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**PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF SPORTS
ADMINISTRATORS IN NIGERIA:
A FORMATOR'S MODEL FOR THE 21ST CENTURY**

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Abstract

In 1971, Stapleton declared that a sudden change in point of view is like the bursting of a dam, but instead of water, it is knowledge and facilities that flood the world, with new possibilities for good. This position paper in the same vein maintains that without improving the "old world" the 'new world' would not be made explicit. A robust blue print is crafted to stimulate the professional savvy of sports administrators in Nigeria. A compendium is packaged to satisfy the kaleidoscopic needs of the 21st century. The model; Strategic Innovative Professionalization Initiative (SIPI), is a profound assemblage of programmes: (humanities, sciences, pedagogy, ethics, technology, public relations, drug education, journalism, diplomacy, politics, nationalism and internship), among others, with a recommendation for revision to meet the times.

Introduction

The dynamism of the new world unleashes desperate challenges. Scarcity of resources create anxieties and call for improved initiatives. Time honoured approach of human talent improvement is education. To make it relevant, the educational enterprise needs reappraisal to demystify the challenges and programmes restructuring to meet emerging needs.

There are pressing problems facing physical education academic discipline in Nigeria. Some of them are the threat of charlatants, rival prejudices, professional apathy, and marginalization. There is no gainsaying that some progress have been made. Though there may be no finite solutions for some of the challenges, efforts towards high quality must be sustained. To achieve this, school curricular contents are to be reinforced for functional manpower development. The leitmotif of this paper is to fashion a contemporaneous preparatory programme for sports administrators suitable for the new millenium challenges. Specifically it is to model a programme that is qualitative, broad based and functional. The aim is to ensure the acquisition of organizational, administrative and managerial skills to equip them with intellectual functionalism and endow them with fertile cerebral articulations to subdue the dynamics of this century.

The rationale is that in the 21st century, sports administration in Nigeria should need no

defenders. Its critics once legion and venomous may agree now that the profession is not an all-comers footstool. As a result of the massive sports consciousness in Nigeria today, it could be said that the need for professional sports administrators is most germane. Nevertheless, it is only when sports administrators are not viewed as head pan professionals that rival prejudices could be allayed. It is from this back—drop that SIPI is developed.

Generalization

The idea of professional preparation suggests concern for quality in the education of sports administrators. By definition, professional preparation is helping trainee sports administrators to come to terms with the opportunities and problems, which they may be confronted in the field. It should also help to provide the skills, strategies and managerial abilities for effective task orientation. The concept of professional preparation depends on one's view of the sports administrator's expected contributions to humanity. The concern here *is* what should be included in sports administrators education, to facilitate the realization of the ideal.

To make the task less ambiguous there is an understanding that process-product operations have result maximization as the template. Besides, sports administrators have a common task, generalized as sports development and promotion. In performing the task, theoretical knowledge properly harnessed has prescriptive implications for good administrative practices.

Conceptualization

Administration is concerned with the functions and responsibilities essential to the achievement of established goals through associated effort, (Bucher, 1983). It is concerned with that group of individuals referred to as executives, who are responsible for directing, guiding, coordinating and inspiring the members, so that the purposes for which an organization was established can be accomplished in the most effective and efficient manner. Administration as used in this text, is the process of influencing human and physical resources of organization for successful goal achievement. The administrators' message is universal: the capability to use human and material resources to effectively translate abstract ideas into practical realities and to provide the relevant framework for dynamic fluidity of the organization's value orientations. Thus administrative concept is of profound significance to the socio-economic and survival—efficiency of human species. It is not surprising therefore, that Drucker (1989) described administration as a key social institution, one of humanity's most notable discoveries, and its emergence, an essential and a pivotal event in social history. All of us are the beneficiaries of administration either at home, place of work, the church and the sports arena. In any civilized society, there is no escape from administration. In this text, the constructs, administration and management are used interchangeably.

Requisitions

Sports establishments are like industries manufacturing products for the markets. Products that are satisfactorily of high quality become highly marketable. The product which sports establishments put on the market is the performance of "athletes". When the performance of sportsmen is high, they are in very high demand locally, nationally and internationally.

Sports organization like any commercial organization needs proper control and utilization of available resources for coordinated pursuit of objectives to enact management policy. The idea of policy is to give members direction, insight and information on their collective responsibility towards a common goal. The relevance of any sports management policy, resides on strict adherence and implementation. Implementation needs leadership. Leadership is provided by sports administrators. Sports administrators perform several essential and unique functions, which distinguish them from other people with professional training, such as lawyers, doctors and educators.

Attributions

The acronym "POSDCORB" was formulated to outline the basic functions of an administrator, (Gulick and Urwick, 1973). It denotes the functional elements of; planning (P), organizing (O) staffing (S), directing (D), coordinating (CO), reporting (R), and budgeting (B).

Tead(1996) also enumerated the qualities of leaders as physical energy, sense of purpose, enthusiasm, integrity, friendliness, technical mastery, decisiveness, intelligence, and clairvoyancy.

Contributing to the subject, Katz (1975) groups the qualities of a skilled administrator into technical, human and conceptual skills. The technical skills are proficiency, knowledge, analytical ability and facility to use tools properly. Human skill is the ability to work as a group member to build cooperative effort within the team. Conceptual skill is the ability to see the establishment as a corporate force so as to direct priorities.

It is to be noted that the sports administrator does the same kind of work as the business executive, that is; plan, organize, integrate, motivate, and coordinate. However the scope does not end with the traditional administrative functions. Precisely an effective sports administrator has to be an intelligent generalist.

Professionalization

Since the time of Plato (427—347BC), the development of professional skills have been an unsettled issue of pedagogic debate. In the past century, Maria Montessori, John Dewey, Bertrand Russell, John Locke and Jean Rousseau also contributed to the development, although final decisions have not yet been made on the matter. Despite the elements (op.cit) common to the professional

training of all administrators, the training programme of the sports administrator should embrace and reflect changes in the contemporary society. The speed of technological progress and the accompanied social changes create necessary innovations for the content and scope of professional training. As an axiom of truth, the services rendered by leaders to a large extent is contingent on the scope of their professional formation. It is no cosmetic flourish that an eclectic curriculum is the hallmark of the sports administrator of the 21st century. To do so is to make him insolvent in an era prone to flux and great expectations.

Prerequisites

The programme is to be adapted for candidates seeking admission to first, second and apex degrees. Apart from the basic relevant requirements, all candidates must have fair practical ability in at least two major games and or sports skills. They should have no negative body disability. For admission to any of the programmes, credit in English is required while a pass grade in Mathematics is desirable both at ordinary level.

B.Sc. Sports Administration: Candidates for admission are to pass a minimum of five (5) O' Level subjects at not more than two sittings. Two of the subjects required are biology or health science and physical and health education. Candidates with diploma and or certificate in coaching or sports organization/administration may be given special consideration on personal merit. The programme would last a minimum of four or maximum of five years, (Appendix A) . Candidates with NCE, or Higher Diploma in Physical & Health Education or Physical Education or Sports Organization and Administration may be considered for direct entry admission for a minimum of three or a maximum of four years degree programme, provided they satisfy the minimum entry requirements.

M.Sc Sports Administration: The basic qualification for admission is a first degree in sports administration not below second class, upper division. In exceptional cases candidates with a lower pass may be considered on his own merit The programme would last a minimum of eighteen or a maximum of thirty calendar months (Appendix B).

Ph.D. Sports Administration: Prima facie, candidates with a good master's degree in sports administration are legible for admission to the degree of doctor of philosophy. However, except for continuing students, such candidates are to be admitted in the first instance to one year M.Phil programme for qualifying examination.

In all cases admission to higher degree should not be prejudicial to basic admission.

requirements to the first degree programmes. The duration of study should be a minimum of three or a maximum of six years (Appendix C)

SIPI - Curriculum

Given the broad responsibilities inherent in the duties of the sports administrator he has to acquire a repertoire of relevant knowledge. Though the inventory may be a long one, they should be institutionalized as suitably required. This is like a developmental templet. The purpose is to develop a diversified curriculum to ensure that the consumers acquire substantial intellectual skill as well as have a close relationship with the socio—cultural events of the society. Ruggs (1990) views curriculum as a sequence of potential experiences set—up for the purpose of disciplining the students in ways of thinking and acting. It is obvious that the intended thinking should be intelligent and the acting pro—society.

The courses are in cohorts and for purpose of brevity outlines are not developed, (Appendix A, B, C) *

Internship

By the penultimate year and before graduation the candidates should undergo a “12 week” internship in a reputable establishment with sports management facility. This is to afford candidates an on—the—spot experience in sports management. At the end of the period of internship, a report should be compiled and submitted for formal grading. Those who satisfy the requirements successfully should be awarded a professional licence along-side the certificate of graduation. The requirement should be incorporated into the Bachelor and master’s degree programmes.

* *The major features of the programme is the inclusion of such courses as (i) Introduction to computer (ii) elementary survey (iii) international diplomacy (iv) Sports journalism, and (v) Internship.*

Conclusion

Sports management as a career has evolved rapidly over the years as sports Administration/Organisation have assumed complex dimensions. The organization of school, Local Government, State, National or International sports systems require enormous intellectual resources, as is the organization of Olympic, World Cup, Commonwealth or World University Games.

It is only the divine mind which is outside the province of mortals that can successfully lead through premonition. In the making of a successful leader a good education is a prerequisite. A leader with sound professional preparation ceteris paribus, is most likely to show administrative eclat.

Ajala (1992) opined that it is highly desirable that sports administrators (leaders) for effectiveness should have quality education. The claim that a successful sportsman or woman would make a good sport administrator is an anachronism. To live by claim is not to operate by reason. The will to change a popular culture but a bad legacy is the raw material for progress. This is a guideline to energize the professional competence of sport administrators.

Professionalization must not simply equip the sport leaders with professional know-how, but the intellectual sagacity to survive the versatile tunnel of the future.

Recommendation

The world is in a state of flux. This vision should therefore not be static but revised periodically to meet the times. Sports is a growing organism.

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Appendix A

B. Sc (Ed) Programme. **

Administration and Organization of Sports.

1. **General Studies (GST):** As per the university's requirement.
2. **Education courses:** As per faculty's requirement.

3. **Physical Education Courses:** (i) Foundation of physical education: philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, comparative physical education and sports. (ii) Skill Development and Techniques: Major games, Track and Field programmes, Gymnastics, Traditional games and sports and swimming. (iii) Sport technology: facilities construction, design, and operations. Elementary survey and introduction to computer. (iv) Scientific Foundations of Sport: Human anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, nutrition and drug education. Non-communicable and communicable diseases. Accidents prevention and first aid. (v) Administration and Organization of Sports: Administrative and organizational concepts, principles, theories, structures and functions, organization of sport programmes in schools and other agencies. Training theories and principles; legal aspects of sports. (vi) Research methods, measurement and evaluation in physical education. (vii) Internship and project report.

*** Presently, no university in Nigeria offers the first-degree programme in Sports Administration*

Appendix B

M. Sc (Ed) Programme.

Administration and organization of sports.

Courses (i) Research Methods in Education: Types and hypothesis formulation, research designs. Research instruments, construction. Data collection procedures. Research proposals and reports. (ii) Statistical Methods: Foundations of applied statistics. Data organization. Standard deviation standardized scores. Concepts of correlation, probability and sampling. Hypothesis and inferences, t- tests, analysis of variance, chi-square and use of computer. (iii) Measurement and Evaluation in Physical Education: Selection, development and evaluation of measuring instruments. Types of measuring instruments. (iv) Administration and Organisation of Sports: In schools, sport agencies, tertiary institutions, national and international competitions. Sports marketing, financing, facilities engineering, sports journalism, personnel management and public relations. (v) Seminar in physical education. (vi) Internship and Thesis.

M.Sc (Ed) Grading

Average score	Remarks	Interpretation
0-50	Terminal	Candidate cannot proceed further
51-59	M.Phil	Candidate undertakes a two year programme with course work and thesis
60-64	M.Phil/Ph. D	In the second semester, candidate takes a conversion examination. If he succeeds, continues with Ph.D without further examination but submits a thesis.
65+	Ph. D	Candidate takes course work without examination but submits a dissertation

Appendix C**Ph.D Programme: Administration and Organisation of Sports.****Courses**

- (i) Advanced Statistics: (Certification in computer literacy)
- (ii) Advanced Research methods
- (iii) Advanced measurements and evaluation in physical education and sports.
- (iv) Administrative and organizational case studies: current issues and trends in the field.
Personnel administration, labour relations. Application of theories and principles.
Professional ethical issues.
- (v) Doctoral Seminar
- (vi) Dissertation.

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