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A Survey of the Status of School Physical Education in Public Primary Schools in Edo State (Pp. 277-289)

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the status of school P. E. Against this backdrop, four research questions were raised in the areas of scope of activities, sports facilities/equipment and sports personnel to establish benchmark for the study. A total of 486 sample sizes were selected proportionately from a population of 1215, being 40% of the total population. A checklist for surveying the status of school Physical Education programme was used. As a first step toward establishing benchmark, 30 primary schools were administered with prototype checklist. The benchmark were achieved by using normal distribution curve and the results obtained later converted to z- scores, and a scale of low, moderate, and high status derived. This was later used to describe the data obtained, having been analysed using simple percentage. The scope of Physical Education programme rated high status on team sports /games and track & field sports facilities equally rated high status. Sports equipment rated low status; finally sports personnel generally rated low status except OND/NCE which rated moderate status.

Introduction

Sport as a social institution is commanding followership more than ever before. The popularity may be due partly to the role of electronic media.

More importantly is the perceived health benefits inherent in participating in it. There is no doubt that sports has always been in existence. But the physical activities engaged in during the early period were highly informal and unorganized and oftentimes geared towards promoting survival and security skills (Aluko, 2010). However, the benefits of participating in physical activities have varied over-time.

Sports in contemporary society can be described as coordinated and organized with clearly defined goals. In other words, sport is aimed at achieving recreational, healthy and nationalistic ends. The role of sports as a unifying factor and one for national integration cannot be underestimated. There is no doubt that sports, if well managed, has great gains for societal relationships.

In order to propagate and effectively promote sports, educational institutions are seen as viable focal points. It is in this regards that Nigeria School Sports Federation (NSSF, 1976) was established. It was invested with coordinating and controlling school sports activities. The National Sport Policy of 1977 in its reversed version of 2004 was to give legal guide to school sports. Significantly, in 2009 the National sport policy provided the needed framework for school sports, which is still in use till dates. This is a further enactment that school sports in Nigeria have gained substantial recognition.

It is in this regard that the focus in this paper is on an examination of public primary school Physical Education programme. The aim is to assess the extent to which public primary school Physical Education program can actualize the objectives of school sports. This is also against the background that education is mostly acknowledged as a necessary catalyst for national development. In essence it is almost indisputable that the quality of educational services available in any society is reflected in the quality of manpower (Ojeme, 2010). In this vein it could be asserted that any subject selected for the school curriculum must truly justify its inclusion, as one capable of contributing positively to societal development.

Statement of the problem

In times past, most Nigerian athletes were identified and nurtured through primary and secondary schools sports. This was typically done through informal Physical Education and sports, and organized as Physical Training. The model of operation was such that every child in the school system was given opportunity to unfold his potentials. This period also witnessed a good

number of budding talented young athletes to represent the country. Notably the country was a force within the Commonwealth, African and West-African Sports competition. Unfortunately, same cannot be said especially with the present dearth of athletes. This fast growing trend may have stemmed from primary and secondary schools that may no longer have the status of breeding grounds for young talents (Odudu, 2008 & Ojeme, 2009). Interestingly, much has been done in the area of school sports administration and organisation; however, benchmark is yet to be achieved as for describing standards. It is in this regard that this paper takes first step into a survey of the status of physical education and sports in public primary schools. The scope being Edo state to give this work a focus, the following areas are assessed

- i. The scope of physical education sports programme,
- ii. Physical education facilities,
- iii. Physical education personnel

Essentially the purpose of this study is to provide a benchmark for describing the programme of physical education in public primary schools in Edo state. This will be attained through an assessment of the programme of activities, facilities, personnel, and the extent of monitoring of the total programme.

Theoretical framework

The school physical education and sports programme is anchored on three vital interrelated areas: instructional, intramural and extramural. The instructional programme centres on the conventional classroom teaching while the intramural aspect of the programme deals with all such sports activities that encourage mass participation. On the other hand, the extramural area refers to highly competitive aspect for selected few in the school. However, the focus in this study is the intramural aspect of the school physical education and sports programme.

The Robert stake countenance model of 1967 is adopted as quite appropriate in evaluating the intramural programme. Notably, this model focuses on two major operations, namely the description, and judgement matrix. In applying this approach, both formal and informal techniques were adopted to collect data. The data were treated statistically and comparison made using a set norm or value or relative standard. The intent here is to ensure standard as against making judgements. In applying the stake model it is imperative to

recall the objectives of physical education which according to Bucher (1981) and Ojeme (2009) include physical development, motor, and movement development, cognitive development and social development. Specifically physical education and sports is predominantly activity – based and it requires standard infrastructure and quality manpower to achieve desired educational goals. In order to present an acceptable judgement Fadehen (2010) noted that relative comparison as a means of providing best practices should be undertaken. In this case there is need to assess or make a survey of the existing infrastructural and manpower available as a prelude to judgement. This is inconsonance with Choo (2007) and Nichola (2007) who are of the opinion that nothing in our contemporary world should static, hence the need for benchmark or survey.

Physical education and sports is essentially movement exploration based tailored toward development of varied movement repertoire and geared to acquisition of sports skills. This in the opinion of Ojeme (2005) is predicated on available qualities of services and infrastructure likely to influence the product output. Unfortunately the lack of the existing benchmark statistics or data makes it extremely difficult to determine the standard of our school physical education programme. There is no gainsaying that situations as this can bring about the dwindling fortune of physical education. It is in this context that Hardman (2005) has advocated the need to survey and identify deficiencies in physical education. But more imperative there is need for a global survey of physical education with the aim of standardized physical education and sport practices.

Generally, what seem prevalent as sports programme in Africa, Middle East Latin America and Africa can best be rated as inadequate. Specifically, in terms of availability of sports facilities and equipment across selected areas across cultures indicates that the situation in Africa is quite inadequate Latin American is just below average and grossly inadequate in East America. Such findings tend to provide renewed effort toward improving physical education and sports globally. Like in other human endeavours, it is therefore important to regularly survey infrastructural and manpower available to operate school physical education and sports. This no doubt is a step toward achieving total quality management (TQM). A tool of this nature will make it possible to compare the Nigerian school physical education programme with that of other nations. Importantly, too the purpose of survey is not only to determine standard, but also have information that could be stored for usage as data bank aimed at

benchmarking.

Benchmarking and school sports

School physical education and sports is an integral aspect of the school curriculum, as prescribed in the National Policy on Education (2004) it is commonplace to hear of the existence of a sound mind in a sound body. This certainly reflects the significance of sports education in schools. This can best be achieved when such a school sports programme boasts of quality one that strives towards achieving best practices. The question therefore, is how to achieve standards and best practices in physical education and sports? It is in this context that issues of benchmarking in school physical education become crucial.

The concept of benchmarking and its process may not be quite novel. Notably, practice and application in various endeavours with the outcomes is linked with improved performance. In the field of library and information services Nicholas (2000), found in benchmarking, a “Total Quality Management (TQM) tool”. The essence was to ensure better and quality library services. In a similar research carried out by Taylor and Godfrey (2003), it was discovered that data benchmarking was employed as a quantitative performance measurement in the English local authority sports facilities. The aim was to set a pace for best practices.

The foregoing immediately throws a challenge on the need for standards in the Nigerian school sports procedures and management. Specifically, the essence here is the importance of conducting benchmarks with a view to describing the status of physical education in primary schools in Nigeria as a guide to seeking improvement. It is in this wise that White (2002) has described benchmarking as an ongoing systematic process for measuring and comparing the processes of one organisation to those of others that exhibit functional “best practices?”. Corroborating this assertion, Adegboye (2007) has also opined that benchmarking involve comparing on a measurable scale, the performance of a business operation to a similar operation in other organisations. In the same vein Rech (2009) has described benchmarking as a process of determining the very best in terms of standards. The summation from this affirms benchmarking as a process geared towards standards in organisation.

From the foregoing how can we assess the concept of benchmarking within the context of school physical education. School physical education like any

other field or programme in school is an academic endeavour. Specifically intramural sport phase is regarded as the heart of school physical education. The crux of this assertion stems from the movement exploration in addition to the development of the necessary movement repertoire essential to acquisition of sports skills. It is in this context that it is regarded as the clinical laboratory using the typical sports language (Ojeme, 2005) importantly too, the qualities of available services infrastructure and manpower have their direct impact on a physical education programme output. This may not be quite fortunate due to the scarcity of benchmarks. The resultant effect is a hindrance on the measurement of standard of school physical education. However, maybe this can be remedied if we can begin with what could form the indices for benchmarking in school physical education and sport.

Indices for benchmarking school physical education and sports

The available literature and practice of benchmarking indicates that every sphere of academic endeavour can be benchmark from an action, task or process (Gohlke, 1998). Significantly, the ultimate objective of benchmarking is to achieve best practice for adaptability to ensure improved performance.

Arising from the above, the following areas are possible target for review to achieve set goals.

1. The scope of school sports activities which include the following:

- i. Team games/sports
- ii. Individual games/sports
- iii. Gymnastics
- iv. Dance
- v. Swimming
- vi. Outdoor adventure pursuits
- vii. Track and field athletes
- viii. Traditional sports
- ix. Calisthenies
- x. Rhythms and dancing

Sports personnel is a target that could achieve set goals. This is in the sense that the manpower available to operate school sports programme will determine the effectiveness or quality of programme. In the opinion of

Ojeme (2009), sports administration is a major global business requiring highly technical and competent hands. Essentially, sports personnel include

- i. P. E. teachers
- ii. Coaches
- iii. Trainee/coach
- iv. Player/coach
- v. Groundsmen
- vi. Volunteers
- vii. Store keepers
- viii. Facilities manager

Notably, the only way to measure the quality of school sports programme is in terms of the qualification and experience of the personnel. In this wise therefore, consideration is given to the level of qualification as seen below:

B.Ed/ B.Sc
NCE/ OND
Dip. In P.E
Dip in Coaching
Coach cert
ACE
TCII

Infrastructural development (facilities/equipment)

There is no gainsaying that facilities and equipment are quiet crucial to the effective running of school sport. More importantly if standard must be ensured for improved services, then the infrastructure by way of facilities and equipment must regularly undergo upgrading. According to Buchor and Krotee (2002), such maintenance culture should take cognizance of utility, accessibility safety, durability, aesthetics and flexibility of the infrastructure. The facilities and equipment are see below:

400m x100 track
Tennis court
Basketball court
Squash Hall
Multi-purpose facilities
Swimming pool

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study was made up of all the public primary schools in Edo State. The population of primary schools as at 2009/2010 (period of research) was 1215. A sample size of 486 was proportionately selected representing 40% of the total population. The headmasters/mistresses or Gamesmaster provided the necessary information.

A checklist for assessing the status of school sports was used. The checklist was constructed to cover such areas as sports programme, facilities/equipment and sports personnel. The checklist instrument was administered on the gamesmaster/mistress, where none was available the headmaster/mistress provided the answer. Data analysis was done by converting score to point and analysed using percentage and later, interpreted on three points scale established.

As a first step toward achieving benchmark for describing status study, a prototype checklist instrument for the study was administered on 30 primary schools. The data was subsequently analysed to establish benchmarks. The benchmarks were derived by using normal distribution curve and the results obtained later converted to Z scores. A scale of:-

Below $-X_2$ = low status

Between X_1 & $-X_2$ = moderate status

Above X_1 = High status

The status of sports activities in primary school revealed that team games/sports and track and field athletics were rated high status in school sports programmes shown in table 2 Research question 2: What is the status of physical education facilities in primary schools in Edo State?

Table 3: status of physical education facilities based on the established benchmark

Establish benchmarks= low status = $-X_2$ or 32.3

Moderate status = $X_1 - -X_2$ or 32.4 – 36.7

High status = X_1 = 36.7

In all only 400m x 100m track rated high status on the list items in the schools.

Research question 3: what is the status of physical education equipment in primary schools in Edo State?

The research question as to the status of physical education sports personnel in primary schools in Edo state based on the established benchmarks reflected thus:

Established benchmarks = low status = - X_2 or 20.5

Moderate status = X_1 - $-X_2$ or 20.6 – 30.5

High status = X_1 = 30.6

What can be deduced from the foregoing is a situation where only NCE/OND sports personnel rated moderate status, while others rated low states

Discussion of findings

Findings from the study revealed that only two of the listed variables benchmark rated high status, they are team games/sports and track and field athletics. All other eight variables rated low status. Taking cognizance of the fact that the scope of physical education programme must be made to cover all aspects, Oloruntoba (2002) and Odejidu (2004) have opined that it is the only way of providing an ample opportunity for all learners in the school develop skills and cultivate interest in sports. But with findings in this study where the concentration is on team sports/games and track and field athletes, it affirms to the fact that the learners are denied opportunity to explore other sporting activities.

The status of sports facilities indicates only 400m x 100m field rated high status, while other facilities listed were found to be lacking in the schools. Bucher & Krotee (2002) noted sports facilities as major determinants of physical education curriculum success. This also means that facilities are quite indispensable in an effective physical education programme (Ananomo, 2005). Consequently, if primary school must be involve in providing the basic training needs, sports facilities need to improve on even at the primary school level.

Finally, the status of sports personnel revealed that only NCE/OND holders rated moderate status. An indication that sports personnel to teach and manage sports at this level is lacking. In the findings of Ojeme (2009) failure or success in sports-related matters is in direct proportion to availability of sports personnel.

Conclusion

On the whole, the study established low, moderate and high status for describing physical education and sports programme at the primary school. Based on the established status, team sports/games and track field athletics rated high status on 400m x 100m track only, while the status of sports equipment rated low on the status of sports personnel, only NCE/ OND personnel rated moderate status in the study. It could therefore be concluded that with the establishment of benchmarks for physical education and sports at the primary schools, the strength and weaknesses of sports programme will be fully identified and articulated. From there on, appropriate steps would be taken to enhance sports development at the primary stage of learning. In this wise it was recommended that Pan- Nigeria benchmark be undertaken to provide a uniform value for describing primary school sports programme in the country.

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Table 1: Pilot study Benchmarks

S/N	Research question	Low status * X ₂	Moderate status ** X ₁ & X ₂	High status *** X ₁
1	Sorts scope of activity	< 30.1	30.2 -35.7	35.8
2	Sports facilities	< 32.3	32.4-36.7	36.8
3	Sports equipment	< 31.2	31.3-35.5	35.6
4	Sports personnel	<20.5	20.6-30.5	30.6

**Table 2: Status of scope of the physical education activities based on the established benchmark
N = 486**

Variables	Status	Rating
Team games/sport	36.2	***
Individual games/sports	12.1	*
Gymnastics	8.6	*
Dance	11.2	*
Swimming	6.9	*
Outdoor adventure pursuit	11.7	*
Track and field athletics	36.4	***
Traditional sports	15.3	*
Calisthenics	9.5	*
Rhythms and dancing	2.1	*

Table 3 above revealed the status of sports facilities available in primary schools. N = 486

Variables	Status	Rating
400m x 100m track	50.7	***
Tennis court	14.9	*
Basket ball court	23.7	*
Squash hall	0	*
Multi purpose facilities	13.8	*
Swimming pool	0	*
Cricket oval	6.2	*
Storage room	4.7	*
Shower room	0	*
Locker room	0	*
Medical room	0	*

Table 4: Status of sports personnel N = 486

Variables (items)	Status	Rating
B.Ed/ B.Sc	10.4	*
NCE/ OND	30.5	*
ACE	6.3	*
Dip in Coaching	1.1	*
Coach grade I	0	*
Coach grade II	0	*
Dip. In P.E	2.3	*
Player/coach	0	*
TCH	0	*
Others	0	*