

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' DECISIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN UNIVERSITY SPORTS

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Abstract

This study investigated the motivating factors that influence students' participation in sports at the Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. A total of four hundred students in three halls of residence were used for the study. The instruments used for data collection was questionnaire. The simple percentages were used to analyse the data collected. The findings showed that the majority of the students indicated similar perception towards motivating factors that influence students participating in sports at Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti. The factors includes awards of scholarship to athletes, free accommodation for participating athletes, provision of adequate equipment and facilities, awards of prizes and trophies to the athletes and adequate supervision of the athletes. Based on the findings it was recommended that the University authority should be given scholarship, free accommodation to the athletes, presentation of gifts, certificates and trophies, provision of facilities and equipment, adequate supervision of the athletes and monetary incentives for the athletes in order to improve the students' participating in sports.

Keys words: Motivational factors, Participate in University Sport, Rewards, Reinforcement, Role-model.

Introduction

In the past, students were expected to compete in sports even with threat or force without any benefits or incentives. Today the situation has changed. Towards becoming an outstanding athlete in a university, it is necessary that the student-athletes be highly motivated. It is therefore, necessary to adopt reasonable measures to help athletes attain height in their field of sports.

Motivation could be strong inspirational device to enhance athletes' achievement. For example some American universities awarded some Nigerians student-athletes scholarship as a result of their active participation and outstanding performance in sports. This form of incentive and other better training facilities have helped Nigerian athletes like Innocent Egbunke to

excel in various sporting competitions.

The degree of motivation, which an individual enjoys at any given time, is affected by what is expected of him. However, the provisions of adequate facilities and equipment, attractive incentives for the athletes and sound human relation are important variables, which influence participation and effective performance in various sports.

Buffafessign (1980) stated that sportmen and woman were highly achievement-oriented as coaches, but if there is conflict in goals - a little opportunity for long time success is possible. He concluded that judicious use of reward for performance would provide reinforcement for desired behaviour.

Sometimes, leaders play an important role in the performance of athlete both in Local, National and International championship. For example, the Nigeria Green eagles played the match of their life in 1980 in the presence of then President Sheu Uthuman Shagari and some State Governors motivated the National Soccer Team (Super Eagles) towards victory. This was followed: Hoses, cars and a reasonable cash award for each player. Another example included those athletes who won medals at the 1984 Olympic Games during the reign of General Mohammed Buhari. Incentives such as money, scholarship, and a street in the State Capital named after each medalist. Another example is that of Atlanta 1996 when Supper Eagles won the Golden cup, were also given incentives, and since then, Nigerian athletes seemed motivated to win in organized competitions.

In addition, Ekiti state University, authority has always taken keen and active interest in sports and games. Originally the University authority has always devoted the evenings of every Wednesday for training and practices on different sports and games. These essences geared up the establishment of local sports in the university. Furthermore, the establishment of an office known as sport unit, the office has also contributed to the success recorded by the University in sport competition.

Apart from extramural competitions, the sports council organizes some inter Faculty and recreational sporting activities. Participation and performance have encouraged the University authority in the building and standardization of existing facilities purchase of more equipment, supplies and recruitment of personnel to manage difference sections in the established sport office.

This attitude could affect the student athletes' morale incentive sport participation. In spite of the college

athlete, training and camping, the inability to participate was attributed largely to inadequate funding.

These and other phenomena have motivated the writer to research into this study.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

- (1) Participation in sports by university undergraduates is not a significant means of empowering the students.
- (2) Participation in sports by undergraduates is not a significant means of boosting Nigeria sports image.
- (3) Participation in sports by university undergraduates is not a significant means of promoting healthy living.

Method

A descriptive research design of the survey type was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of undergraduates of Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. The sample consisted of 450 undergraduates students both males and females of the Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti living in the halls of residence during the 2015/2016 academic session.

The instrument for data collection was a self developed questionnaire which was validated by experts in human kinetics and measurement and evaluation in tertiary were in mean.

The above table shows that 62.5% of the respondents were male while 37.5% were female.

Table 1: Religion of the respondents

	N	%
Christianity	250	62.5
Islamic	150	37.5
Traditional	0	0.0
Others		

The above table indicates that 250(62.5%) respondents were Christians while 150(37.5%) were Muslims.

Table 2: Responses of the participants on sports participation

S/N	Question	Agree		Disagree		Undecided	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Will scholarship awards aid students' participation in sports?	250	62.0	80	20.0	70	17.0
2	Monetary incentives aid athletes' performance?	340	85.0	60	15.0	0	0.0
3	Will free accommodation aid students' performance in sports?	320	80%	60	15%	20	5%
4	Will preference to athletes in allocation accommodation aid performance in sports?	340	85%	20	5%	40	10%
5	Do awards of certificates to athlete aid their performance in sports?	360	90%	24	4%	16	6%
6	Will awards of prizes aid trophies to athletes' aid performance in sports?	380	90%	16	4%	4	1%
7	Will provision of adequate facilities motivate students' participation in sports?	340	85%	40	10%	20	5%
8	Will provision of adequate equipment and supplies motivate students' participation in sports?	360	90%	32	8%	8	2%
9	Will adequate supervision by term contiguous and other sports personnel and students participate in sports?	384	96%	12	3%	4	1%

The above table indicates the motivational responses of the participants on sports participation.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicated that scholarship or monetary incentives encouraged students to participate in sports. While table 2 (column3) indicates that free accommodation is a motivation factors of the respondents. Table 2 (column5) showed that free awards of certificates to athletes aid performance in sports.

Table 2 (column) 7 and 8 showed that awards of certificate/prizes will encourage student, while facilities and equipment serve as a motivation factors for students' participation in sports. While table 2 (column) 9 confirmed that adequate supervision by the team contiguous and other sports personnel and students participate in sports.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The following conclusion based on the discussions were necessary and should be strictly followed in order to embrace the development at the optional level of students' participation in sports in the university.

The following recommendations were made:

- 1) The students should be given scholarship awards for brilliant performance in sports by the University Authority.
- 2) Equipment and facilities should be provided in order to meet the students' need.
- 3) Careful and constant supervision of all the equipment and facilities and areas with respect to maintaining safety factors.
- 4) The University management should make sports practical skills a compulsory course which students must allow and pass before eligible to graduate.
- 5)

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