



10.5281/zenodo.7821423

Vol. 06 Issue 04 April - 2023

Manuscript ID: #0814

SPORT FACILITIES, PEER GROUP AND FUNDING AS PANACEA FOR SPORTS PARTICIPATION AMONG SELECTED FEMALE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AHOADA WEST LGA OF RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

Then on interest of the junior secondary school's female students in sport is becoming a recurring-decimal and something urgent needs to be done to nip it in the bud if any meaningful stride is to be achieved in terms of catching them young at that level and this may not be achieved if the authorities concerned are not proactive. Based on the foregoing, Suggestions were made to the effect that Government should come up with a clearly formulated policy on sports that would engender greater participation among junior secondary school female students through improved funding, provision of sports facilities, and the need to package the sports activities in such a way that would meet the need and interest of the students as individuals and group. The focus of this review therefore is to examine the panacea to sports participation among selected female junior secondary schools students in Ahoada West LGA, Rivers state

KEYWORDS

Sport Facilities, Peer Group, Funding, Junior secondary schools.



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INTRODUCTION

Sports have continually occupied the prime time and space in the electronics and print media. and also occupy the subconscious and conscious of man, to such an extent that men has become fanatically committed to the cause of sports either as athletes or spectators (Morakinyo, 2000) Adedeji (2005) defined sport as a medium for social integration, a strong political weapon for national unity, youth development and international understanding.

Sport is an integral part of physical education and could he use effectively in cultivating the mind,spirit and body of an entire population in order to optimize its growth and development. Babatunde (2001) stated that sports served as a safety valve for both spectators and participants in dissipating excess energies. tension and hostile feelings in a socially accepted way.

Globally, sports is considered a creator of beauty and as an instrument of ethical value that brings about peace. unity and understanding among people of all races during sports participation (Awosika, 1996). Ladani (1992) maintained that active sports participation by students, has positive role to play in the maintenance of their physical well being. health and academic excellence, hence sports is a term used in a broad sense to cover all individual, team, or competitive physical activities and games depending upon tests of physical strength or skill.

Many educational institutions all over the world function to promote the social objectives of sports. This is because it enables young stars to acquire a socially acceptable behavioural pattern that would afford them the opportunity to lead a useful, rewarding and enriched life. In fact, sports with its broad relevance to education in the realm of social welfare. culture. politics and wealth. if adequately planned. may foster integration, better understanding. as well as discouraging participation in cultism(Ituh,1992).

According to Babatunde (2001) schools have usually served as the avenues for the acquisition of life time skills including sports.He emphasized that youth sports with particular focus on gender, among other things was more frequent among people from the higher classes to participate in sports than among people in the lower classes. He attributed the reason to the availability of resources. time, facilities and equipments which enable people from higher classes to participate in sports that requires finance, free time, access to the equipment and facilities and the ability to organize sports.

It is in the light of the above, that this paper seeks to investigatethe panaceato sports participation among selected female junior secondary schools students in Ahoada WestLGA, Rivers state.

SPORT FACILITIES

According to Oyewusi (1992), just as adequate facilities are needed for effective instruction and good fulfillment ofobjective in other disciplines, so. They are needed for successfulparticipation in sports programme. Fadamiro (1992) specified that the quality of athletes and sportsman and woman in any country bear direct relevance to the availability or lack of facilities and relevant environment in which training takes place. He suggested that the provision of adequate facilities and a conducive environment must be geared towards creating an effective participation. training and stimulating environment that can ensure the realization of participation in recreational or competitive sports programme.

According to Awosika (1996) it would be impossible to achieve satisfactory results from sports programme whose training facilities are unavailable, inadequate or substandard. They argued that if

the facilities are available, adequate and well maintained there is every possibility of having a good programme and sports participation will be high.

PEER GROUP

A peer is an equal and a peer group is composed of individuals and they provide the norms or standards of thought and behaviour to be pursued by its members and establishes the attitudes, options and cultural ideas which they are expected to be adopted (Awosika, 1996).

Parents have been seen as more influential in socializing their children in sports. However, the father stands out as the most influential in this respect. Consequently, it is generally believed that in any society, the family is seen as the foundation of socialization process, and values that are vital for cultural maintenance, norms and prospective of life (Oyewusi, 1992). According to Fadamiro (1992) an individual child is motivated not simply by his own basic needs and drives but also by the stimulation provided by his peers.

FUNDING

Achieving successful sport programmes requires funds that are readily available and appropriated purposely for organisation and development of sport. Fasan (2004) noted that the development of sports can be achieved where there is good financial base to execute programmes, develop athletes and build facilities. However, provision of funds should not be taken as a liberty to misappropriate the little available funds. therefore there is need for sports administrators and organizers to judiciously and prudently make use of the available funds. In the words of Oyewusi (1992) sourcing of funds to run sports programme is very vital and the ability to judiciously utilize such monies realized is of equal importance.

Funds are very essential in the planning and execution of programmes but the extent to which they are effectively utilized depends on the personnel involved. Awosika (1996) opined that there are feelings that the lack of fund are apparent obstacles to providing desirable programmes, while the lack of insight by those charged with the programme planning constitutes the real obstacles.

In other words funding encourages sports participation and adequate funding must be made available so that the female students will be motivated to participate in sporting activities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, it is glaring that proactive steps needs to be taken in addressing the non-challan attitudes of junior secondary schools female students to sports participation given that at this age the need to discover and nurture them into great athletes is *sin qua non*, therefore, it behooves the government and those saddled with the responsibility of imparting the needed skills and creating a conducive atmosphere for sports to thrive at that level to put on their thinking cap and do the needful.

SUGGESTION

In view of the foregoing, the following suggestions are hereby made:

1. Students should be encouraged to engage in meaningful sports activities that not only improve their physical, health and mental well-being, but also create opportunity for play and lasting friendship.
2. Government subventions should cater for funding of sports activities in schools, through the school principals and P.E. teachers, so as to realize the objective of building a sound mind in a sound body.
3. Standard sports facilities should be provided for the students as this will spur their interest in sport thereby unleashing the bud den talents in them to the world.

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