
APPRAISAL OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE IN SPORTS COMPETITIONS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

By

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to appraise the training programmes for improved performance in sports competitions in Nigeria tertiary institutions. An ex-post-facto research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of all the directions of sports in Federal Universities in Northern States in Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sampled universities. Purposive sampling technique was use to select the directors of Sports. A researcher designed questionnaire was used to illicit the relevant information about the opinion of the respondent. Research assistants were employed, motivated and trained each from the sampled universities. The data collected from the variables were analyzed in form of means and standard deviation which was further subjected to t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the study revealed that there was inadequate provision of training; there were no open and close campaign for the athletes for training. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that there should be adequate attention be given to sports training programmes for improvement of university sports competitions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Training is the most essential pre-requisite for any human endeavor be it business, academic, trade, sports, politics and so on. For nay sports training to be successful the athlete must be physiologically and psychologically prepared. The coach for the training programme should be competent, the equipment and facilities should be adequate Payne and Payne (2001) stressed that systematic sports training involves learning, acclimatization and stressing of sportsmen and women as well as his or her adaptation to such stress aimed at improving sports performance. But Ademola (1992;143) described trained as a preparing for sports competitions which involves learning or perfecting sports skills, changing attitudes, developing and

strengthening organs of the body and their functions. It involves change in physical, all aimed at improving one's provisions level of performance. Training varies in frequency, duration, intensity and purpose as well as coming in all shapes and sizes depending on the type of sport.

Bucher (2001) indicated that for any effective organization and improved performance, certain principle must be followed. These include provision of adequate facilities and equipment for training, good and experienced coach. The author stressed that without training an athlete cannot prove his best. His inborn traits notwithstanding, he needs equipment enough for proper conditioning and practice. Bucher (2001) further stated that excellent sports performance is preceded by

physical readiness and physiological readiness which are required through adequate training, Sadiq (1997) observed that most athletes based in Nigeria do not engage in constant practice especially athletes from tertiary institutions. They engage in training only when competitions are in-view.

Bucher (2001) exploited that planning for training in sports has become an essential feature of all developing countries in order to ensure constant growth and improvement in the performance of athletes both at local and national and international competitions. The author indicated that in planning for training, performance goals are determined and means of achieving the long range as well as immediate performance target as described. Bucher (2001) concluded that a sports training plans are very essential because world standards can be achieved only after several years of uninterrupted and systematic training. Venkateswarlu (2002) claimed that improved performance in sports and physical education activities is attributable to right selection of facilities and equipment, year round training better methods of training and improved nutrition. The researcher indicated that if sports clubs and even athletes are pursuing international standards in performance, they need to train systematically which calls for training plans. Klaf and Lyon (2008) and Venkateswarh, (2002) suggested that training plans can be weekly, quarterly, yearly, Olympic and even decade plan. But Obiyemi, (2009:43) identified the following methods of training i.e. continuous training, circuit, training, interval training, weight training and pressure training. Ademola, (1992) observed that sports is undergoing tremendous changes in form of scientific modern technology devised for sports training and coaching. These devices he maintained are the consequences of the ever-increasing demand and strife for improved performance and to better previous by held sports records. Nwankwo (2008) had earlier contended that many sports scientist also

strife to come up with full proof methods of training athletes so as to achieve excellence both at national and international levels. Ademola, (1992) indicated that training alone cannot produce champion athlete and suggested good nutrition provision of sports psychologists adequate coaching, adequate and standard sports facilities, adequate seasoning to produce and train and funds as inclusive.

Fox, (2009) supported circuit training which he described as effective training programme for preparing athletes for competition. Toeing this line of reasoning, Opatola (1992) claimed that training has been described as the most essential pre-requisite to competitions and excellent performance in sports. The researcher observed that competition is a platform whereby skills or techniques and teams strategies learned and put to test. The author concluded that competition has a positive function as a means of preparation and training for competition at higher levels.

Onifade and Adeniran, (1992:152) stated that what win medals is not doping but a well-designed training programme the way out for the champion athlete is adequate and consistent training (Emiola 1984) and (Ajisafe, 1988). Adekoko, (2008) observed that critical analysis of unparalleled progress in competitive sports performance bring in competitive sports performance bring to light the stark reality that the record breaking performance of the modern athletes is a result of deliberately planned training followed from childhood with dedication and sacrifice. The researcher said further that potential athletes are trained systematically under careful supervision of creative experience and qualified coaches, sports scientist and doctor, who will employ various training techniques with psychological factors to achieve the desire objective. To improve the sports performance of athletes in organized sports, their strength, power, speed, muscular endurance, cardio-respiratory endurance, agility and fitness that must be improved upon the guarantee their

success in sporting activities (Adesoye 1989). But one critical process of beefing-up these components of physical fitness of athletes in through training which Klafs claimed to be a systematic process of repetitive exercise involving also the learning process and acclimation. Earlier Cureton, (2004) stressed that training is a teaching process which makes standard performance possible without any physical or mental damage. Through planned systematic development of certain special and technical skills, physical capabilities and spiritual qualities and adaptation. Sohi (2006) contended that sports training is a comprehensive process making use of appropriate means and organization but adopted instructional strategies to develop athlete potential abilities as bases for excellence in performance.

To improve the physiological and motor capabilities of athletes for better performance, Bucher, (2001) identified three popular training techniques. They are:-

- (i) Circuit training
- (ii) Fartlek called the Swedish for speed and play
- (iii) The interval training.

On the other hand, Klafs and Lyon (2008) and Fox, (2009) proposed a number of training methods to boost the physiological and constitutional disposition of athletes. These include:-

- (i) Continuous training
- (ii) Circuit training
- (iii) Interval training
- (iv) Weight training and
- (v) Pressure training

However, various researchers conducted to determine differences between trained and untrained individual athletes were reported in literature. Bucher (2001) found that when two individuals are trained and one untrained of approximately the same build are performing the same amount of muscular work, there is

evident to indicate that the trained individual has a lower oxygen consumption lower pulse, rate, less rise in blood pressure, greater red and white corpuscles counts, slower rate of breathing, lower rate of lactic and formation and a faster return to normal of blood pressure and heart rate. In a similar manner, Okhaku (1960) discovered that athletes constant engagement in physical training obviously improve in their cardiovascular functions. Consequently, their respiratory system is better and able to utilize and process oxygen for muscular work in this respect the discovered that trained female athletes of the University of Benin are more physically fit than the untrained female students of the same institution. Gambari (1995) said that studies have been conducted on factors which facilitate sports achievement. Most important these factors as discussed by Silvia, (2007) include, a food training technique effective equipment and facilities and good selection of sporting activity based on psychological and physiological factors of the athletes. Venkateswarliu (2002) claimed that if prospective athletes are to reach international standards they should train systematically for many year and hence the need for training plan. The author therefore suggested a training plan for athletes which can be based on the followings.

- (i) Weekly plan
- (ii) Terminal plan
- (iii) Yearly plan
- (iv) Olympic plan and
- (v) Decade plan. Yinka and Abass, (1999) opined that training methods involve programmes for improving both aerobic (endurance) and anaerobic (spirit) energy capabilities and performance. They include interval training, speed play or fartlek training and sprint training. However, they suggested that the following principles guiding effective training-specifically of

training, overload principles, training and in-season training.

Therefore this study was carried out to appraise the training programmes for improved performance in Sports competitions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Expost-facto research designed was used in this design a standard self-questionnaire was administered on 9 directors of sports and 81 coaches in Federal Universities in the Northern States of Nigeria. The information thus collected was statistically analyzed to test the hypothesis.

Population

This consisted of all the directors of Sports and Coaches of all Federal Universities in Northern Nigeria. At the time of this study there were ten (10) directors of sports and ninety (90) coaches in all federal universities in Northern Nigeria.

Sample and sampling technique

Federal universities in Northern Nigeria as at the time of this study include: Ahmadu Bello University Zaria; Bayero University Kano; USaman Dan-Fodio University Sokoto; University of Jos; Federal University

of Technology Minna; Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi; Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi; Modibo Adama Federal University. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the sampled universities. Purposive sampling technique was used to select nine Directors of Sports from the Federal Universities.

Research Instrument

In this design a standard self-developed questionnaire was used to obtain the relevant information about the opinion of the respondents. A four (4) point Likert Scale of measurement response mode was used.

Method of Data Collection

A research assistant was employed, motivated and trained for each sampled university.

Information collected on all the variables were analyzed in terms of mean and standard deviations, which were further subjected to t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to appraise the training programme for improved performance of athletes in sports competitions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Table 1: Provision of adequate training programme

S/N	STATEMENT	MEAN	SD	Remarks
1	Adequate provision for the training of athletes is usually made	2.24	.61	Dis Agree
2	Over-emphasized academic work a little time allotted for training makes training programmes inadequate	3.40	.59	Agree
3	Lack of adequate training can be attributed to coaches	2.44	.75	Dis Agree
4	Open and close camping is usually organized for athletes before competitions	2.09	.70	Dis Agree
5	Both off-season: pre-season and in season training season are used to train athletes	2.02	.66	Dis Agree
6	Various training programmes are known to improve sports performance of athletes.	3.41	.60	Agree

Table 1 provides information on provision of adequate training programmes. The table signifies that high mean scores are recorded in items 2 and 6 showing that majority of the respondents strongly agreed to these items. The items and little time allotted for training and various training programmes on improved sports performance. Low mean scores were recorded for items 1,3,4 and 5. These items dealt with adequate provision of

training, open and close campaign and off-season, pre-season and in season training sessions as provided.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the sports training programmes provided and the sports performance of athletes in Federal Universities in Northern Nigeria

Table 2: t-test of difference between the provision of training programmes and athlete's performance

Variables	No	X	SD	df	t-value	Critical value
Provision of training programmes	90	2.601	0.502			
Sports performance	90	3.037	0.513	89	-24.36	1.96

P<0.05 significant

Table 2 shows that t-test was used to compare the means of two independent group i.e. provision of sports training programme and athletes performance. The calculated t was -24.26 lower than the critical t of 1.96 significant level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

DISCUSSION

T-test used to test the significance of trend of opinions expressed as seen in table 2 was found to be statistically significant thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there was significant difference between the training programmes and the sports performance of athletes. However, adequate provision for the training of athletes was not made because of over-emphasizes academic work and little time allotted for training programmes (items 1 and 2 table 1). Athletes in these universities are not provided with both off-season, pre-season and in-season training season. Also, open and close camping for athletes before any

competition is not organized, (Table 1 items 5 and 4). Despite all these in the provision of adequate training programmes for the athletes by the directors of sports and coaches, the same directors of sports and coaches emphatically maintained that various training programmes are known to improve sports performance of athletes. This idea confirms with the ideas of shared by Ventkateswarlu, (2002), Ventkateswarlu, (2007), Chado (2008) and Abbas, (2009) that training is the most essential pre-requisite and necessary ingredient for improvement of performance in sports competitions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of this study, the researcher concludes that:

1. Adequate provision for training of athletes was not made by the directors of sports and coaches because emphasis was over placed on academic work.

2. Little time was allotted for training athletes on weekly basis.
3. Athletes are not provided with both off-season, pre-season and in-season training session.
4. Open and close camping for athletes before any competition are not organized.
5. Most athletes from the tertiary institutions in Nigeria do not engage in consistent training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are advanced to enhance more provisions towards improved sports performance of athletes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

1. Adequate provision for training of athletes should be provided by extending equal attention to training programmes to improve sports performance of athletes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
2. Adequate time should be allotted for training athletes on weekly basis.
3. Both off-season. Pre-season and in-season training sessions should be adequately provided to athletes.
4. Before any competition is organized there should be open and close campaign for athletes.
5. All athletes from the tertiary institutions in Nigeria should engage in constant training programmes for improves performance in sports competition

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