

ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AS PREDICTORS OF ATHLETES' ACHIEVEMENT IN NIGERIA SPORTS COMPETITIONS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the Predictors of Athletes Achievement in Nigeria Sports competitions. To achieve this purpose, survey research design was used. The total population was Seven thousand, One Hundred and four (7,104) in the six (6) Geo-Political Zones of Nigeria. The sample size for this study was Six Hundred and Ten (610) at 99% confidence level with 0.05 degree of accuracy was used for the study. An attrition of 15 copies was added to 610 to make it a total of 625. The instrument used was a self-developed questionnaire. A descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages was used for the analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, mean and standard deviation (SD) was used to analyse answers to the research questions while inferential statistics of Chi-square (χ^2) was used to test the Hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the study revealed that facilities will significantly predict athletes' achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions ($\chi^2 = 268.04$, $p = 0.000$) leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The researcher concluded that facilities are predictors of athletes' achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions. The researcher recommended that government should always ensure that sports facilities are provided in required quantity to enhance performance.

Keywords: Facilities, Predictors, sports competition, Athletes, Achievement

Introduction

Sport has permeated Nigerian society just as it was in many other societies worldwide. This view was supported by Morakinyo (2019) who pointed out that sport is a social phenomenon that has grown from its humble beginning of being an entertainment and recreation pastime to become a visible and prominent business phenomenon that could no more be ignored in the social, political and economic environment of any nation. The outstanding relevance of sports to humanity makes sports management and administration the bedrock for sports development in virtually all nations. This is the aspect that is responsible for the smooth-running of various sports in terms of planning, organizing, directing and controlling all essential inputs in sports. Sports succeed or fail in direct proportion to the appropriate decisions and actions of those responsible as sport manager and administrators (Oloruntoba, 2017).

Msheila (2018) also described sport as a highly organized physical activity of high human intensity regulated by accepted rules and regulations, which requires maximum physical and mental exertion. He also went further to state that sport is a form of education which pervades the lives of people throughout the world, permeating through the process of knowledge starting from the rules of competition to the complex art of coaching, administration, research and nation-building. Sport is a means of exchange and understanding among people of various backgrounds, nationalities or beliefs, and promotes expression beyond traditional barriers. Sport has gained political and social significance, with growing public awareness of its

contribution to personal health, community development and the national economy. As a result, there is increasing demand for higher quality and more diverse provision, and stakeholders are expected to possess a range of personal skills and attributes that are appropriate to influence the performance of athletes at different levels of sport competition.

There is no doubt that sport is a major unifying factor amongst Nigerians. However, despite the massive talents in the country and the palpable love of the people for sports; it is quite unfortunate that the industry is still very much under-developed. This is the reason Nigeria only records success in international competitions once in a while; rather than replicating it on a constant basis (Salawu, 2017). Sports administrator works with athletic organizations to improve sports programs. Sports managers strive to create programs that are profitable, beneficial to athletes and successful both on and off the field. They work for secondary and collegiate athletic departments, professional teams, sports facilities, country clubs, fitness clubs, States Sports Councils and community athletic associations (Abdulkadir, 2017).

The management and development of athletes to enhance sport performance is what many people might associate with “sports administration”. Team managers, coaches, agents, and trainers would fall on this side of the spectrum, working directly with talent to optimize their performance. Among the role performed by sports administrators are: provision of facilities and equipment needed to be carried out, planning the training programmes, provision of functional welfare services for the athletes and provision of a functional reward system. Others are the provision of funds that could be used to carry out the entire sporting programmes, provision of accommodation, as well as provision of transportation for the athletes (Abdulkadir, 2017).

Nigeria is a country of young people and so sports is a major segment of the county. That has been the case since the 40s and intensified after independence. Even though football has taken up a lion's share of time and resources, many other sports like athletics, boxing, and basketball have thrown up memorable moments. At national and international organized sports competitions, Nigerians participated in various sports competition for instance, Ajunwa became the first athlete in Nigeria to win an Olympic gold medal and she is also the first black African woman to win an Olympic gold medal in a field event. She remains Nigeria's only individual Olympic gold medalist to date.

Nigeria became the first African country to win the Olympic gold in the football event at the 1996 Olympics. The team, captained by Nwankwo Kanu, went the circuitous route; coming from 3-1 down to Brazil in the semi-final to win 4-3 with a sudden-death goal from Kanu and then repeating the feat against Argentina in the final. Nojeem Maiyegun represented Nigeria at the 1964 Summer Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan, then he won the bronze medal in the men's Light Middleweight category and enter the history books as Nigeria's first Olympic medalist. The national team, the Golden Eaglets was the inaugural winners of the U-17 World Championship, as it was known in 1985, held in China. The team coached by Sebastien Brodericks and Christian Chukwu beat Germany in the final 2-0, with goals from Babatunde Joseph and Jonathan Akpoborie.

Nigeria's Wellington Jighere won the Scrabble world title triumph in 2015 and in the process became the first African player to be crowned World Scrabble Champion. The national male basketball team, D'Tigers won their first-ever FIBA Africa title in Tunisia in 2015 by defeating their perennial nemesis, Angola 74-65 in the final, led by Emeka Ugochi, who scored 19 points. Enyimba FC of Aba won Nigeria's first Champions League crown – the CAF Champions league. Nigeria qualified for the 2009 ICC World Cricket League Division Seven, held in May 2009 in Guernsey. The tournament was the first stage of the qualification structure for the 2015

World Cup. Chika Yagazie Chukwumerije qualified for the 2008 Olympic Games and defeated Akmal Irgashev of Uzbekistan to win Nigeria's first bronze medal in taekwondo at an Olympic Games tournament. Nigeria won the inaugural African Women Championship [AWCON] in 1998. The team beat Ghana 2-0 in the final match played at Abeokuta, Ogun state.

Samuel Peter won the WBC Heavyweight title in 2008 when he defeated Oleg Maskaev by TKO in Mexico. Though Peter's reign lasted only seven months, returning Vitali Klitschko eventually defeated him. This and more were Nigeria's performance at the national and international sports competitions. These performances were as a result of the roles played by sports administrators in Nigeria. Various research was conducted with regard to the role performance of sports administrators on the athletes' performance in Nigeria but very little was done with respect to how the role performance of sports administrators predicts athletes' performance achievement at the national level in Nigeria. This prompted the researcher's interest to undertake this study with the sole aim of establishing the assessment of the predictors of athletes' achievement in Nigeria Sports Competitions.

The role of standard facilities in sport performance at all levels of sports competitions cannot be over-emphasized. Technology has transformed sports facilities and equipment to a very high level which affects performance as well as athletes' achievements. No one can dispute the fact the quality and quantity of training programmes which athletes undergo during the period of their preparations for competitions is another strong predictor of their performance and or achievement. The psychological, physiological and tactical preparations are parts of training of the athletes for all types of sports competitions. Equally, sponsorship and welfare of athletes are other strong predictors of athletes' performance and or achievement in sports competitions hence they serve as other strong sources of motivation to the athletes. Considering the significant roles of the aforementioned predictors of athletes achievement in Nigeria sports competitions, it has however, been observed with high level of dismay that such achievement predictors seem not to be accorded their required recognition and attention by the sporting organizations and the stakeholder of sports in Nigeria. The provision of funds, standard facilities, equipment, training, sponsorship, and welfare of the athletes for competitions seems to be lacking or grossly inadequate. In football for example payment of fringe benefit, match bonus and allowances as welfare to both male and female professional footballers is either delayed or withheld. Technology has transformed sports facilities and equipment to a very high level which affects performance as well as athletes' achievements. It is of no doubt that Nigeria is still operating below expectation in the use of technology in the stadium in training athletes in athletics, football, basketball and tennis etc sponsorship is never a constant affair in different sport tournaments ranging from interscholastic to Nigerian university game, national youth game and national sport festival etc. clubs need to lobby private organization such as companies and firms before getting one.

This definitely influences negatively on the quality of their performance and achievement at all levels of sports competitions in Nigeria. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that the researcher intends to assess the predictors of athlete's achievement in Nigeria sports competition

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the Predictors of athlete's achievement in Nigeria Sports competitions. Specifically, find out whether:

Provision of sporting facilities predicts athletes' achievement in Nigeria sports competitions.

Research Questions

The following research question was raised for this study:

To what extent will provision of sporting facilities predict athletes’ achievement in Nigeria sports competitions?

Hypothesis

For the purpose of this study, the following research hypothesis was formulated.

Provision of sports facilities does not significantly predict athletes’ achievements in Nigeria’s sports competitions.

Methodology

Survey research design (ex-post-facto) was used for this study. This is due to the fact that information required to achieve the purpose for this study is already available with the respondents and no manipulation of any independent variable is required. Kerlinger (1986) stated that this method is the best tool to use in survey descriptive research involving current events or conditions. In this design, opinions of respondents on the predictors of athletes’ achievement on Nigeria sport competitions were discussed. Thus, the Ex-post-facto was chosen for this study on the basis that there was no involvement of experimentation. The population of this study consists of national and state athletes of both male and females are as follows: Football, Basketball, Volleyball, Handball and Athletics. The total population was Seven thousand, One Hundred and four (7,104) in the six (6) Geo-Political Zones of Nigeria. The sample size for this study was three hundred and sixty-five (365). According to research advisor (2006) stated that for a population of seven thousand one hundred and four (7104) a sample size of three hundred and sixty-five (365) at 95% confidence level with 0.05 degree of accuracy is said to be adequate. The researcher used a multistage sampling procedure to select the sample for the study. The instrument used in this study was a self-developed questionnaire. The instrument comprised of Six (6) sections as follows:- Section A was on demographic characteristics of the respondents, Section B was on Funding, Section C was on sporting facilities, Section D was on sporting equipment, Section E was on training programs, Section F was on sponsorship of Athletes while Section G was on welfare Services of Athletes. For the purpose of responding to statements in Section B – F responses was made using a five (5) point likert type scale.

Results

Research Question

Would sporting facilities predict athletes’ achievement in Nigeria sports competition?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Sporting Facilities as a Predictor of Athletes’ Achievement in Nigeria Sports Competition

| S/N | Item | Mean | Std Dev |
|-----|---|------|---------|
| 1. | Facilities provided for athletes performance in sport achievements are available but not adequate | 3.72 | 1.03 |
| 2. | Facilities provided for athlete performance in sport achievements are available but in bad condition | 3.70 | 1.04 |
| 3. | Facilities provided for athletes performance in sport achievements are maintained and adequately used by athletes | 3.22 | 1.24 |
| 4. | Facilities provided athletes performance in sport achievements are available and in good condition | 3.32 | 1.24 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 5. | Facilities provided athletes performance in sport achievements are regularly utilized by athletes | 3.45 | 1.13 |
| 6. | There are varieties of facilities for athletes performance in sport achievements | 3.65 | 1.09 |
| 7. | Facilities provided for athletes performance in sports achievements are adequate | 3.13 | 1.22 |
| 8. | Facilities provided for athletes performance in sport achievements are not adequate | 3.62 | 1.19 |
| 9. | Facilities provided for athletes performance in sport achievements are of standard | 3.43 | 1.11 |
| 10. | There are availability of facilities provided for athletes performance in sport achievements | 3.93 | 1.20 |
| Aggregate Mean | | 3.52 | 1.15 |

(Decision Mean – 3.5)

A careful observation of Table 1 showed the mean scores of the responses on sporting facilities as a predictor of athletes’ achievement in Nigeria sports competition. The responses for each item were computed and item 10 had the highest mean score of 3.93 indicating that the majority of the respondents affirmed that there are availability of facilities provided for athletes’ performance in sport achievements. However, the aggregate mean score of 3.52 was obtained which is greater than the decision mean score of 3.5. This implies that sporting facilities is a predictor of athletes’ achievement in Nigeria sports competition.

HO: Facilities does not significantly predict athletes’ achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis of facilities as a predictor of athletes’ achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions

| Variable | N | df | Cal. χ^2 Value | χ^2 Critical Value | P-Value | Decision |
|------------|-----|----|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|----------|
| Facilities | 620 | 36 | 268.04 | 50.99 | 0.000 | Rejected |

P < 0.05

Table 2 shows that the calculated chi-square value is 268.04 while the critical value is 50.99 with the degree of freedom of 36 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated value of 268.04 is greater than the critical value of 50.99 at 36degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which stated that facilities would not significantly predict athletes’ achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions is rejected. This implies that facilities will significantly predict athletes’ achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions.

Discussions of Findings

This hypothesis revealed that facilities will significantly predict athletes’ achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions. This is because the calculated value of 268.04 is greater than the critical value of 50.99 at 36degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that facilities predict athletes’ achievements in Nigeria Sports Competitions. The provision of facilities in all sports is one of the major priorities in the promotion and development of sports. Responsibility for the provision of the facilities shall be shared by the government, individuals and private organizations.

According to Awosika (2019), it might be impossible to achieve satisfactory results from athletes whose training facilities and equipment are inadequate or sub-standard. The inadequacy of sports facilities in universities constitutes a big cog in the successful

administration, organization and management of sports programmes in universities. Bucher (2012) opined that facilities should be planned and constructed with an eye to the future. Therefore, facilities maintenance should be given serious attention for the long-lasting of the facilities. Facilities maintenance management is an important tool needed for effective sport participation.

Danjuma (2017) asserted that sports facilities are important for sports to thrive in our institutions. The responses of the students indicate that the availability of facilities is a significant determinant of sports participation of private and public secondary school students in Kwara State. This corroborates the submission of Lawrence, (2019) who acknowledged that like in other organizational settings, facilities are of paramount importance in the effective execution of physical education programmes. It should be emphasized that a functional facility will attract the interest of the students and instructors.

Lawrence (2019) noted that facilities are important, if the facilities are available, adequate and well-maintained, there is every possibility of students participating in sports programmes. Barghchi & Omar (2014) also observed that standard facilities are essential prerequisites to athletes' participation and achievement in sports. It is important to note that the presence of adequate facilities will help keep athletes busy and stimulate them to learn new skills and make learning permanent. Sports facilities are crucial to the development of athletic potential because they act as significant stimuli that attract or influence most young people's emotions in relation to sports. Thus, when sports facilities are not available for athletes to use, they might not develop much interest in sports.

Luschen (2019) found that the student's level of sports participation was significantly influenced by insufficient sports facilities and equipment. Buttressing this submission the findings of this study revealed that the majority of the respondents affirmed that there are availability of facilities provided for athlete's performance in sports achievements. This often occurs especially when new sports facilities are built in schools. Unfortunately, the building of sports facilities in Nigerian secondary schools has been mostly substandard and irregular (Barghchi& Omar, 2014); as such, they do not contribute much to the reduction of the low level of sport participation among secondary school students. The findings further indicated inadequacy and poor maintenance of available sports facilities and lack of qualified coaches to utilize the sports facilities in the training of athletes as a hindrance to their participation in sports.

This finding supports Lawrence (2019) who reported that the state of sports facilities in Nigeria is a major factor influencing the participation, interest and performance of athletes. However, this finding is against the finding of Awoma, (2017) that assessed the facilities as a predictor of sport development in Delta State and found that facilities did not significantly predict sports development in Delta State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, facility is a predictor of athletes' achievements in Nigeria's Sports Competitions.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, it was recommended that the government should always ensure that sports facilities are provided in adequate quantity and continuously maintained to enhance athlete's achievement in Nigeria sports competitions.

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