

## INFLUENCE OF SPORTS ADMINISTRATORS' DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE GRASSROOTS SPORTS DEVELOPMENT IN ABIA NORTH SENATORIAL ZONE OF ABIA STATE

**Dr. Deemua, G. A.**

Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education

&

**Alaubi, Stanley C.**

Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education

University of Port Harcourt, NIGERIA

### ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of sports administrators demographic variables on the achievement of sustainable grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The descriptive survey design method was used in this study. The population of this study comprised of 1,027 sports administrators in 5 Local Government Areas of Abia North Senatorial Zones of Abia State. Simple random sampling technique was used to arrive at the sample size of 340 (196 male and females) sports administrators. A self-structured instrument was used for data collection. Face and content validities were ensured by experts from the department of Human Kinetics and Health Education. Percentage was used to answer the two research questions while the inferential statistics of chi-square was used to test the two hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels. The study found that age of sports administrators and the professional status of officiating officials have an influence on the management of sports facilities and equipment and sports officiating in Abia North Senatorial Zones, Abia State. The study recommended that sports administrators' age and professional status of officiating officials should be considered during employment in order to enhance sports developments at the grassroots.

**Keywords:** Demographic, sports administrators, grassroots sports, sports development, sustainable.

### INTRODUCTION

Where two or more persons are gathered, there is need for a leader. Therefore, sports organization and administration is not excluded from this axiom. Leadership is needed for sports development at the grassroots. According to Bucher (2004), sport development is the technical innovation and economic growth in the world of sports through proper utilization and management of human and material resources. It is a common knowledge today that the attainment of world class status in sports is a strong reflection of development objectives of a country.

One of the ways of achieving meaningful sports development is through grassroots sports. In this course, grassroots sports development is used to mean the exposure of youths and young adults, male and female from local communities and urban areas of the country in sporting activities and skills for optimal performance. Anyanwu (1999), opined that grassroots

approach is the most appropriate measure to sports development in Nigeria as well as any nation struggling to find its bearing in the world of sports.

However, for effective and efficient administration of sports at the grassroots, good leadership is highly required for the attainment of all goals. Sports administration is handled by sports personnel called sports administrators. Olajide (2007), described sports administrator as that person-male or female that is charged with the responsibility of harnessing human and material resources available for sports to enhance sports patron, development and excellence. In line with the above assertion.

Based on the context of this study, a sports administrator is someone at any level of sport organization, uses his administrative prowess to plan, organize and manage both human and material resources towards the achievement of organization goal as applied to sports.

For sports to attain most of its lofty goals, sports facilities and equipment have to be managed by qualified sports personnel for improved sports performance at the local, national and international levels of sports. Sports administrators who wish to achieve excellence in sport involve themselves in some management practices that help to improve the performance of athletes, coaches and spectators or fans. These management practices include management of sports activities and equipment and officiating officials for grassroots sports development. Sports facilities in this study refer to sports arena, such as fields, courts, running tracks, boxing rings, swimming pools, and so on. These facilities play a vital role in the administration and management of sports in any developed and developing community (Bamidele, 2012). If adequate sports facilities are provided and maintained, definitely the standard of performance and participation in interscholastic and inter collegiate sports programs at the grassroots levels would be appreciated and enjoyed by participants including, sports administrators or managers. Responsibility for the provision of the facilities shall be shared by the government, individuals and private organizations (Lawal, 2015).

In realization of the objectives of grassroots sports development, place of officiating officials becomes paramount. To achieve this basic objectives, there is need to have the right caliber of personnel to cover all the Local Government Areas of the state. There is need to recruit coaches and sports organizers to all the Local Government Headquarters to enable them reach the local level and discover the hidden talents. Administrators and other personnel should participate in planning new facilities and organize sports in an attractive atmosphere to encourage mass participation in sports at the grassroots levels.

It is against this background that the researcher seeks to examine the influence of sports administrators on grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zones, Abia State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

One of the objectives of the sports councils which include administrators is to promote sports at all levels and to spread the principle of mass participation to every nook and cranny of the state. To achieve this basic objectives, there is need to have the right caliber of people to cover sports at the grassroots levels. There was consensus on the need to recruit coaches and sports organizers under the supervision of the sports administrators to enable them reach the local level and discover the hidden talents. But unfortunately, the benefits and role expected of coaches, sports organizers and sports administrators in regards to sports development, seems presently that nothing is happening to sports at the community levels. No meaningful trace of planning new facilities and maintenance, organized competition, funding or

management of funds, motivation of athletes, sports officiating officials, fans and supporters of local clubs and teams at the grassroots levels. These and more observations have necessitated this study, particularly in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. Ascertain influence of sports administrators' age on the management of sports facilities for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State.
2. Determine the influence of sports administrators' professional status on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What influence has sports administrators' age on management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State?
2. What influence has sports administrators' professional status on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State?

### **Hypotheses**

1. The age of sports administrators will have no significant influence on management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State.
2. The professional status of sports administrators will have no significant influence on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of 1,027 sports administrators in 5 Local Government Areas in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State (Abia State Ministry of Sports, 2017). Simple random sampling techniques was used to arrive at the sample size of 340 (196 male and female) sports administrators. Self designed questionnaire (QISADVGS) was used for data collection for the study. The instrument was in two parts. Part A consisted of the demographic variables while part B contained the variables under study. This section was structured after the modified likert four points rating scales of Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point). This section contained 6 items on sports administrators and management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development.

Face and content validities were ensured. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to establish the reliability index of 0.68. The mean and percentage were used to answer the research questions whereas chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

**Results**

The results of the study are presented as shown below;

**Research Question 1**

What influence has sports administrators' age on management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State?

**Table 1: Percentage analysis of influence of sports administrator's age on management of sports and equipment for grassroots sports development**

S/N	Items	Agreed	%	Disagreed	%
1.	Young sports administrators hardly think about maintenance of existing sports facilities and equipment within their jurisdiction compare to their older counterparts	134	(39.4%)	206	(60.6%)
2.	Most sports facilities and equipment are not used for sports training of athletes by young sports administrators in the locality like their older counterparts.	128	(37.6%)	212	(62.4%)
3	Young sorts administrators don't properly monitor available sports facilities and equipment in their area as their older counterparts do.	184	(54.1%)	156	(45.9%)
4	Many older sports administrators always ensure new sports facilities and equipment are bought and used for sports purposes at the grassroots level.	218	(64.1%)	122	(35.9%)
5.	Older sports administrators who have being in the field help to supervised young athletes' usage of available sports facilities and equipment's at the grassroots level than their younger ones.	164	(48.2%)	176	(51.8%)
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>Correlate</b>

(Source: Field Survey, 2017)

The table above shows the percentage analysis of influence of sports administrators' age on management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development. From data analysis in the table above, it was found that in item 1, 134 (39.4%) of the respondents agreed that young sports administrators hardly think about maintenance of existing sports facilities and equipment within their jurisdiction compare to their older counterparts while 206 (60.6%) of the respondents disagreed. In item 2, 128 (37.6%) agreed that most sports facilities and equipment are not used for sports training of athletes by young sports administrators in the locality like their older counterparts, while 212 (62.4%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement.

In item 3, 184 (54.1%) of the respondents agreed to the statement that young sports administrators don't properly monitor available sports facilities and equipment in their area as their older counterparts do, while 156 (55.9%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement, item 4, 218 (64.1%) of the respondents agreed that many older sports administrators always sure new sports facilities and equipment are bought and used for sports

purposes at the grassroots level than younger ones do while 122 (35.9%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement. In item 5, 164 (48.2%) of the respondents agreed that Older sports administrators who have being in the field help to supervised young athletes' usage of available sports facilities and equipment's at the grassroots level than their younger ones, while 176 (51.8%) disagreed to the statement. From the above analysis, it was found that the percentage of respondents who in favour of young (item 1, 2, & 5) was higher than the percentage of them who responded against them (item 3 & 4). This means that the age of sports administrators influences the management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development. It shows that while young sports administrators have more influence on the area of maintenance of existing sports facilities and equipment within their jurisdiction, used sports facilities and equipment for sports training of athletes in the locality, and helping to supervised young athletes' usage of available sports facilities and equipment's at the grassroots level, older sports administrators dominate on the area of monitoring of 'available sports facilities and equipment in their area and ensure new sports facilities and equipment are bought and used for sports purposes at the grassroots level.

## Research Question 2

What influence has sports administrators' professional status on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone in Abia State?

**Table 2: percentage analysis on sports administrators' professional status on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development**

S/N	Items	Agreed	%	Disagreed	%
1	Professional sports administrators employed sports officials to officiate sports programme at the grassroots level than non-professionals	200	(58.8%)	140	(41.2%)
2	Professional sports administrators ensure that trained sports officials officiates all sports programme fairly as compare to those who are not professionals.	190	(55.9%)	150	(44.5%)
3	Professional sports administrators ensure that sports officials trained with the current sports officiating skills and policies are employed to officiate sports competitions.	199	(58.5%)	141	(41.5%)
4	Professional sports administrators ensure that sports officials are well motivated during sports officiating at the grassroots level than nonprofessionals.	218	(64.1%)	122	(35.9%)
5	Professional sports administrators supervise sport officials during sports officiating than non-professionals	288	(84.7%)	52	(15.3%)

The table above shows analysis of influence of professional status of sports administrators on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development. From the data

analysis in the table above, it was observed that in item 1, 200 (58.8%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that professional sports administrators employed sports officials to officiate sports programme at the grassroots level than non-professionals, while 140 (41.2%) of the respondents disagreed. In item 2, 190 (55.9%) of the respondents indicated Professional sports administrators ensure that trained sports officials officiates all sports programme fairly as compare to those who are not professionals, while 150 (44.1%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement. In item 3, 199 (58.5%) of the respondents indicated that professional sports administrators ensure that sports officials trained with the current sports officiating skills and policies are employed to officiate sports competitions, while 141 (38.2%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement. In item 4, 218 (64.1%) of the respondents indicated Professional sports administrators ensure that sports officials are well motivated during sports officiating at the grassroots level than nonprofessionals, while 122(35.9%) of the respondents disagreed. In item 5, 288 (84.7%) of the respondents indicated that professional sports administrators supervise sport officials during sports officiating than non-professionals, while 52 (15.3%) of the respondents disagreed.

From the above analysis, it was found that the percentage of respondents who responded positively to professional sports administrators is higher than the percentage of them who responded against them. This means that, the professional status of sports administrators influences the officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial zone of Abia State.

### Hypotheses 1

The age of sports administrators will have no significant influence on management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone of Abia State.

**Table 3: Ch-square analysis of significant influence of age of sports administrators on management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone in Abia State.**

Age	Agreed (Exp)	Disagreed (Exp)	Total	$\chi^2$ cal	$\chi^2$ crit.	Df	Sig.	Decision
Below 35 yrs	69(60)	49(58)	118	4.21	3.84	1	0.05	Rejected
Above 35yrs	104(113)	118(109)	222					
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>340</b>					

From the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) analysis in the table above, it was found that the  $\chi^2$  calculated value observed was 4.21 , while the  $\chi^2$  critical value was 3.84 at 0.05 level of significant under degree of freedom (df) 1. Thus the null hypothesis stated was rejected since the calculated value (4.21) was higher than the  $\chi^2$  critical value (3.84). This means that the age of sports administrators have significant influence on management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial Zone in Abia State.

**Hypothesis 2**

The professional status of sports administrators will have no significant influence on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial zone in Abia State.

**Table 4: Chi-square analysis of significant influence of sports administrators' professional status on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial zone in Abia State**

Professional status	Agreed (Exp)	Disagreed (Exp)	Total	X <sup>2</sup> cal	X <sup>2</sup> crit.	Df	Sig	Decision
Sport/Physical Education Professional	153 (140.4)	65 (77.6)	218	8.86	3.84	1	0.05	Rejected
Non Professional	66 (78.6)	56 (43.4)	122					
<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>340</b>					

From the chi-square ( $x^2$ ) analysis above, it was found that the  $x^2$  calculated value observed (8.86), was higher than the  $x^2$  critical value (3.84) at 0.05 level of significant under degree of freedom (df) 1. Thus the null hypothesis stated was rejected. This means that the professional status of sports administrators have significant influence on management of officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial zone in Abia State.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Findings from the study reveals that the age of sports administrators influences the management of sports facilities and equipment for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial zone in Abia State. This finding is line with Jeroh (2012), findings which states that management of the available facilities is also another key factor that has direct bearing on the development of sports in the area. He also posited that having the right quality and quantity of sports facilities and equipment is an integral part of sports development. This is important because the availability of sports facilities and equipment serve as an encouragement to athletes' participation in sports at the grassroots levels.

The findings of this study also review the professional status of sports administrators influences the officiating officials for grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial zone in Abia State. This is in line with Ikulayo (2009), finding which stated that singular act of appointment of non-professional has caused the nation a lot of setback in sports development and it will continue as long as the practice continues. Therefore, it is imperative to ensure that sports officials trained with the current officiating skills and policies and qualified sports officials are employed to officiate during sports competitions to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the programme.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings from this study, it was concluded that sports administrators' demographic variables influences sports administrator's management of grassroots sports development in Abia North Senatorial zone in Abia State. It is also concluded that grassroots sports development is attainable in Abia North Senatorial zone of Abia State, if sports

administrators use appropriate method and techniques in managing both human and material resources for the development of sports at the grassroots.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Sports administrators' age and professional status should be considered during employment
2. Provision and management of sports facilities and equipment should be the duty of the community and the government for effective grassroots sports development
3. Sports administrators should scout for more means for officiating officials to improve on their professional competencies
4. Sports administrators should use appropriate methods and techniques in managing human and material resources for sports to strive in the area.

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