

# **S**IGNIFICANT OF SPORTS PROGRAMME ON THE EMPOWERMENT OF YOUTHS

<sup>1</sup>DR. SANI MUKTAR BICHI; <sup>2</sup>EMMANUEL OBIAGBA

*Human Kinetics and Health Education Department, Faculty of Education,  
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*

## **ABSTRACT**

**T**he lack of continuous development and proper investment in sport especially that which is targeted at the physical and psychological development of youth have been the bane of youth under development with the attendant consequence of deviant nature, engagement in crime and eroding of socio-cultural and economic contributions to social development. Sports has a special attraction to young people as it offers opportunity for fun, play and physical challenges and the development of youth oriented programmes in sport is fundamental towards promoting the sporting culture amongst young people in Nigeria. The extent to which this could be said to be applicable in our society and how it has impacted the lives of the youths. Furthermore, the extend significant of their engagement in sports programmes could also improve their health status, mortality rate and alleviate their poverty status in

## **Introduction:**

The lack of continuous development and proper investment in sport especially that which is targeted at the physical and psychological development of youth have been the bane of youth underdevelopment with the attendant consequence of deviant nature, engagement in crime and eroding of socio-cultural and economic contributions to social development.

The engagement of young people is one of the most visible forms of violence in society. Around the world, newspapers and the broadcast media report daily on violence by gangs,

*the community as sports industry can create opportunity for employment thus making youth productive members in the society. Conclusion and recommendations were made on the way forward that, the agencies such as state sports councils, sports clubs and federation have direct responsible for youth development and should embark on periodic sensitizations, and enlightenment programme among youths on the merit of participation in sporting activities.*

**Keywords:** *Sports, Youth, Empowerment.*

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■ In schools or by young people on the streets. The main victims and perpetrators of such violence, almost everywhere, are themselves adolescents and young adults (Reza and Krug, 2001). Homicide and non-fatal assaults involving young people contribute greatly to the global burden of premature death, injury and disability. Youth violence deeply harms not only its victims, but also their families, friends and communities. Its effects are seen not only in death, illness and disability, but also in terms of quality of life. Violence involving young people adds greatly to the costs of health and welfare services, reduces productivity, decreases the value of property, disrupts a range of essential services and generally undermines the fabric of society.

Wilson (2013) regards the youth as the most active segment of any community population, which determines the peace and stability of the community. The same determines the degree of disorderliness and instability of any community. Elegbeley (2005) sees youth restiveness and violence as sustained protestation embarked upon by to enforce desired outcome from a constituted authority by an organized body of youth's sport has a special attraction to young people as it offers opportunity for fun, play and physical challenges.

According to Biki (2011) over one billion people in the world today live in unacceptable conditions poverty. The most tragic of the effect of poverty is that it affects youths within the age bracket of 14 to 50 years old (Ajaegbu, 2012). This makes it more dangerous because this vulnerable group is

susceptible to committing and perpetrating all sorts of crime like terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, assassination, thuggery, prostitution, drug addiction, human trafficking etc.

Organizes sports programme therefore, has a great potential to attract young people away from the tendency of engaging in violence and crime that are detrimental to the development of the society. Unfortunately, this capacity has not been well tapped in many places due to lack of financial and material support, voluntary leadership coaching and administration of sport ([www.toolkitsportsdevelopment](http://www.toolkitsportsdevelopment)).

History have shown that from the earliest time to present, physical activities have played a major part in the life of people. This has been motivated by factors such as the need to earn a living and the desire to live a fuller life. It was reported that "the evolution of sports has been closely associated with the evolution of man himself". Furthermore, that the primitive man uses sports in his existence in a relatively more hostile environment as a medium to develop abilities to fight, express his exuberance emotion, transmit his skills to positive life and to recreate himself after days' work. As he evolved, sports become an essential part of his instinctive behavior and integral part of his religious celebration, rituals and cultural activities (Venkateswarlu, 2000).

Emeruwa (2014) stated that the development of youth oriented programmes in sports is fundamental towards promoting the sporting culture amongst young people in Nigeria. This will further decrease the crime rate among idle youths in the country. We must not lose sight of the potential of sport as a vehicle for addressing unemployment among Nigerian youths. Sport, when properly organized and managed, can serve as an economic catalyst for any nation.

### **Concept of Youth Empowerment**

High rate of violence, crime high risk of sexual behavior of any group are usually seen among the youth population. As a result of these, they are usually labeled as deviants and perceived as source of society problems instead of been seen as potential assets to the society. This has led the

government to seek for new approaches in order to harness the potentials as well as address the problems of the youth. The concept of youth empowerment is thus gaining increasing attention not just from the government, but also other non-governmental agencies. It be pertinent to say that the concept of "youth" is based on one's understanding and ones believe. Empowerment according to Azikiwe (1993) could be explained to mean giving or providing power, independence. It is a way of helping the youth to explore their youthful strength, creativity and dynamism, cooperate with one another to turn things around them for their own good and for the good of the society.

### **Historical Development of Sports Programme**

Sports is a collective term incorporating a large number of different activities. Omolawon and Mohammed (2006) defined sports as an institutional competitive activity that involve vigorous physical exertion and the use of relatively complex physical skills by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of intrinsic satisfaction with the activity itself and the external rewards earned through participation. Sports make people of different cultures, races, ethnic groups, age, sex social and economic status develop friendly and harmonious relationships. Awosika, (1988) in Andrew and Opaoluwa, (2012) asserted that sports have not only become a unifying factor, but also an essential ingredient towards nation building. Omolawon and Samuel (2006) reported that sports is becoming popular throughout the world and most successful used. Sports according to them is phenomenon which project the image of country economically. Pertinently, sorts as an activity, gives participant a full sense of enjoyment, satisfaction, physical wellbeing. This is so because people participate in sports for different reasons, while some go into it to satisfy personal needs others are involved to reduce tension, or develop a high level of physical fitness. Bright, Bill and Mayer (1993) in their work reported that taking part in sporting activities can be man's best opportunity for an enriched abundant and satisfying life.

The field of sports is activity gaining ground in Nigeria since the emphatic pronouncement of decree 34 of 12<sup>th</sup> August 1971, which established the National Sports Commission Decree 1971 Ladani, (2007). This decree gave the commission power to regulate, control, develop and promote sports activities in all the three tiers of government and institutions in the country. History shows that from the earliest time to the present, physical activity has played a part in the people life.

Sports programme in Nigeria is coordinated and managed by the federal government under the auspices of the federal ministry of sports, National Sports Commission, the National Institute for Sports which is a sport development and training institution and the sports federations. While the administration of sports is decentralized in the country, the states are also zoned in order to facilitate the delivery of sports to the grassroots. The Nigerian Schools Sports Federation (NSSF) organized sports competitions at both primary and secondary schools level respectively. This it does in collaboration with the states ministry of education, the state sports councils and the National sports commission.

### **Philosophy and Scope of Sports Programme**

Philosophy is a field of inquiry that attempts to help individuals to evaluate in a satisfying and meaningful manner their relationship to universe. It seeks to help people evaluate themselves and their world by giving them a basis with which to deal with the problem of life and death, good or evil, freedom and restraints, beauty and highness (Bucher, 2001).

Philosophy is rooted in the desire to understand the world, in the desire to find an intelligible pattern in events and to answer problems which occur to the mind in connection with the world. A philosophy of any field of endeavor is extremely important to all those who intent to go into that particular field. One cannot be an effective teacher, coach of sports administrator in today's changing society if he or she does not have a well thought out philosophy.

In today's changing society, there must be a sound philosophy of physical education and sports programme for the profession to survive. One

question, sports administrator and planners must ask themselves includes: What has values in the society? What is relevant to the needs of today's youth and adult?

A philosophy of sports programme according to Bucher (2001) will thus serve the following functions: -

- A philosophy of sport and physical education is essential to professionals. Any person who claims to be a physical educator, or sports experts should have developed carefully, it will help one to have a common basis for thinking about their profession, properly articulate the meaning and worth of their field of endeavor to the public at large, become motivated to achieve greater professional accomplishment and better evaluate programme and practices.
- Philosophy helps guide one's action. To function as an intelligent being, one needs a philosophy for life that will guide one's action. One need knowledge of what is right before any programme can be created. A sound philosophy will help the coach, teacher, administrator decide what he or she wants to have happened or impacted on the youths in the field.
- Today, many of our programmes of activities as well as curriculum lack order and direction. Having a philosophy of what one intends to do give direction to programme when assumptions are made by the instructor. For instance, that an activity strengthens human relationship because children play together. Such assumption should be based on a system of reflective thinking that embraces logic and other philosophical components. A philosophy of sports programme will help to provide this system.
- Many members of sports professionals today are dissatisfied with what they see happening in their field. Philosophy of sports programme would thus aid in bringing together members of the profession. This will enable sports experts and administrators to determine how they can best contribute to society through sports (Ndanusa, 2012).

In achieving a sound sport programme therefore, youths as well as administrator and experts in the field of physical education and sports should develop a philosophy of that discipline. This will serve as a guide to decision making, since it will clarify the worth of this field of endeavor. Such philosophy should include among others: -

- How sports should be conducted in order to benefit mankind.
- Determine the parameter of sports as a leisure and sports as a means of living.
- Determine how to achieve excellence of performance on the sports field.

Summarizing the significance of sports to youth of the developing countries, Toriola, Adetoro and Igbokwe, (2000), reported that sports in developing societies is serious business with functions to perform. It is state controlled with specific utilitarian and ideological designs associated with hygiene, health defense, patriotism, integration, productivity, international recondition, cultural identity and nation building. Sports, often has the revolution role of being an agent of social change with the state as a pilot.

Sports today has become extremely popular and has a strong foothold on the Nigerian youth, it is therefore imperative to provide direction to sports programme that will enable the country achieve set goals. Bucher (2001) suggested four guidelines for the conduct of sports programme:-

- Restrictive athletics to achieve cognitive, psychomotor and effective learning.
- Provide sports programme where intensity of competition is developmental in nature.
- Designing of programme that gives more opportunities for girls and women.
- Institute changes in the organization and administration of sports programmes.

### **Basic Concepts of Sports Programme**

Sports plays an important role at the individual, community, national and international level respectively. For an individual it enhances one's personal abilities, general health and self-knowledge. On the national level, sports contribute to economic and social growth, improve public health and bring different communities together. Access to and participation in sporting programmes provides free interactions with youths of other social, cultural or religious inclinations irrespective of gender, disability or other discriminations. Through sports individuals experience quality, freedom and dignifying means for empowerment (Adolf, 2005).

Over the year's sports have come to be regarded as catalyst for economic development. Individually, each of the various sectors of sports economy can create activity, jobs and wealth when they are integrated into single strategy and it is possible for a nation to achieve additional economic gains because of the synergies that result. Through the formulation of a viable sports programme the local economic potentials inherent in sports is further enhanced. The concepts of developing a sports programme evolved from a review of structure already in existence across the country and the identification of the challenges sports faces by the state. Most activities have been intrinsically linked with various associations with their underpinning programmes predominantly either club led. These ideals have led to inconsistency of opportunity both local and state level, and thus leading to the inability to produce elite athletes. The concept is thus focused towards developing a strong network to clubs, having a strong work force, a viable composition framework, and create an enabling environment in each local government or community to raise the standard of sports. By this opportunities are created not just for maintaining the standard of various games, and progress towards the provision of elite athletes, but also provides opportunity for the athletes to achieve the potentials ([www.asaner.sportcentric](http://www.asaner.sportcentric)).

Sports programme should therefore be modeled on a hub and satellite basis with each locally having a performance club that serves as the overseer to all other affiliate clubs for youth participation. However, to

make their successful, the following key areas of operation have to be put into consideration: -

- Athletes and youth development.
- Work force development.
- Health related fitness.

### **Determinant of Sports Programme**

Before any programme is developed, there is the need to study the training and availability situation of the participants. For this to be done successful, certain items needs to be included in survey which would help the programme developer determine how and what should be contained in the programme. These determinants include: -

- There is the need to evaluate the philosophy and policy of sport obtainable in the country putting into focus what type of people to be served, the location of the various groups as well as the climatic condition of the society.
- **Focus group:** - There is the need to determine the number and types of individuals to be involved in the programme.
- **Equipment:** - This is also strong determinant of any sports programme.
- **Facilities:** - Look at the number, types and location of facilities for various sports.
- **Fund:** - The success of any sports programme is the ability of those concerned to successfully fund it.
- **Personnel:** - The need to make assessment on the number of people required to run a hitch-free programme is very important.
- **Activities:** - Another determinant of sports programme should be the activities (Muktar, 2014).

### **Types of Sports Programme**

In trying to design a programme of activity for any ties, there is need to have different types of sports programme that will suit the need of the different categories of people who are to use it. This is so because athletes

are in different categories and as they move from one phase of training to the other, there is need to have types of programme that will not only suit them but also cater for their need. The types of sports programme should include: -

- Intramural and extramural sports programme.
- Intercollegiate sports programme.
- Training programme.
- Competition programme (Muktar, 2014).

### **Objectives of Sports Programme**

Oloruntoba, (2005) reported that the justification of any sports programme is its contribution to the fullest development of the individuals who participate in the programme. In order to achieve these objectives therefore, the manager ought to ensure that the various aspect of the school (staff, students, resource and programme) are well planned, organized and executed. Accordingly, objectives of sports programme should thus consist of the following: -

- Having good and useful sport plan and policy.
- There should be good inter-relationship among participants in the sport programme.
- Adequate improvement and execution of sport programme.
- Proper motivation and training of sports coaches and other officials.

Oloruntoba, (2005), stated the following as cardinal objectives of the sports programme:-

- To use sports and recreation as a tool to uplift the standard of living of the youth.
- As a means of poverty eradication through the use of policies and strategies that involve the youth.
- Encourage the development of skills and self-reliance in various sectors through the use of sports.
- To increase youth accessibility to sports and recreation.
- Contribute significantly to the eradication of hunger.

- Provide development and employment opportunities through sports equipment and manufacturing industries.
- Promote gender equality and women empowerment.
- Encourage mass participation.
- Provides sports facilities and infrastructures at all levels.
- Attract hosting of major national and international sporting events.
- As an instrument of unity.
- Create linkage between sports and development of sporting goods manufacturing.

### **Youth and Sports Programme**

The development of sports can be regarded as a process of continuous improvement of a sport structure, sports performance and programme in order to create a condition that is conducive to physical fitness for all and the effect function for self-actualization (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1989). According to Anyanwu, 2000, sport development covers all the dimension of sport programmes including, the performance, participants, sports facilities, equipment, fund, as well as personnel. Youth sports programme of sport designed to help young person irrespective of gender to acquire and develop sound sports skills and techniques according to one's ability.

The need to look at the development of youth sports today in countries all over the world especially leading nations in the world of sports concentrate more of their efforts on youth sports programme. This is because as a person advances in age, his or her ability to endure environmental stress such as in sports, working capacity. It was also reported that most proficient age among Olympic athletes is between seventeen and thirty-five years of age.

Nigeria being a lucky nation with more youths in its population could use sports to mould the behavior of the present generation so that they will grow to be leaders that will turn this country Nigeria into a great nation through sports and other areas of human endeavors. The country which neglects its youth is heading for disaster because this period is very

important. This age the "golden years" of grassroots sports development, emphasis must therefore be laid for the development and acquisition of skills in a wider variety of motor activities.

### **Conclusions**

The secret behind the achievement of some developed countries in the field of sports lies in their performance in international sports competitions. Through sports technology, athletes in their countries have been able to attain excellence in their various areas of interest. This is made possible because qualified and knowledgeable coaches, good facilities and equipment and a well-designed sports programme. Sports programme must be that which is sustainable and can cater for the needs of all tiers of government as well as educational institutions. It should be able to meet the needs of not only the present generations but equally that of the future, without however compromising the needs of the future generations. For success to be achieved in any sports especially in aspect of programmes development, it requires that people have varieties to choose from. There is therefore the need to provide all members of the societies and communities and with increased opportunities and varieties of conditions necessary for them to attain set goals. A well designed programme will assist in meeting the objectives of a sustainable youth empowerment strategy that will go a long way in contributing to the economic and social development of any nation.

### **Recommendations**

- The youth participation in sports programme has significant contribution to youth empowerment as it will totally eliminate the crime in the society.
- The tiers of government should take it as a matter of priority to carry out periodic enlightenment programme among youths on the merits of participation in sporting activities.
- The funding of schools sports programme should be made adequate in order to meet the needs of sports.

- Adequate sports facilities, equipment, personnel and motivation should be priority of government and non-governmental organizations.
- Various sports competitions should be regularly organizing and participated without hindrance to gender.

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