has been decided" or because the anti-doping rules "say so", a sort of self-sufficient justification. However, for a social order such as the anti-doping system to be perceived as legitimate overall, it takes more than the authorities' autonomous justification of the rules and conformity to them. The finding in Article I, that the prevailing legitimization discourse in athlete guides is authoritarian, shows that a self-sufficient justification has been dominant. However, anti-doping will not be legitimate just because rules exist; furthermore, the authorities cannot rely on arguments such as "the WADC says so". Rules do not make grounds for themselves just by being rules. Rules must be justified through arguments grounded in values shared by those involved in the system, which is the second condition I will analyse in the search for evidence of legitimacy (Beetham, 2013).



## Anti-doping as a principle and practice

The third research question posed was, *How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping as a principle and practice?* I will begin to answer this question by presenting and discussing relevant results for the analysis of anti-doping as a principle and practice, in relation to existing knowledge. Thereafter, I will turn to the analytical framework of the kappa for an elaborate discussion on legitimacy.

The question on athletes' experiences and perceptions was addressed by both a survey study and an interview study to gain broad knowledge as well as a deeper understanding of the issue. The analyses were aided by theory on legitimacy and procedural justice. The main results from the quantitative survey, reported in Article II, were that athletes in general approve of the anti-doping policy, but that the practice and procedures carry negative consequences. Among the perceived negative features were inefficiency and unequal conditions, intrusions in the athletes' everyday life and on their privacy, as well as dissatisfaction the athletes felt about their limited influence over anti-doping policy making. The findings were interpreted as meaning that the athletes perceived the policy as legitimate but that this legitimacy could be jeopardized by the procedures within the system being perceived as procedurally unjust.

The procedures within the anti-doping system were subsequently in focus in the qualitative interview study. The understanding gained from this study, reported in Article III, was that conditions for meeting the requirements of the anti-doping regulations were not the same for all athletes and all contexts. This divergence primarily concerned infrastructure-related matters, such as technology-related and language issues, access to knowledge and education, as well as support from the entourage. Some contexts provided all the right conditions for meeting the requirements of anti-doping regulations, while others did not, and this was concluded to constitute a playing field that is uneven at the outset. Therefore, "the level playing field" that anti-doping efforts often claim, or aim, to create can be reconsidered in light of the results of the qualitative study.

Earlier studies on perceptions of anti-doping, mainly carried out in one single country or focusing on a specific sport, report that athletes support specific parts of anti-doping policy (De Hon et al., 2011; Dunn et al., 2010; Hanstad et al., 2009; Overbye & Wagner, 2013; Sas-Nowosielski & Świątkowska, 2007; Striegel et al.,

2002; Valkenburg et al., 2014). Further, earlier research conducted in specific countries and sports has found that athletes perceive negative consequences of anti-doping in practice (Bourdon et al., 2014; Breivik, Hanstad, & Loland, 2009; Elbe & Overbye, 2013; Hanstad & Loland, 2009; Overbye & Wagner, 2013; 2014; Pitsch et al., 2007; Valkenburg et al., 2014). In relation to this existing knowledge, the contribution of the survey study in this thesis on athletes' perceptions is the inclusion of a considerable number of athletes from many different countries and sports. Our research largely confirms the findings of earlier studies, yet with provision of a framework for legitimacy analysis. Earlier studies on athletes' perceptions of anti-doping have indicated a potential risk for a decrease in legitimacy but without providing theoretical anchoring. The legitimacy framework elaborated in Article II allowed for analyses that showed that athletes are in favour of anti-doping in principle – therefore, that athletes in general view the principle as legitimate, though at the same time they do not perceive procedures within the system as just, which puts the legitimacy at risk. The increased understanding of the athletes' disparate conditions in different contexts is a further contribution of these studies to the research on anti-doping. The possibility to include a geographically dispersed sample in the interview study enabled analysis of the consequences of global implementation of procedures and measures that were developed in a small part of the world (Houlihan, 2014; Park, 2005). The results emphasize that the imposition of global regulations that are non-sensitive to local variation in resources and assets (cf. Palmer, 2013) has created outcomes that may directly affect the individual athlete.

Departing from Beetham (2013), the acquisition and exercise of power, as stated in the rules and pursued in practice within a social order, should be in line with accepted norms within that specific social context to be viewed as legitimate. Consequently, the analysis should include an assessment of whether the anti-doping rules are based on norms and values that are accepted and shared by those involved. In the analysis I used the concept of procedural justice to describe and evaluate the anti-doping practice that forms part of athletes' everyday lives.

How then, is the power within the anti-doping system acquired and exercised and what are the athletes' normative beliefs? Turning to the findings reported in Article I, regarding WADA's own description of how they obtained their authority, the acquisition of power is a story of unanimous acceptance from both the sports movement and the governments of the world. This narrative description of the

authority is a part of the authority's legitimation strategy and is used to justify how power has been gained. Thus, the anti-doping authorities' norms and values can be found in regulatory documents and related texts. However, attempts to legitimize the system are not the same as a legitimate power relationship, which is based on shared beliefs of rules and procedures, and confirmed by explicit consent. Legitimation strategies can be seen as the authorities' efforts to give reasons for acceptance of the system. Whether this, then, is accepted by the athletes is a matter of whether the justifications are aligned with the athletes' normative beliefs about the rightness of the rules and the authority.

There is bottom-up empirical material in this thesis that speaks in favour of shared normative beliefs regarding the principle of not allowing doping in sports. Judging by the answers of the 261 athletes included in the quantitative study reported in Article II, sportspersons generally support the principle of prohibiting doping in sports. Only 2% of respondents answered that doping should be allowed while 80% endorsed the idea that anti-doping activities should in the future be maintained at current levels, or else increase. This can be understood as an acceptance of the rules built on normative perceptions about the aim of anti-doping as a principle.

The concept of *acquisition of power* concerns whether the rules are made in such a way that power is given to the best suited authority, as well as whether the structure of power serves the common good (Beetham, 2013). Even if there are results supporting the anti-doping principle, the anti-doping authority is contested in the empirical material of this thesis. The results in Articles II, III and IV emphasize athletes' wish to have more influence and their scepticism about athletes' representatives having any real impact on decision making. The constraints to *participation in decision-making procedures* have been found to potentially affect the perceptions of procedural justice within the system (cf. Tyler, 2006). It has been previously stressed that athletes have been marginalized in decision making about anti-doping (Christiansen & Gleaves, 2013; Dimeo, 2010; Houlihan, 2004; Kreft, 2011; Valkenburg et al., 2014; Waddington, 2010). This thesis, which is empirically grounded, supports and extends the depiction of the athletes' side-lining in the acquisition of power. The findings of the negative consequences that occur in practice in both the quantitative and the qualitative material speak in favour of the consideration of athletes' perspectives and influence in policy making. As the anti-doping procedures have been shown to affect sportspersons largely in terms of time, effort and integrity, and as they are distrusted for being inefficient and, further, as

they are not carried out equally in all countries, this is a strong argument for listening to the athletes. The formation of trade union-like organizations for sportspersons, such as EU Athletes, who have anti-doping issues on their agenda, is a sign of athletes striving to gain more power and influence. A recent occurrence that highlights athletes' call for influence was a summit held by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, together with the United States Anti-Doping Agency, in autumn 2018 (subsequently criticized by WADA for being one-sided) (Morgan, 2018). International elite athletes were invited to attend this event, together with leaders of national anti-doping organizations, to discuss doping in sports, and criticism was raised towards WADA's lack of success as well as its culture and leadership (Ingle, 2018). The athletes demanded more democracy, transparency and athletes' full voting right in anti-doping governing bodies. The issue of athletes' participation in sports policy was therefore highly topical at the summit. Speakers at the event questioned whether the rules are constituted to give power to the best suited authority, and whether WADA is that authority (cf. Beetham, 2013). An athlete-centred approach in policy making would most likely raise awareness of the consequences of different measures and possibly result in an anti-doping system that is viewed as legitimate and that therefore has greater sustainability. The question of athletes' participation and influence in decision making connects to a larger debate within sports policy literature, about the democratization of sports governance in general (Donnelly, 2015; Geeraert et al., 2014; Thibault et al., 2010). Therefore, the lack of representation and participation in sports policy concerning anti-doping, by the sportspersons themselves, is of significance for legitimacy reasons, as well as for democratic reasons.

In this thesis, the concept of *exercise of power* (Beetham, 2013) in combination with the concept of *procedural justice* (Tyler, 2006) was used to analyse the procedures within the system, specifically to investigate whether the procedures are based on values that are shared by all involved and therefore perceived as just. Our findings in all the articles with a bottom up-perspective (Articles II–IV) suggest that the execution of the rules in practice entails consequences that can affect perceptions of procedural justice, and in turn, legitimacy (cf. Jackson et al., 2012; Murphy & Cherney, 2012; Tyler, 2006). One criterion of procedural justice within the system that was not evident in the findings was the aspect of *interpersonal treatment*, i.e. the perception among athletes of being treated with dignity. Indications that interpersonal treatment was lacking were that athletes felt they were being monitored. They were anxious about the Whereabouts reporting system as well as

the urine doping control. The scarce possibilities for athletes to participate in decision making, due to language barriers and lack of leeway in favour of the entourage, were another indication that the fulfilment of the criteria of interpersonal treatment could be questioned.

The *trustworthiness of the authority* to create a fair outcome for the athletes is another criterion for perceived procedural justice. Findings that spoke against the fulfilment of this criterion were that athletes perceived the anti-doping system as inefficient and not equitably executed across nations and sports. It was noteworthy that the one criterion of procedural justice (Tyler, 2006) that was not contested by the athletes was *neutrality of decision making*. Apparently the athletes seemed to trust that resolutions are made without bias even if they, as previously discussed, are not frequently represented in the decision making. For the athlete, the exercise of power takes place in diverse settings and the anti-doping authority may consist of sports and anti-doping organizations at different levels. The harmonization of anti-doping work, discussed above, is important in relation to the athletes' situation. It seems that the athletes' perceptions of procedural unfairness did not primarily concern the absence of shared values underpinning the regulations; rather, they concerned the consequences arising from a system implemented unequally in different parts of the world. When athletes are not uniformly given the same conditions, this can mean that athletes from certain parts of the world are disadvantaged (including the disadvantage of being at greater risk of inadvertent doping).

In conclusion, the exercise of power entails certain consequences that could affect athletes' perceptions of procedural justice and, thereby, the legitimacy. Nevertheless, these perceptions do not seem to emanate primarily from diverging normative beliefs about the justification for anti-doping. Rather, they come from the large impact that the consequences have at the athlete's level. Regarding the acquisition of power, the normative beliefs may be more disparate between the anti-doping authorities and the athletes. However, under the circumstances, it must be considered hard to know, as athletes' views are not well known. There is a risk of *legitimacy deficit* – a discrepancy between the rules and the norms – if the athletes' norms are not known because of scarce representation and also because of low interest, on the part of the authorities, in sportspersons' perspectives. A legitimacy deficit could be the result of decision-making processes that do not take into account the normative beliefs of the athletes initially or their changed beliefs over time

(Beetham, 2013). Such a deficit could cause a negative spiral in that a loss of legitimacy, due to unknown or disregarded normative beliefs of the athletes, would entail less support for the system and a lower degree of cooperation. In turn, this could lead to anti-doping authorities having to concentrate on maintaining the order and their own position. Therefore, the call for empowerment of the athletes in decision making has been a topic in sports policy and the anti-doping debate for quite some time and it still seems to be an unresolved issue, which we have found to be a potential risk for a legitimacy deficit of the enterprise.

Shared normative beliefs, and signs of rule conformity by the authority were the first two dimensions I have analysed from a bottom-up perspective. The analysis of the third dimension includes an assessment of whether acceptance of the authority and the rules is shown in actions (Beetham, 2013), which leads to the next question in my thesis: the one of compliance.

## Compliance

The fourth research question posed was, *How do elite athletes experience and perceive anti-doping regulations in relation to their own responsibilities and possibilities to be compliant with the rules?* I start by discussing the question in relation to the results from the empirical material and earlier studies before I move on to the analysis of legitimacy according to Beetham's third dimension of appropriate actions (2013).

The research question was addressed by a qualitative approach and a theoretical framework of procedural justice and legitimacy. Two of the overarching themes from the interview study, that of the *limited athlete* and that of the *dutiful athlete*, were found to describe an ambiguous situation for sportspersons. While often restricted in decision making, with limited control over compliance issues, the athletes at the same time felt obliged to be responsible and dutiful in the anti-doping work, almost to the point of being overconforming. There were athletes who, due to insufficient knowledge and information, were dependent on their surroundings to the cost of own control. Similarly, their leeway was limited because of lack of influence in decision making. In some cases the athletes' entourage seemed to deliberately restrict the athletes' control.

The contradictory theme of the *dutiful athlete*, identified during the research process, did not explicitly link to imposed procedures and possibilities to be compliant.

Nevertheless, the finding of the athletes' dutifulness became intriguing when considered alongside the restrictions experienced by many of the athletes. Findings relating to the limited athlete were analysed against the theoretical framework of procedural justice; findings regarding the dutiful athlete were discussed against Beetham's (2013) concept of "appropriate actions". While the athletes' dutifulness could be seen as a sign of acceptance and dutiful acts could be interpreted to confirm the legitimacy of the system, the perceived restrictions affecting the limited athlete's own control could eventually result in a system that appears procedurally unjust and, therefore, that is not legitimate and that will most likely affect the athlete's willingness to comply. As discussed, it is important that procedures within a social system are perceived as just, for the system to be recognized as legitimate (Tyler, 2006).

Empirical research specifically examining athletes' perceptions of compliance is scant. Despite the presence of sportspersons' representatives in decision-making bodies, athletes' influence in these contexts has been minimal, which could mean that their perspectives are not considered (cf. Christiansen & Gleaves, 2013; Dimeo, 2010; Houlihan, 2004; Kreft, 2011; Schneider, 2009; Valkenburg et al., 2014; Waddington, 2010). There is an obvious gap in the literature on athletes' perspectives on compliance and implications for the legitimacy of anti-doping, a gap this study attempts to fill. It can be concluded that the anti-doping rules which aim, first and foremost, at the athletes and individual behaviour, risk to overlook the impact of structures surrounding the athlete and entail that it is the athletes who have to take the risks (cf. Henne, 2015). The recent allegations of Russian systematic state-sponsored doping (McLaren, 2016) stress the importance of taking structural forces into account when considering compliance. Institutional, or collectively induced, use of performance-enhancing means creates a complex situation for the athlete.

Evaluating the legitimacy of the anti-doping system at this point means searching for signs of acceptance from the athletes in their actions (cf. Beetham, 2013). It can be concluded that mere compliance is not enough to be able to say that people agree voluntarily to a power relationship, as obedience can be forced. That people are not clearly protesting is not in itself a sign of consent. What kind of observable evidence, then, is needed? According to Beetham, we have to look for performative acts that are expressions of a legitimate system, and that "confer legitimacy on the powerful" (Beetham, 2013 p. 91). Generally, these acts have to be built on voluntariness and should not be forced on people. It should be possible to choose between various opportunities.

Are there observable performative acts, in the material of this thesis, that confer legitimacy on the anti-doping authorities? Based on the results reported in Article III, it can be concluded that athletes, mainly from the West, show their willingness to behave in accordance with anti-doping regulations, by keeping track of prohibited substances by consulting databases, accomplishing their anti-doping education, filing their Whereabouts information, etc. The results from Article IV emphasize this as athletes were eager to support, and participate in, the work against doping in sports. Respondents expressed that as top athletes they had a certain responsibility to contribute to fairness in sport by doing their duty, such as informing and influencing other athletes not to take drugs or setting up their own information programmes. These performative acts contribute to the legitimacy of the system, as the actions themselves create a continued normative commitment to anti-doping for the individual who performs them (Beetham, 2013). In addition, the symbolic significance of these actions confirms the legitimacy of the system and can be used justifiably against athletes not yet that committed, as well as towards society in general. A well-known athlete who is a representative on an athletes' committee or who otherwise takes an active role in the anti-doping work is most valuable to the authorities as this person acts as a role model and confirms the system's legitimacy (cf. Beetham, 2013). Athletes who are part of executive bodies perform a legitimizing function through their performative acts of participating in consultations, negotiations, and decision making. Their actions can be seen as a form of contract agreement signifying commitment, on behalf of all athletes, to follow the policies. These legitimizing actions are of greater significance than the performative actions of individuals (Beetham, 2013).

Another way to address the issue of observable performative acts is to establish whether athletes "dope" or not, since "not doping" can be considered a performative act in itself. The presence or absence of doping is nevertheless not easy to establish. The WADA annual testing figures reports since 2003 show that around 1–2% of tests are found to be so-called "adverse analytical findings" (De Hon, Kuipers, & van Bottenburg, 2015). The test figures correspond poorly to the estimated prevalence of doping in elite sports, explored through, for example, surveys and indirect methods such as biological passports. Estimates have suggested that doping prevalence among elite athletes ranges from 14% to 43.6% (De Hon et al., 2015; Ulrich et al., 2018). There therefore exists a large uncertainty regarding the prevalence of doping, which makes it hard to use the athletes' actual (non-)doping behaviour as a sign of a performative act that confers legitimacy to the authorities.



Even if the doping prevalence among elite athletes is difficult to establish it can be concluded that a common understanding of the prevalence of doping actions is essential for the legitimacy of the system. If most athletes believe that others are acting in line with the regulations, this confers legitimacy to the power (cf. Beetham, 2013). Suspicions that others are using forbidden means and that “cheats” are getting away with doping without being penalized, on the other hand, are likely to de-legitimize the system. Alternative actions, opposing the performative act of not doping, would indicate resistance and even the perception that they are widespread would undermine the legitimacy of anti-doping regulations. In line with the above discussion about athletes’ impact on policy making, it seems essential in decision processes to take the sportsperson’s perspective into consideration, also concerning the risk of *de-legitimation* of the system. Knowledge about athletes’ performative acts and their perceptions about the same would enhance the conditions for developing a legitimate policy. This seems especially important with regard to athletes who are less able to participate in decision making because of, for example, language barriers or limited resources. Not paying attention to differences, and perceived differences, in possibilities to comply with the regulations – that is, through performative acts – would possibly entail a larger de-legitimation among those with limited resources.

As noted previously, the performative acts that confer legitimacy to the authorities have to be built on voluntariness and should not be forced on people (Beetham, 2013). In elite sports, the voluntariness of the acts that confers legitimacy to anti-doping authorities can, however, be discussed. As soon as the consequences of not taking part in the appropriate actions become severe, the voluntariness is limited (Beetham, 2013). Do the athletes have the alternative to choose not to participate and act according to the anti-doping regulations? Clearly, they could choose not to be elite athletes, and thus avoid the inconveniences and privacy intrusions of the system. However, this is a more complex issue than it might seem. As mentioned previously, by the time athletes have reached the elite level, they, and probably their close family and entourage, have invested a lot of effort and money into the sport over many years. It is, as Kreft (2011) points out, not realistic to say that an athlete, at any point in time, can choose between the voluntary sporting activity and an ordinary life. Athletes have certain social obligations and psychological circumstances, also regarding pressure from sponsors, the media and the public, and regarding the fact that much of their financial situation is dependent on their sporting success (Dimeo, 2010). In addition, for sportspersons in some parts of the world, a

successful sporting carrier could mean the difference between poverty and a decent life. This rather multifaceted situation for the athlete makes the question of voluntary acts complex.

Another alternative action if the requested acts are seen as undesirable, besides from not participating in sports, would be for athletes to raise their voices, challenge the system and question whether its rules and the required actions are reasonable. On the other hand, many athletes feel the need to show their commitment to “playing true” at all costs and may therefore be seen as not having many options but to willingly accept any measure, irrespective of its design. This is the case even when innocent athletes face suspicion of use of prohibited enhancing means from the surrounding community, when they perform well (Ryan, 2015). The results of Article IV show that athletes want to prove their innocence in almost every way possible and it is evident from Article II that many athletes agree to even more extensive anti-doping activities.

This urge to show their innocence can be seen as a credibility contest (Møller & Dimeo, 2014), where questioning the rules may invite suspicions of doping. Ryan calls this amenability an “imposed-voluntary-compliance” (2015 p. 647). The athletes show their purity by giving legitimacy to the extensive controls, supporting anti-doping policy and showing their accountability. As previously discussed, consistency between the system and people’s values provides conditions for legitimacy. This includes acceptance of regulations and rule following of free will (in contrast to fear of disciplinary actions).

However, what is the meaning of consistent, shared values between those governing and those governed? Perhaps this is a “myth about unity of purpose and values” (see Jackson et al., 2012)? At the least, the authority must be able to demonstrate moral alignment with the athletes by acting in a procedurally just way and being sensitive to values in the sporting community. Only then can it create prerequisites for a legitimate system (cf. Jackson et al., 2012).

In short, some actions from athletes can be seen as signs of acceptance of the authority and the rules. Sportspersons’ willingness to actively support and take part in the anti-doping work confirms the system’s legitimacy, both internally for the ones performing the acts by the normative engagement they create, and externally by the symbolic force their acts can have on others (Beetham, 2013). However,

athletes' diverging conditions, in different contexts, for performing "appropriate actions" must be considered a risk for de-legitimation of the system. The results of this thesis point to the importance of awareness of the conditions and situation of athletes, as well as of the issue of voluntariness.

## Concluding remarks and implications

The approach to legitimacy employed in this thesis, with its analyses using both a top-down and a bottom-up perspective, has elucidated different aspects of the athletes' situation vis-à-vis the anti-doping system. I have analysed and discussed my research questions above. In the following I wish to make some concluding remarks and discuss possible implications of the findings.

Firstly, I want to return to the overall aim of the thesis, which has been to analyse the legitimacy of global anti-doping policy and practice from the perspectives of international elite athletes. What can actually be said about the venture of anti-doping in relation to legitimacy? Is it justified in accordance with the athletes' beliefs? Perhaps it is better to reason about the *extent* to which the policy and practice of anti-doping correspond to the athletes' values and expectations? The question of legitimacy is, as Beetham (2013) points out, not an all-or-nothing affair. One conclusion is that the idea and principle of a doping-free sport is justified in accordance with the athletes' beliefs, and in that sense the anti-doping system could be seen as legitimate. However, there are also results that must be considered a risk for a decrease in legitimacy. The risks can be described as follows: regarding the first of Beetham's (2013) three dimensions of legitimacy, rule conformity, the risk of *illegitimacy* concerns perceived inequalities, lack of efficiency and lack of autonomy. These perceived inequalities could be a sign that athletes believe that power is acquired against the rules or that the power exceeds the limits of the regulations (cf. Beetham, 2013). As for Beetham's second dimension, shared normative beliefs, there is a risk for a *legitimacy deficit* in that the acquisition of power is perceived as not sufficiently influenced by the athletes. Decision-making processes that do not take into account the normative beliefs of those involved or that fail to acknowledge changes in viewpoints could result in a discrepancy between the rules and the norms (Beetham, 2013).

Concerning the third dimension, appropriate actions (Beetham, 2013), there are actions confirming the legitimacy of the power relation in the anti-doping system. However, if perceptions of illegitimacy and a legitimacy deficit are increasing – in line with the pointed-out risk for the first two dimensions – and hence there is a decrease in compliance with the regulations, then the third dimension of legitimacy would be affected and a *de-legitimation* would possibly result in an increase in athletes' actual doping. Alternative actions, such as intensified doping, could be signals of resistance towards the system. This would further undermine the legitimacy of the system; the more people resist, the greater the de-legitimation. The risk for de-legitimation emphasizes the possible snowball effect that increased alternative actions could have.

With the abovementioned risks, one could ask: in broad terms, what would be the *consequences* if the anti-doping system lost legitimacy, in that the authority fails to observe the power relationships' inherent limits? Most probably, one consequence would be that the authority would be increasingly dependent on coercion and would spend large resources on control and punishments. Lack of legitimacy would also likely lead to athletes being less willing to cooperate; hence, the quality of performance in the relationship would decrease (cf. Beetham, 2013). In such a situation, the authority would need to put more emphasis on trying to maintain power, which would further erode legitimacy, etc, in a vicious circle.

If, instead, the system and its authorities are viewed as legitimate by athletes globally, this is of significance, not only for the powerful (i.e. the anti-doping authority), but also for the athletes who will experience stable and predictable conditions, which will provide usefulness and functionality to the anti-doping enterprise. The conclusion to be drawn is that the perceptions of the athletes, as core actors in the system, are of significance for the sustainability of the power relationship. Authorities' respect for the limits of their power, set by the rules and their underlying principles, combined with acknowledgment of the core actors, is a fundamental prerequisite for legitimacy of anti-doping.

At last, in concluding the work of this thesis, we can ask questions such as: What is the most reasonable stance to take concerning anti-doping in elite sports? Is the current governance and policy, with its comprehensive and intrusive control apparatus for athletes, reasonable in relation to the outcome? Is the continued prohibition of doping in sports desirable? (The vast majority of athletes in the

empirical material expressed this desirability.) One argument for the current situation must be the strive to harmonize anti-doping efforts globally through one gathering authority and aim for worldwide equal conditions, as the athletes in my studies requested. The athletes' dutiful attitude speaks in favour of the current state, given that the dutiful acts performed by the athletes in my material are seen as appropriate actions that confer legitimacy to the authority. However, if upholding the anti-doping norm is desirable, and if this desire is based on a view that a legitimate enterprise is what best serves this position, there are some implications of my studies I would like to highlight. The athletes' generally positive perceptions of the anti-doping principle are, in my view, an important condition for future efforts in the field and an expression of a stance that should be treated with care. As I have shown above, there are challenges that need to be addressed so as not to jeopardize the athletes' principally supportive position. In order to address the issue of unwanted, inefficient and unjust procedures, more emphasis should be put on the athletes' perspectives when creating rules and designing procedures. Involving the athletes, listening to them, and letting them influence the system and the rules would provide greater knowledge and understanding of the consequences in practice. Further, the finding that athletes in different parts of the world perceive to have unequal conditions for following the regulations must be taken seriously. The harmonization work has to some extent entail that current procedures are designed by "best practice" in the Western world, which sometimes fits ill with conditions in other parts of the world. Even if this issue is not an easy-to-solve problem, a sensitivity towards different contexts and conditions would possibly increase the legitimacy and athletes' possibilities for compliance.

I also want to direct attention to the orientation of the anti-doping system entailing that athletes are the primary focus of its efforts and activities. The current work, which is largely directed at "the doped athlete", is misguided when there are organizational forces at play that are beyond the control of the athlete. Often the athlete is limited in leeway and yet simultaneously it is the athlete who is held responsible and punished. Drawing more attention to the level of organization and the underlying structure would possibly increase the possibilities that athletes may find the system legitimate. In light of what the anti-doping system means for the athletes, there are ethical, democratic, practical and policy-related arguments for a venture that its core actors find desirable, proper and appropriate and, therefore, legitimate.



## 7. Summary in Swedish

Det globala antidopingarbetet inom idrottsrörelsen är en omfattande verksamhet där idrottsutövaren står i centrum för regleringar, granskningar och kontroller. Det finns begränsad kunskap om vad detta relativt genomgripande kontrollsystem innebär för idrottsutövarna och vilka konsekvenser detta kan få för systemets legitimitet. Det övergripande syftet med avhandlingen är att analysera legitimiteten för global anti-doping policy och praktik ur internationella elitidrottares perspektiv.

Fyra artiklar ingår i denna sammanläggningsavhandling. Den första belyser, utifrån ett diskursanalytiskt angreppssätt, hur legitimitetsanspråk för antidopingverksamheten skapas i policydokument riktade till idrottsutövare. I den andra artikeln undersöks uppfattningar om, och legitimiteten för, antidopingarbetets policy och praktik genom en enkätstudie riktad till elitidrottare i olika idrotter och regioner i världen. I avhandlingens tredje artikel undersöks, genom en intervjustudie, hur idrottsutövare i olika kontexter upplever antidopingarbetets praktik och vilka konsekvenser detta kan få för arbetets legitimitet. Intervjustudien var också underlaget för den fjärde artikeln där fokus riktas mot utövarnas upplevelser av, och uppfattningar om, möjligheter till regelefterlevnad och dess följder för synen på legitimitet. I avhandlingen kappas utökas analysen av legitimitet inom antidopingsystemet genom ett övergripande analytiskt ramverk inspirerat av David Beetham.

Resultaten visar att legitimitetsanspråken i policydokumenten baseras på i huvudsak auktoritativa, men också rationella argument för att rättfärdiga antidopingverksamheten. Elitidrottare visar sig generellt vara positiva till antidopingarbetets policy och princip om att doping ska vara fortsatt förbjudet. När reglerna omsätts i praktik uppstår dock problem som kan ha betydelse för arbetets legitimitet, genom upplevd brist på rättvisa procedurer. Procedurer inom systemet uppfattas inkräkta på privatlivet, ha bristande effektivitet, inte vara likvärdigt genomfört globalt sett och inte heller ge utövarna själva inflytande i beslutsprocesser. Anti-dopingarbetets praktik upplevs också ge upphov till ojämlikhet och strukturella orättvisor beroende på skiftande tillgång till teknologi,

utbildning och kunskap samt stödjande system. Utövarna känner vidare en plikttrogenhet att följa reglerna, samtidigt som vissa idrottares situation karaktäriseras av brist på egen kontroll och därigenom ett begränsat handlingsutrymme för att ta det strikta ansvar som dopingreglerna föreskriver. Även om idrottsutövarna är plikttrogna och utför handlingar som ger legitimitet till reglerna och auktoriteterna, visar också den övergripande legitimitetsanalysen att det finns upplevelser och uppfattningar som kan riskera antidopingarbetets legitimitet. Idrottsutövarnas uppfattningar om brist på likvärdigt, effektivitet och handlingsutrymme kan tolkas som att antidopingauktorer inte tillämpar de regler som de själva har utformat. Det förefaller också finnas en brist på kunskap om utövarnas uppfattningar och värderingar inom antidopingsystemet. Beslutsprocesser i systemet som inte tar hänsyn till elitidrottarnas uppfattningar kan resultera i en diskrepans mellan reglerna och utövarnas värderingar.

Det internationella antidopingarbetet är ett stort internationellt system där omfattande regler ska tillämpas lika världen över och som också ska erhålla legitimitet i olika länder där idrottsutövarna har helt olika förutsättningar för att följa regelverket. I denna studie har jag visat att dessa olika förutsättningar får konsekvenser för möjligheten att följa reglerna och även för tillämpningen av regelverket. De långtgående reglerna innebär att procedurer inom systemet upplevs medföra en rad negativa konsekvenser. Jag har också visat att detta riskerar utmanar systemets legitimitet om man inte uppmärksammar problematiken.



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