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The influence of motivation and facilities on athletes' performance in Nigeria University games (NUGA)

Mayowa Adeyeye *, Adeyemo Kehinde

Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Faculty of Education, University of Lagos.

Abstract

This study sought to investigate the influence of motivation and availability of facilities on athletes' performance in Nigeria University Games (NUGA) with the aim of finding the areas of success and failure. Literatures relevant to the study were reviewed. The survey research design was adopted for the study. Motivation and Availability of Facilities Questionnaire (MAFQ) was administered to two hundred and ten (n-210) participants from six Nigerian universities in south western Nigeria which included University of Lagos, University of Ibadan, Lagos State University, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Obafemi Awolowo University and Adekunle Ajasin University. The test retest reliability value obtained for the instrument using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was 0.86. Data was analysed using frequency counts and percentage for demographic data while Chi-square was employed in determining the level of significance between the hypothesized and observed values at .05 alpha level. The participants ranged from sports administrators, male and female athletes. The result of the data showed that equipment and facilities are not adequate and funds are not enough while athletes are not well motivated in Nigeria University Games (NUGA).

Keywords: Motivation; Facilities; Athletes' Performance; NUGA

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* Corresponding author. E-mail address: kelvinkenedy2007@hotmail.com

1. Introduction

The ultimate goal of athletes preparing for competition is to attain peak performance for excellence. The Nigeria University Games is not an exception to this rule of athletes achieving peak performance. The Nigeria University Games is a forum for University athletes who have been identified as champions to represent their Universities in a fiesta that comprised all Nigeria University which is hosted every two years, thereby promoting friendship among University students in Nigeria. Thus, the Nigeria University Games become popular for University athletes to compete at optimal level since those that performed excellently at the end of the events will represent the country in the Olympics and other competitions e.g Chioma Ajuwon. However, Privette (1982, p. 242) defined peak performance as the level of optimal functioning where athletes found themselves in the zone and things are just working out fine. Williams (2006, p. 207), also submitted that peak performance are those magic moment when an athlete put it all together both physically and mentally, the performance is exceptional, seemingly transcend ordinary levels of play. Privette (1983, p. 1361) further defined peak performance as behaviour which exceeds one's average performance or an episode of superior functioning. Competitively, these performances often result in personal best, they are the ultimate high, the thrilling moment that athletes and coaches work for in their pursuit of excellence (Privette, 1983, p.1361). There are some psychological factors which may serve as barriers, blocking athletes from getting to this zone of optimal functioning in Nigeria University Games which include the level of motivation and availability of facilities. The provision of good organisation and administration of sports programmes in Nigeria and in the higher institutions of learning in particular has been an important variable which psychologically influence the participation and effective performance of athletes in Nigeria University Games (NUGA). Good organization and administration of sports as considered include the provision of adequate facilities and equipments, attractive incentives for the athletes and sound human relations. Umeasiegbu (2000, p. 1) stated that "good sports programmes can function effectively only when they are supported with sufficient equipments in good condition". Oyilogwu (2005, p. 22) emphasize that it would be impossible to achieve satisfactory results from athletes whose training facilities are inadequate or of substandard.

The provision of adequate facilities and equipment is as important as providing adequate incentives for athletes. Awoyinfa (2008, p. 121) stated that facilities are immovable or permanent structures that are used either for sport or other purposes depending on the structural designs. Example of permanent facilities are football pitch, sport hall, spectators stand etc, while the equipment are considered as moveable objects which in some cases may be consumable. Examples of moveable equipment are football boots, jerseys, balls, rackets etc.

Motivation is a broad term and encompasses a wide array of behaviours. Like many other psychological constructs, motivation has been defined in variety of ways, but in general it refers to the intensity and direction of behavior. Motivation is a vital prerequisite to performance and it plays a vital role during the entire process of acquisition of skills. Mastery of physical skill is essential to succeed in Nigeria University Games (NUGA). However, without motivation optimum performance can not result, in fact there might be no interest to drive athletes to train effectively during practice session in preparation for Nigeria University Games competition.

2. Methodology

The sample size involved two hundred and ten ($n=210$) athletes who were selected from six state and federal universities in south west Nigeria. The universities comprised of three federal (University of Lagos, University of Ibadan and Obafemi Awolowo University) and three state (Lagos State University, Olabisi Onabanjo University and Adekunle Ajasin University). Athletes were selected based on the number of sports available in the institution after adequate consultation with the institutions sports units. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants for the study.

Motivation and Availability of Facilities Questionnaire (MAFQ) consisting of two variables to which the participants were asked to tick the options of their choice in four-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively, this was intended to rate the motivation and facilities' influence on the athletes' performance in NUGA. The test-retest method was used for reliability of the instrument, a correlation co-efficient value of 0.86 was obtained. 210 copies of questionnaire was administered by the researcher through the assistance of two research assistants after an approval from the institutions sport directors. Out of the 210 copies of questionnaire only 175 were correctly filled, returned and coded for analysis. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage was used to analyse data while inferential statistics of Chi-square (χ^2) was used to test all hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

3. Result

The demographic data revealed that by sex, 110 (62.8%) were male while 65 (37.2%) were female. Based on age, 92 (52.5%) of the respondents fell within 19-25 years, 41(23.4%) of the respondents fell within 26-30, 22 (12.5%) of the respondents fell within 31-40 while 20 (11.6%) fell within 41 and above. In marital status, the data revealed that 90 (51.4%) of the respondents were male single, 56 (32%) were female single, 20 (11.4%) were married male while 9 (5.2%) were married females. As regards the educational background, it revealed that 10 (5.7%) of the respondents have being to one tertiary institutions or the other while 165 (94.3%) were secondary school educated.

Table 1. Chi-square Result of the Influence of Motivation

Variable	N	Df	Calculated X^2	Critical X^2	Remark
Motivation's influence	175	15	12.48	31.41	*S* Significance

X^2 Cal. Value = 12.48 < Crit. X^2 value = 31.41, df15 $p < 0.05$

Table 1 showed that calculated value of 12.48 was lower than the critical value of 31.41 at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that there is no significant level of motivation on athletes' performance in Nigeria University Games (NUGA)

Table 2. Chi-square Result of the Influence Facilities

Variable	N	df	Calculated X ²	Critical X ²	Remark
Facilities' Influence	175	15	15.6	22.29	*S* Significance

X^2 Cal. Value = 15.6 < Crit. X^2 value = 22.29, df 15 $p < 0.05$

Table 2 showed that calculated value of 15.6 was lower than the critical value of 22.29 at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that there is no significant level of facilities on athletes' performance in Nigeria University Games (NUGA).

4. Discussion of Findings

The focus of this study was to investigate the influence of motivation and facilities on athletes' performance in Nigeria University Games. Several studies have been conducted on various psychological factors influencing athletes performance in Nigeria University Games but little light has been shed in the area of motivation and facilities. Generally, the findings clearly disclosed that athletes were not well motivated when they go out to participate in Nigeria University Games, which implies that nothing is spurring the athletes to dipping into their reserve to perform optimally in competitions. This corroborate the study of Cox (2002, p. 82) that stated that motivation influences an individuals overall performances which come in form of praise, money, award or trophies. In the same vein, the responses that athletes were not well motivated after competition was corroborated by Duda (1987, p. 57) who opined that motivation inform of incentives can maximally enhance athletes when it is given immediately after the task has been completed.

Nigeria Government like every other government has for a very long time been rewarding those athletes that bring laurel to the country in the field of sports. But the country started giving cash and materials award in 1980 when Nigerian Green Eagles won the 12th African Cup of Nation's Soccer. This confirmed kind gesture of the late General Sanni Abacha on the Nigerian contingent to 1998 Commonwealth Games in Canada. Adeyeye (1994) stressed that the Gold Medallist were given the sum of hundred thousand naira (100,000,00) each, Silver Medallist, seventy five thousand (75,000,00), Bronze Medallist fifty thousand (50,000,00) each, While participants who did not win any laurel received twenty five thousand naira (25,000,00) each. Contrary, Lumpkin, stroll and Bellar (1999) stressed that making money is not immoral, when this act is encouraged though, athletes, coaches and sports managers may be tempted to let a normal value of money, success, or fame influence moral decisions.

Result gathered on the influence of facilities showed that the hypotheses of significance was rejected from the findings of this study, majority of the respondents agreed that there were no facilities and equipments to train before competitions which negatively affect their performance during Nigeria University Games as this is supported by the work of Williams which submitted that athletes' performance is decided by the quality of

facilities the athletes have been using for training and he said athletes who are used to quality training as a means of simulating themselves are tend to perform optimally than their counterparts that is not exposed to the same facilities.

5. Conclusion

In line with the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn that there was no level of motivation on athletes' performance in Nigeria University Games (NUGA). There was also no level of facilities on athletes' performance in Nigeria University Games (NUGA) in the attainment of optimal performance during competition as this may be one of the reasons why Nigerians are not doing well in sport since some of the country's contingents are recruited from different tertiary institutions. The facilities are not properly maintained which affects the athletes' performance in Nigeria University Games (NUGA).

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Modern facilities should be bought for the development of sports in the Universities.
- ii. Funds should be made available for proper maintenance of equipments and facilities
- iii. College athletes should be well motivated before, during and after competitions if optimal performance is to be achieved.
- iv. Financial incentives should be made available to athletes who win laurels for their various universities and should be given immediately after the competition to honour their effort.
- v. There should be a committee from the Nigeria University Commission (NUC) who will collaborate with Nigeria University Games Association (NUGA) to assist athletes produced in any university organized competition to pursue their career as a professional during and after their university education.

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