

THE IMPACT OF EAST AFRICAN REGIONAL CO-OPERATION ON SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The re-unification of the East African countries, namely Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania comes at a most opportune time when countries in Europe, Asia and Latin America are forming regional blocks to promote cultural, political and most importantly a wider market for greater economic prosperity. As for instance, the European Union, example, with a single currency, provides a testimony that in order to avert recession forging a united front directly creates a stronger economy. Sport has a significant role in the case of the East African Co-operation, Sports will provide one of the means to strengthen the friendship ties among the three countries.

This paper assesses the historical perspectives of sporting ties, in the region at colonial time and during East African Community period. With the background information, it is hypothesized that the prospect of sports under the rejuvenated and renewed co-operation will be characterized by high-tech and information-revolution. In order for sports to prosper, therefore, research and development must assume a center stage. This will not be accomplished without good programmes in Physical Education and Sport science.

The main responsibility of Physical Education and Sport science Departments will be the enhancement, enrichment and cultivation of knowledge of physical education instructors, sports coaches, researchers and other sports professionals. The continent of Africa has generally lagged

behind when it comes to physical education and sport because sport has not been associated with economic development. This attitude will have to change because among the developed countries sport has played an important role in the process of nation building. Besides, the economic and social-political gains, sport is associated with health standards, which directly contributes to economic vibrancy.

With better economy, the three nations will afford to allocate more financial resources to sport development and sports facilities. Frequent competitive matches among the three countries will certainly raise the standards and this will translate into sports excellence and more Olympic medals. In addition, the soccer teams from the region will stand better chances of playing at Continental and World Championship like the World Cup. The co-operation will, therefore, bring hope to Sports and Physical Education in the region.