

# The Importance of Sports and the Role of the Institutional Head

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## Abstract

It is an established fact that for every human being, sports are second to oxygen in maintaining a good health leading to a happy life. The role of sports has a significant place among other extra-curricular activities. In this regard, the academic institutions act as a nucleus whose impact on the youngsters matters a lot in the society. These institutions are responsible in highlighting the importance of sports in the community. For the sports' activities, an ample place is needed which is not available especially in the urban areas. The academic institutions provide solution to this problem as they have vast grounds in their jurisdiction to pursue such activities. In this context, the head of the academic institution has a vital role to lead and organize sports in his/her corresponding institution. In these institutions, there are separate funds to hold sports on daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis. The concerns and the interests of the head of the institution are very important to institutionalize the extra-curricular activities especially the sports.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of this world, food was the first priority for the human kind for the maintenance of his/her health. As, the time passed people got engaged in different activities other than food and health, the sports became the major option for their leisure. In this regard, the sport has been a useful way for people to increase their mastery of nature and the environment. "The history of sport can teach us a great deal about social changes and about the nature of sport itself". Sport seems to involve basic human skills being developed and exercised for their own sake, in parallel with being exercised for their usefulness. It also shows how society has changed its beliefs and therefore there are changes in the rules. "Of course, as we go further back in history the dwindling evidence makes the theories of the origins and purposes of sport difficult to support". When a good sports man becomes the head of the institutions then there will be elevated performance in an effective and efficient manner (Hanks & Eckland, 1976).

This study is an effort to relate the utmost importance and prospectus of the sports with the social and physical health of every member of society. On the part of the head of the institution, awareness and motivation is the first task to be dispensed with. It is organized into three main parts, each detailing a key aspect of the literature. "The first reviews the preponderance of evidence that has been accumulated over the years which documents the strong and positive correlation between athletic involvement and the academic success of student-athletes". The second section summarizes the research into the social sources of this association between sports and education, as well as the ways in which the relationship varies for certain social groups, different types of sports, and in different kinds of school settings. "The third and final section of the report highlights implications for policy formation, program design, and training as well as suggestions for future research and analysis". Through, the goal and intent is to focus attention on the educational possibilities and potential of interscholastic athletics (Alwin & Luther, 1977).

The need is to consider and impart the sports as a science which should be thought and searched out in the academic institutions both at the public and private level. "The participation and educational achievement and becoming a successful head of institution is one of the most discussed, debated, and researched topics in all of sport scholarship, particularly when one looks at the social scientific research focused on sport and society interactions and their consequences". Dozens of dissertations have been written on the topic and new studies and papers the best and most important of which are reviewed in this report appear every year. "Ongoing for nearly half a century (as old as sport studies itself), research and writing on this topic has come from academic disciplines ranging from sociology, psychology, and economics to sport management, kinesiology, and education, and yielded some of the most sophisticated and clear findings of any topic in the field" (De Boer, 2000).

## 2. SPORTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Both at the school and college level, there are annual competition of indoor and outdoor games. Among them athletics, hockey, cricket, football are held outdoor while badminton, volleyball, basketball, table tennis are

played indoor. “Among the many factors that distinguish the colleges and universities from their counterparts elsewhere in the world, intercollegiate athletics occupies a place of prominence. Every observer of the university life must engage the pervasive, ubiquitous institution of intercollegiate athletics that occupies so many students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends and consumes substantial institutional resources” (Hanks & Eckland, 1976). Some critics see this head of institutions passion for organized college sports competition as an egregious attachment to the body academic whose removal should be the goal of every serious person. Some partisans of intercollegiate sports see the pursuit of athletic competition as an essential component of superior higher-education institutions. “Neither of these evaluations is correct, for athletics in HOIs has a long and enduring tradition that represents a fundamental construct within the activities of almost every type of higher-education institution and sustains its vitality and significance in the face of substantial fiscal and managerial challenges” (Alwin & Luther, 1977).

At the beginning of the 21st century, the student-organized competitions to the professionalized structure and operation of intercollegiate athletics have significantly the followers. However, in the available literature, the public exchange about this issue tends to degenerate rapidly into hyperbolic argumentation about the qualities and harms of intercollegiate sports (Boer, 2000). “It is believed that sports build character, provide essential training for success in the modern world, and develop the individual values of teamwork, self-sacrifice, discipline and achievement”. In turn, others see college sports as a corrupting influence on academic life that distort good values, teach students and sports fans to cheat to win, and undermine the university’s core values of quality and integrity. Both perspectives are partially right. Our purpose here is not to resolve the issue of values but to understand how sports have come to have such a highly visible collegiate presence even in some of the most secure and academically powerful research institutions (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003).

Some other important characteristics of college athletics was also identified by this beginning. Likewise, hockey, and football other college sports may well have reinforced values of strategy, conditioning, discipline, sacrifice and teamwork, but their principal purpose remained to win. Though it may appear obvious, as every college sport highlight the major standing of this code of challenging to win because the whole thing that develops around college sports the rules and regulations, the association, the challenges, the money, the cheating and corruption, the heroics and awards serves the purpose of identifying winners (Lipscomb, 2006). “Organized sports provide an opportunity to test strength, skill, strategy, and competitive values in a highly stylized and structured venue where outcomes produce clear winners and losers”. “The games themselves recur repeatedly, each time starting from a new beginning. We cannot rewind and start anew the competition of life that sports model, but we can participate vicariously in the endlessly renewed process of sports where each episode, game or season begins fresh, with no predetermined winners or losers and with an expectation of success undiminished by prior failures”.

### **3. THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS**

The regulation of the sports is thus an effort to exploit on the achievements and achievement of every opportunity to spread and develop the sports while strengthening communities. “It will provide the background that will support an environment in which there will be increased participation among all citizens, infrastructure and human resource development to promote improved accessibility and the drive for excellence, a coordinated sports policies that supports athletes’ development and progression to high performance and economic development and prosperity through sport development by steps taken by the head of the institutions”. Head of institution leadership is essential in ensuring that sport and physical education are incorporated in sports development and international cooperation policies and laws. The strategic role of sport in the achievement of sports development goals and national growth cannot be overstated. It is important that institution is proactive in exploiting every opportunity to diversify and develop the economy while strengthening the communities (Hanks & Eckland, 1976).

The head of the institution concerning the sports is committed to setting targets and invites serious and productive partnerships at all levels in order to ensure that the sport system functions in a transparent, synchronized and effective manner. “This is a new approach that promotes and facilitates shared leadership and collaboration amongst all stakeholders in order to achieve the goals of increased participation, economic development and prosperity through sports, enhanced physical and social infrastructure and a more coordinated and integrated sports system”. In developing this framework this will mean placing greater emphasis on policies that strengthen human capital at all levels, through maintaining our strong record on sports development in the educational institutions and in the communities and improving the quality of education and training. “The head of the institution is committed to give priority to cross cutting issues of sports and environmental protection and the emerging issues related to rapid climate change and continue the firm stance against doping in sports and

healthy lifestyle and healthy habits among all students as well as the removal of systemic barriers to the full participation of those persons with special needs". Finally we need to have policies in place that acknowledges the value of sports as a legitimate means as a conduit for conflict mitigation and peace building and development (Alwin & Luther, 1977).

#### 4. DISCUSSIONS

The head of the institution must encourage, all forms of physical activities that contribute to physical fitness, mental grooming and social interaction such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, indigenous sports and games at all levels. "The approach is based on a very broad, all inclusive notion of sport. As a signatory to the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, the policy seeks to promote and encourage participation to the fullest extent possible of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels which acknowledges sports as being about participation, inclusion, citizenship, human values such as respect for opponent, acceptance of binding rules, teamwork and fairness" (Boer, 2000). The revised sports policy regarding the head of institution calls for integrated and harmonious coordination and administration of sports. The coordination and administration of sports in HOI is decentralized and fairly complex. "It involves a mix of government and non-government, national and international structures. The collaboration and coordination is challenging and this is an area to be highlighted in stakeholders' consultations and requires their input". The governance system of the HOI in place is constrained on achieving the best possible results in the sports policy implementation due to limitation in public resources; the perceived lack of a culture of outcome orientation, and evaluation. There is also the under development of sports as an industry (Alwin & Luther, 1977).

The head of institution viewed the sports as a cross cutting vehicle that will contribute to achieving national development and a healthy society. "Sports contribute to individuals: personal, emotional, physical, social, cultural and academic development. It provides opportunities for leadership skills, constructive outlets and generally enhances individual quality of life". As a way to be physically active, participation in sport contributes to the adoption of a healthy lifestyle and prevention of disease and illness. Physical activity is fundamental to positive human development and contributes to healthier, longer and more productive lives. "The participation in sport and physical activity at all ages increases resistance to such diseases as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, and obesity and to mental health disorders". An increased investment in sports means an increase in health quality and a decrease in health care costs (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003).

The sports policy by the head of institution calls for programs that will support the development of athletes and seeks to cater to the mental grooming. "Altogether, the factors outlined above impact on the programs for athletes' development". Funding is a major challenge however; there is also the need for a systematic, analytical, and collaborative approach to the development of high performance athletes. "This is one of the policy goals and the input of past and current athletes as stakeholders is also critical in the consultative process. Sport professions are growing and there are now several non- traditional areas such as, facilities management, construction of sports facilities, psychologists, sports medicine professionals and many other areas". These are all critical for the development of sports and to ensure sustainability and the expansion of a high performance program. However, all these areas are in short supply in Jamaica and the programs for training are either just emerging or absent (De Boer, 2000).

The educational institutions, at both the local and national levels, provide adequate and effective administrative institutions for sport. "There is a dire need for new and upgraded community facilities for multi-use recreational and competitive sport, supporting facilities and services that facilitate the holistic development of the professional athlete. The sports development foundation should be provided with an increased allocation in order to provide additional support to sporting institutions to upgrade their facilities. Increase physical education and organized sports programs in schools and in communities". Most schools rely on other class teachers to manage the physical education program. In some instances the Sports Associations partner with schools in providing support for the sports and physical education programs (Boer, 2000).

The sport Academies are established and operating within the highest standards for international sport. "Adoption of international best practices for training of sports personnel including certification and introduction of a Competency Based and Education Training program. Other tertiary institutions are now beginning to strengthen their curriculum by introducing sports development programs". The head of institution has been provided with the requisite tools and autonomy to promote and facilitate the adherence to the principles and standards which are the pillars of accountability and transparency. "The government expects the sport organizations to adhere to the highest ethical standards as it demands also that there is integrity in the governance of the society as a whole". The government expects that private sector, professional associations,

international organizations will adhere to these principles in promoting their self-interests and in ensuring public acceptance (Lipscomb, 2006).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The growth and future development of sport requires innovative and creative thinking. It requires bold and fearless leadership and a willingness to go beyond the status quo. The opportunities and potentials seem limitless. Though, the competition for scarce resources especially in the economically challenging times, defines to some extent the direction for sport evolution. The people with their strong spirit and great love for sport provide one of the greatest natural assets. The protective dimensions of the head of institution in sports development can be a sustainable process that builds leadership, supports healthy behavior and lifestyle as well as peaceful coexistence among communities. Sports can be used by government and non-government organizations, businesses, educational institutions, sports federations and other institutions as a means to systematically reduce poverty, build peace, reduce conflict and create wealth within communities. Sport is essential for the development of our young people. Sport brings young persons in contact with each other and serves as a release from tension and stress. It is also an important avenue for academic advancement and an opportunity for social mobility.

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