

Management of Physical Education Facilities, Equipment and Supplies in Secondary Schools in Nigeria: issues and challenges

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Abstract

This paper examines the management of Physical Education facilities, equipment and supplies in secondary schools in Nigeria. The place of physical education facilities, equipment and supplies in secondary schools sports development were discussed. This paper exposed the problems of physical education facilities, equipment and supplies in secondary schools in Nigeria. It also discussed the poor maintenance culture of physical education facilities, equipment and supplies, and the state of facilities, equipment and supplies in Nigerian public secondary schools. Based on the discussions some of the recommendations made were that: All heads of schools should be held responsible for lack of maintenance culture of physical education/sports facilities, equipment and supplies. It was also advised that all hands and efforts should be on deck as to provide standard and adequate facilities, equipment and supplies that were locally manufactured for easy maintenance and cost.

Keywords: Maintenance, Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, locally manufactured

1. Introduction

The school is a social institution entrusted with the formal education of the youth in the society. Sporting activities have been known to be an integral component of the educational programmes of the most, if not all nations of the world.

In Plato's Republic, physical education was included as an integral component of the educational system. It is therefore the function of the school to socialize the individuals. Here in Nigeria, physical education programmes are not much emphasized at all levels of the educational system, infact, the recognition of physical education as a part of the secondary school curriculum by the national policy on education in 1982 formally and wholly integrated physical education into the educational programme of the country. (Ojeme, 1985; Orunaboka, 1990).

In most advanced countries of the world; education authorities have realized the benefits accruing from participation in sports programmes and they have not hesitated in including physical education in their curriculum as a part of the learning experiences offered to the students. The implication is that a lot of resources (finance) were put into physical education to enable the youths enjoy a worthy sports programme for their healthy development. Sports activities have been seen as an instrument for national unity. This role has been epitomized by the biannually organized "All Nigeria Sports Festival and Nigeria Schools Sports Festival", which aimed at bringing people from various states and schools in Nigeria together through a healthy competition.

There is a clear indication that the authorities responsible for administration of sports in Nigeria have realized the contributions of the school physical education programmes towards sports development in

Nigeria and are sparing no effort to encourage secondary schools to set up well structured physical education and sports programmes. This implies that Nigeria secondary schools are now looked upon as one of the fertile grounds for breeding the Nation's future sportsmen and women. In order to achieve this objective, the government through the ministry of Youths and Sports provided standard facilities, supplies and equipment to all the secondary schools through their state government, but the problems of facilities, and equipment management in the secondary schools in Nigeria, are the issue of concern by many sports researchers, sports managers and practitioners, as an area that merits investigation.

2. Conceptualization

The provision of adequate facilities, supplies and equipment are as important as providing adequate incentive for the athletes, but the maintenance of such adequate facilities, supplies and equipment use by many often constitute a managerial problems.

Traditionally, at the secondary schools level, facilities, supplies and equipment management are usually the responsibilities of those persons who are in-charge of physical education and sports programme. The facilities for which they are responsible include outdoor facilities – such as playgrounds, pools, skate parks, courts and fields – and indoor facilities – such as locker and shower rooms, natatorium, racket, sport courts, weight and exercise rooms, arenas, climbing walls, and gymnasiums, their supplies and equipment. Facilities, supplies and equipment management includes not only the effective scheduling, operation, and maintenance of such facilities, supplies and equipment but also, at times, planning new structures to keep pace with the demand for participation in physical education and sports programmes of the school. (Crompton 2005; Cohen 1996; Flynn 1993; Pate et al 1997).

The secondary school physical education programme is characterized by individual and lifetime sports as well as by team game activities. This emphasis, together with the popularity of recreational and interscholastic sport, and the fact that facilities, supplies and equipment are typically needed for recreational use. The cost of materials and labour is rising as a result of inflation, making it very difficult for new capital building projects to go forward. High interest rates make it difficult to get bond issues passed for facility construction. Energy conservation and sustained maintenance and repair costs must also be taken into consideration.

Supplies are those materials that are expendable and have to be replaced at frequent intervals such as shuttle cocks, tennis balls, while physical education equipment refers to those items that are not considered expendable, but are used for a period of years, such as parallel bars, volleyball standards, soccer goals, strength training equipment are need all needs to be considered in the managerial budgeting of the sports administrator.

2.1 The Place of Physical Education Facilities, Supplies and Equipment in Secondary Schools Sports Development

Recent studies and experimentations have yielded new trends in design for the construction of physical Education facilities, supplies and equipment. Although basic concepts, such as that of having teaching stations remain the same, current innovations in design are producing teaching stations that are more functional and less expensive. In order to catch them young, Nigeria secondary schools physical education requires a variety of sports/physical education facilities, supplies and equipment both indoors and outdoors. The relative needs of the students and athletes should be recognized in the planning of facilities, scheduling for their use and the purchase of the supplies and equipment. Supplies and equipment needs vary according to a wide range of factors, including the level of programme or participants, age of the user group, type of activities being offered, number of participants, and, of course, finance. (Arnhein & Prentice, 2000; Athletic Business February 2000; Athletic Business August 2000).

Facilities, supplies and equipment provision are important aspect of physical education and sports management. Excellent programme is the key word in physical education and sports competitions, and this requires well equipped good play-ground for training. Standard facilities and equipment are essential pre-requisites to good and impressive performance. Lack of adequate and standard facilities and equipment hampers physical education and sports programmess in many ways.

Adedeji (2000), also pointed out that there must be sufficient motivation in the form of attractiveness of facilities, supplies and equipment to captivate athletes' interest to participate in sports or games. He further stated that the facilities and equipment in this country are simply not good enough and are hindrance to physical education and sports development.

2.2 Problems of Physical Education Facilities, Equipment and Supplies Management in Secondary Schools

The effective performance of physical education and sports programmes in secondary schools involves the determination, allocation and development of funds for the achievement of the school sports programmes. The programme requires a large amount of money every year. This is because facilities such as courts and pitches are constructed and maintained for the use of the students. Also equipment and supplies such as balls, nets, javelin, rackets, hockey sticks, bats, gymnastic and athletic (track and field) materials require either purchasing, replacement or repairs. Bucher and Krotee (2002) opined that facilities should be planned and constructed with an eye to the future. Too often, facilities are constructed and out-grown their use within a very short time. Most facilities constructed in our secondary schools are very difficult to expand or exchange. It is noticed in today's schools, the increased population, rising school enrolments, city life, limited space, and skyrocketing labour and material costs, are all altering physical education and sports facilities and equipment production and management.

According to Awosika (2009), Pate et al (1997), it might be impossible to achieve satisfactory results from athletes whose training facilities and equipment are inadequate or of sub-standard. The scarcity of physical education facilities, supplies and equipment constitute a big cog in the successful administration, organization and management of physical education and sports in Nigeria. Nigeria athletes would have performed better if they have half of the facilities and equipment available to the Western World. It is noted that most of our athletes lack exposure to modern sophisticated sports/physical education infrastructural facilities and equipment for training. Igbanugo (2004) ascertained that athletes have been known to drop out of skip training because these things (facilities and equipment) are either non-exist or inadequate.

2.3 Maintenance culture of Physical Education Faculties, Equipment and Supplies

Maintenance of most public properties which belongs to nobody is less concern of some citizen of Nigeria. Maintenance culture should be established by the physical education administrator, with proper repairs of physical education facilities, supplies and equipment. Bucher and Krotee (2002) opined that equipment and facilities should always be maintained in a serviceable condition.

Procedures for caring for facilities, equipment and supplies should be routinized so that repairs are provided as needed. All used equipment and supplies should be checked and then repaired, replaced, or serviced as needed. Such used items should be cleared and stored properly. (Brown 1977, Carron 1982, Howe 1981).

Nigerians are very good in programme and policy planning, good innovation, but seriously lack maintenance culture of equipment, facilities and supplies. Facilities and equipment should be attractive and esthetically pleasing with the utilization of good colour and design. Facilities and equipment should be easy and economically to maintain and should be durable. A great emphasis should be on maintenance culture by the administrators as to achieve the best results.

The construction of facilities for physical education must follow the established checklist for facility planners. The planning, construction, and use of facilities for school physical education programme should consider the following health facility planning;

- (a) Validity (b) Utility (c) Accessibility (d) Isolation
- (e) Departmentalization (f) Safety (hygiene and sanitation)

- (g) Supervision (h) Durability and Maintenance (i) Beauty
- (j) Flexibility and Expansibility (k) Economy and
- (l) Acoustics

It could be said that with proper maintenance culture, a facility will last longer, provide a healthier and safer environment, be less costly, and provide a more satisfying experience for user groups. Planning and constructing facilities in physical education and sport are team efforts.

If proper plans, construction, and materials are selected, then maintenance should be made easier. Nothing is more embarrassing than a new facility that is a maintenance nightmare because of poor management decisions in the design and planning phases of the construction process, not to mention the purchase of equipment, scheduling, and hiring of staff. Given an adequate facility, it is up to the physical education, recreational sports, and athletic departments' management and all user groups as well as the custodial staff to work together in taking pride in their facility and putting forth a special effort to see that it is maintained in as near perfect condition as possible (Flynn 1993, Pate, et al 1997, Appenzeller 1998, Kraus & Curtis 2000, Bucher & Krotee 2002).

3. The State of Facilities, Equipment and Supplies in Secondary Schools in Nigeria

In Nigeria today, sports is fast gaining recognition as a way of the life of the people. Sports has also become a universal political game, therefore no effort should be spared in encouraging every able bodied person to participate. The primary and secondary schools are the fertile ground for mass participation and sports for all through physical education programme. It is at primary and secondary schools that the aim of the slogan "Catch them young"! will be achieved. The importance of physical education and sports in this country has been demonstrated by the level of patronage from the government, individuals, private sectors and even the spectators. Excellent physical education and sports programmes have been matters of interest to many people and government, because physical education and sports have been the avenue through which great nations of the world exhibit their supremacy over others. Physical education and sports are now effectively used to propagate political, social and economic might.

There is strong evidence that every state of the federation spends a great proportion of her revenue to either resuscitate or maintain and improve upon the levels already attained in sports. Recognizing the advantages of sports and physical education therefore, the government established sports councils, schools sports management and others sports bodies. It would be impossible for any state to win unless talents are tapped at the grassroots (primary, secondary, colleges and polytechnics /universities).

The physical education and sports administrators and organizers need to do a lot of work to raise the levels of physical education and sports in Nigeria. The planners need to appreciate that the foundation of good sports development is the exposure of the youths of that nation to participate in physical education/sports programmes by provision and maintenance of standard sports sophisticated facilities, equipment and supplies for the training and participation.

As it is now many public primary and secondary schools in Nigeria may not be proud of good and quality physical education and sports facilities, equipment and supplies in their school environment for the pupils and students use. No matter the government efforts towards improving this situation, many contractors with some ministry of Education personnel are ready to frustrate that government efforts.

4. Conclusion

It is well understood that the major cog in Nigeria secondary schools success in physical education and sports participation are sub-standard facilities and lack of sophisticated equipment. Nigerians also lack maintenance culture. Effective sports organization requires organizational and administrative variables such as personnel, facilities, equipment, finance, incentives, planning, scheduling and training. Facilities and equipment provisions are important aspect of physical education and sports administration. Excellent

programme is the key word in physical education and sports competitions. This requires well equipped and good play-ground for training. Standard facilities and equipment are essential pre-requisites to good and impressive performance. Lack of adequate facilities hampers sports progress in many ways as discussed in this paper.

5. Recommendations

This paper recommends that:

1. Adequate and standard facilities, equipment and supplies should be provided for all public schools (primary and secondary schools) in each of the states.
2. Trained physical education teachers and sports coaches should be employed to all the primary and secondary schools in Nigeria.
3. Physical education programme should be made compulsory in all primary and secondary schools
4. All heads of schools should be held responsible for lack of maintenance of physical education/sports facilities, equipment and supplies where necessary.

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