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Abstract
Participation in sport in African universities is essentially at two levels i.e recreational and competitive levels. However, enrolment in sports at the universities is militated by structural, interpersonal, intra personnel and social – cultural constraints. This paper outlines the nexus between sport participation and academics in African Universities. The management concerns of administration, budgets, sport programmes, status of sport research and sport personnel are scrutinized with a view of generating possible solutions to the myriad challenges that accrue. Recommendations are to be embraced by the central governments, universities and the corporate sector to spur sport participation in the African universities.

KEY WORDS: Challenges Nexus, sports, academic, management, universities.

Introduction
Participation in recreation and sports in African universities just like other educational institutions in the world is at two levels, that is, recreational and competitive. However, sport participation ratings among both students and members of staff across the universities are somewhat low. Sport programmes that emerged from a survey in Nigerian universities reflect inaccessibility, inertia, elitism and reductionism (Shehu,2000). Researchers and practitioners are puzzled that many university students maintain a sedentary lifestyle (Wallace, et al, 2000; Keating, et al ,2006) yet the university system is viewed as offering the major national concentration of highly educated and experienced sport persons and scientists forming the basis for a wide variety of sport expertise (Shehu,2000)

Studies have indicated that the number of sports participants in the universities are low due to structural constraints (facilities, equipment, money, time and information about sport participation), interpersonal constraints (individual relationships with others such as play mates or partners and reinforcement from significant others). Intra- personal constraints include individual dispositions, personal endowments such as stress, physical ability, attitudes, religion etc and socio-cultural constraints (traditional beliefs, myths, stereotypes and sex role orientations (Yusuf & Omor- Fauzee, 2003; Gitonga, Wahome & Njororai, 2003; Mwisukha, Wahome & Wanderi, 2011). Despite the low enrollment of students, participation in sport is still vibrant at intramural and intramural programmes. Universities in Africa take part in national, regional, continental and global competitions such as world university championships and world university games. However, African universities performance in these world events is not comparable to performance from universities in the West and East. Indeed, university students from America, Europe and Asia form the bulk of the athletes representing their countries in the Olympic Games and other world events.
Benefits of Sport Participation

Physical Educators and sport experts would agree that sport participation brings numerous physiological, psychological, educational and social benefits to the participants. The general benefits of sport participation would include:

- Improving health and expending students surplus energy
- Obeying the societal rules and constraining delinquent behavior.
- Promoting societal values, integrity and building character.
- Enhancing confidence, motivation, sense of empowerment and self-esteem.
- Providing social interaction, fun and enjoyment.
- Offering opportunities for education and career in sports.
- Expanding life experience and making more friends.
- Knowing how to deal with failure and difficult situation
- Developing life-skill (Eitzen & Sage, 2008; Woodruff & Schallert, 2008).

More specifically, the educational benefits associated with intercollegiate sport participation include:-

i. Collegiate students’ athletes were often engaged in academic and campus activities than their non-athletes peers (Umbach et al, 2006, Williams, et al, 2006)

ii. College student-athletes were more likely to transfer learned life and work skills and self-esteem and character traits into their chosen career fields (Woods, 206).

iii. Successful sport programs attract, student athletes and non-students athletes with higher academic scores hence improving the academics of the institution as a whole (Mixon, et al, 2004).

iv. As the graduation rates for students athletes are on the increase in American Universities (Franklin, 2006; Hosick, 2008), one can justifiably argue that intercollegiate athletes have a positive impact on student athletes as well as on college education (Markein, 2009).

On the contrary, other studies have showed that sport participation had either negative association or no effect on male college students—athlete’s academic motivation, development and learning ability (Wolniak et al, 2001). Students who participated in intercollegiate athletics did not have a better Grade Point Average (GPA) (Shulman & Bowen, 2001) or greater outcomes in cognitive learning and motivation (Wolniak et al, 2001) when compared to those students who were not athletes.
Additional negative consequences and psycho-social problems were found to be associated with collegiate athletic participation. These are violence on and off the court, eating disorders, poor academic performance and low graduation rates among major revenue-generating sports, alcohol and performance-enhancement substance abuse, depression and burnout, hazing, gambling and lack of social life and experience (Miller & Kerr, 2003; Bacon & Russell, 2004; Miller, et al, 2005, Miller, et al. 2007; Eitzen & Sage, 2008: Grossbard, et al, 2009).

Despite the above bipolar schools of thought, sports in a majority of African universities occupy a central position in keeping students away from mischief, catering for the welfare of the students and faculty, continued perpetuation of the colonial legacy and marketing of academic programs. Njororai (2010) opined that universities are spending more money on recruiting less academically prepared students and building elaborate sport facilities instead of utilizing their resources in funding academic/research scholarships or programs that will enhance the student-athletes’ academic career. Overall athletes in educational institutions have been noted to have more interest in continuing with education after school, better attendance records, lower dropout rates and less involvement with drugs. In addition, athletes show increased interest in school, enhanced membership and interaction with educationally oriented peers. University athletes are socially outgoing and attract increased attention from significant others.

**Management Sports in African Universities**

There are various management issues which plague sports in African universities based on their historical evolution, religious affiliation and mode of financing their educational programmes (public or private). However this section will address management concerns under the following the broad areas of directorates of sports, budgeting for sports, sport programmes, staff participation, status of sports research and personnel involved in sports management.

**Directorates of Sports**

All universities in Africa have directorates, sections/subsections to administer and manage sport programmes for students and staff. However, the administrative hierarchy of the above units is not homogenous. Some of sports and games departments are placed under the faculty of education, dean of students or a section in the department of student’s affairs. Heads of these units could be directors at the associate professor level hence they are senators or coordinators working under many authoritative heads like dean of students, chairman of academic departments (in universities where physical education or sport science is taught), or office of Deputy vice-chancellor or vice-chancellor. There is a dire need to streamline the administrative structures of sports in African universities’ so as to reflect homogeneity.

Shehu (2000) survey in Nigeria found that personnel in the university sport centers were composed of
men and women with at least a diploma and bachelors degree and one holding a PhD. He opined that:

"While a B.Ed degree or diploma in P.E will conceivably prepare those (Sports Officers) for a teaching role, they were far less oriented towards sport marketing, economics of leisure services and sports science research. This fails to recognize the fact that it is not the years of schooling or qualifications that intrinsically increase workers ability to manage a university sports enterprise but rather the quality of job- relate specialized training and skills obtained unit in school" (Pg. 43).

In view of the foregoing, there is every need to have some homogeneity in the placement of directorate of sports in universities in Africa. This will possibly ensure that administrative structures are similar in all the universities.

Budgeting for Sports.

Financing of sporting activities in African universities is mainly through activity fee which is subsidized by central governments. The activity fee is meant to cater for facilities and equipment, supplies (ball, uniforms, sports, shoes) travel and allowances. Minimal budgets or allocations to the university sport departments lead to inadequate provision of sport facilities and equipment, inadequate personnel, limited travel and exposure, and few athletes’ honour international sporting events. Mwisukha et al., (2011) reported that the main technical factors that militate against Kenyan universities ability to nurture top athletes are inadequate number of qualified coach and trainers, low number of talented athletes at university level and inadequate exposure of athletes to structured local and international competitions. Due to limited financing of sport activities in the universities in Africa, Shehu (1996) proposed the following remedies or options for raising revenue:- setting up a sport equipment supermarket within the universities, hosting of commercial sport clinics, coaching courses and seminars. Other revenue opportunities may involve renting sport facilities to outside agencies and seminars, charging students for use of gymnasium, tennis courts and others.Universities can also improve their revenue base by organizing internal events which participants /spectators pay to have admission ( beauty contest, Mr. Campus competitions, dance tournaments, marathon races ),

Starting of sports endowment fund, raffles and lotteries, annual contribution from alumni, Launching commercial sport camps for children during Easter, Christmas and long vacations, commercial video/film show of spectator sports events, and setting up a consultancy unit for sport training facilities design, construction and management.
Sport Programmes in Universities

It is notable that competitive sport programmes are vibrant in primary schools and secondary schools in Africa. In these institutions all students are expected to participate in sports as times for those activities are scheduled and compulsory if not obligatory. However, sport programmes in African universities are characterized by the participation of too few students and staff, sporadic engagement in competitions, lack of serious and systematic well scheduled competitions at local, regional and international levels, haphazard training programmes, lack of publicity around the university activities, lack of involvement of senior staff, absence of structured intra and inter-university sport competitions, low female participation, absence of sport programme for students with disabilities and pay as you earn (PAYE) has left many students athletes lacking in the necessary nutritional requirements to participate in competitive sports. Shehu (2000) survey of Nigerian university sport revealed that they are characterized by lack of full and effective sport programme evaluation, sporadic intramural programmes and poaching or hiring of non-students for intercollegiate games in order to gain competitive advantage over rival institutions that field poorly trained bona fide student athletes. They are also riddled with devaluing of indigenous games, failure to integrate Physical Education (P.E) into general studies modules and a narrow recreational programme structure resulting in over-fixation on a few activities such as soccer and basketball. A significant number of African universities have a severe shortage of technical and administrative sport personnel and lack of organizational arrangements for both generation and deployment of sport related revenue. There is pronounced tendency to downgrade investment in sport residence, research and technology. Cumulatively, African universities are characterized with low physical activity rate among students due to institutional disincentives such as inadequate and/or poorly maintained sport facilities, absence of reliable sport injury support system and insurance, paltry subsistence allowance for athletes in training and competition camps, sham athletes and ineffective coaching. African universities need to be more innovative on how to strengthen the sport programmes by borrowing successful models from the west. This may possibly ensure that African universities remain more focused, competitive and satisfy the students’ sports needs.

Staff Participation

Just like the University students, very few numbers of staff in African universities are involved in sports. This is traced to various myths and stereotypes that have been embraced to perpetuate that sports are for young people and adults are too old to engage in sport activities. A recipe for university directorates of sports and games to increase staff participation would include: -

i. Emphasizing on intra-mural activities, that is, inter-year, inter-classes inter-halls, interfaculty and the like with staff participation.

ii. Have inter-campuses/colleges where team managers are principals, dean of colleges or faculties.

iii. Invite the top managers of the university to be part of the sport events such as chief guest, chief
iv. Have specific events to be contested between top managers and other units’ such as a tug of war between university management board and students’ leaders will be very interesting and interactive.

v. Plan contests between students, academic staff and supportive staff.

vi. Have inter – faculty, interdenominational and inter-trade unions in sport events.

vii. Let senior university managers be involved during national, regional, continental and international events as team managers, coaches and any other such positions.

Status of Research in Sports

The researchers in sports in African universities are mainly lecturers in teaching departments of physical Education and sport sciences in universities. Most of the lecturers involved in research do it for the sake of promotion and not knowledge-generation. Personnel in sports and games department are hardly involved in research activities not even action oriented research.

However, researchers in physical Education and sport sciences should embrace and embark on performance orientated research and diversify areas of research with greater focus on experimental studies, sport nutrition and others. Scholars in both PE and sport need to conduct research in comprehensive human performance laboratories and also take stock of African athletes physiological and biochemical reactions. This will ensure that they develop African physiological, psychological and physical norms. (Mwisukha, Gitonga & Njororai, 2004; Rintaugu, Toriola & Amusa, 2013)

Sports Personnel

Personnel manning sports departments are pivotal in the ultimate achievements of both the departmental and universities objectives of ensuring that students’ health is at its best. These personnel include administrators, facilities manager, coaches, clerks, storekeepers, cleaners and supportive staff. Sport personnel (officers) in African universities are men and women characterized by:-

- Lack of adequate personnel to man all sport codes.
- Lack of sound theoretical, technical and conceptual skills in some games tutors.
- Inadequate grounding in coaching and management obligations.
- No research based evidence to improve sports at university.
- General feelings of inferiority.
- Lack of organizational ability.
Absence of government and university sport policies

Discriminatory promotion and remuneration criteria.

Marginalization to opportunities for further training and scholarships.

Lack of modern technology in training (Njororai, 1996; Shehu, 2000; Mwisukha, et al. 2011).

Shehu (2000) observed that hiring university sport officers on the basis of a diploma or degree in health and physical education as is typically done in Nigeria fails to recognize the fact that it is not the years or qualifications that intrinsically increases the workers ability to manage a university sport enterprise but rather the quality of job related specialized training and skills obtained while in school. A vast majority of respondents in the above survey indicated that the capacity for their sports division for strategic development of sport was not good at all citing the following factors as the impediments: failure to plan, lack of training in planning, documentation and implementation of a plan, lack of economic/demographic impact and modeling, lack of coordination with sport governing associations, problems with sport marketing and promotion and lack of advanced technology for assessing, integrating and managing issues emanating from the micro, meso and macro sport levels.

Summary of Challenges in Sport Management

In summary the following challenges are prevalent in African universities and require urgent attention.

1. Administrative hierarchy and placement of the department of sports and games.

2. Limited finances which curtails sport faculty development.

3. Congested academic time tables leaving students and staff with no free time to constructively engage in either recreational or competitive sport.

4. University recruitment and admission policy does not cater for talented athletes.

5. Lack of incentives.

6. Introduction of parallel degree programmes/self -sponsored, privately sponsored students/alternative degree programmes has led to congestion in the few available sport facilities, outsourcing of sport facilities, stretched /stressed sport personnel, scramble for few sport equipment and limited travel by athletes.

Conclusion

It is apparent that African universities have rich material and human resources to support excellence among the student-athletes. Concerted efforts by all stakeholders should be put in place to address the
myriad challenges affecting sport in African universities. Shehu (2000) observed, there is need for the national sport authorities and higher education community in Nigeria to interactively re-examine a great deal of the sport policy in paper and to locate the necessary institutional framework needed to make higher education sport system in the country more effective, inclusive, efficient, scientific, resourceful and social.

**Recommendations**

In order to heighten and have vibrant sporting universities in Africa, it is suggested that Governments need to waive duty on imported sport equipment and Commissions for higher education in different countries to:

i. Regulate the minimal acreage for universities/campuses/colleges.

ii. Regulates enrolment of university students versus sports infrastructure

iii. One afternoon in a week to be set free from academic classes for students and faculty to engage in sports.

Secondly, Universities need to seek for partnerships with corporate world. This may enhance facilities, equipment, supplies and revenue to university sports departments. Thirdly, sports personnel need include senior university staff during intramurals so that they can motivate and induce students to take part in sport. Provision of incentives to students such as scholarships tuition waiver and awards will go a long way in motivating students who excel in sport.

Universities need to open more academic departments in human movement studies and accord further training opportunities for sport personnel. Assembly of modern sports infrastructure which can host international events may increase the revenue base of the universities. There is compelling urgency to have affirmative action in sports for women and students with disabilities and finally African universities need to seek collaboration with sport federations and exchange programmes with universities from the west and East.

**References**


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Introduction
The Confederation of African Rugby (CAR – Confederation African de Rugby) is the governing body for rugby within Africa. The confederation was officially launched in January 1986 in Tunis. The inaugural members at the meeting were Ivory Coast, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Senegal, The Seychelles, Tanzania and Tunisia. At a meeting held in July 1992, South African Rugby Union was integrated as it had originally been denied entry due to the then government policy of apartheid. The confederation currently has thirty seven member nations as follows:


Management of Rugby in Africa

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