

## ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES AS CORRELATE OF SPORTS PERFORMANCE AMONG NIGER STATE ATHLETES IN NATIONAL SPORTS FESTIVAL AT DELTA 2025

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### Abstract

The performance of any athlete or team can be traced to the types of leadership styles adopted by the sports administrators in the area of preparing the team for a competition. It is in the light of this, that this study investigated Administrative Strategies as Correlate of Performance of Niger State Athletes at National Sports Festival Delta State, Nigeria. Descriptive research design of survey type was employed for this study. The population for this study consist of state athletes, coaches and sports administrators with 196 respondents in the study area. Stratified and Purposive sampling techniques were used to select 196 respondents for the study. A researcher structured questionnaire was used to gathered information for this study. The instrument was validated by three (3) lecturers in the department of Human Kinetics Education, University of Ilorin. The reliability level of the instrument was established through test retest method using person product moment correlation (PPMC). A correlation coefficient of 0.85r was obtained. The instrument was administrated by the researcher and three trained research assistants. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentage to analysed the demographic data of the respondents and research questions while inferential statistics of person product moment correlation (PPMC) was used to test the postulated hypotheses set for the study at 0.05 alpha level. The result reviewed that funding has significant contributions to excellence performance of Niger state athletes at National sports festival, also availability of sports facilities and sponsorships are fundamental to Niger state athletes performance at National sports festival. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made that Government and sport administrators should always encourage the athletes by motivating them so as to achieved excellent result in competitions. Coaches and sports administrators are advised to adopt a leadership style and management strategies that would encourage athletes to perform better in a competition.

**Keywords:** Administrative Strategies, Sports Performances, Athletes Performance, National Sports Festival

## INTRODUCTION

Sports development is the process of continuous improvement of the sports structure, institutions and programmes in order to create societal conditions that are conducive for effective functioning of sports council that would enhance athletes' performance in an organised competition.

Sports at any level is a social activity and event that requires human and material resources with the aid of administrative effectiveness (Elendu&Ogujiofor, 2016). Sports is more than ever before, commanding global attention, its influence on world peace, economy and the development of social relationships cannot be underestimated. According to Asagba, Balogun, Odewunmi and Oladipo (2014), sport administration is the art of managing programmes, human and material resources in sports organization with the aim of accomplishing the objectives of the organization. The synopsis of sports administration is that sports management is sports programming and excursion. The importance of effective sports administration on a state cannot be over emphasized as it does not only promote the athletes presented by the state, it also brings the winning state into limelight both nationally and internationally as the case may be.

The administration of mega or small-scale, recreational or competitive sports programme in every society requires human and material resources. One of the challenges facing the administration and development of sports at any level and society is inadequate skilled personnel or manpower. The inadequacy of personnel needed for any event or programme can be augmented through the use of volunteers. Volunteer is referring to an individual who offers his/her labour, knowledge, skills, and experience at no wage cost to a utilizing organization. Throughout the world, volunteers are utilized by various organizations for various events. Volunteers have become a vital asset in ensuring the efficiency of events.

The management strategies are very vital to the success of any organization or team, it could be described as the official line of authority and control within an organization (Babatunde, 2015). Management strategies often describes the relationship of work between

staffs in particular organization, in this case, the goal setting of an Administrator depends on the environment and nature of workforces available. Effective management requires a design structure that ensures that the various component is integrated so that their efforts can contribute to the overall aim of goal set for the team (John, 2018), it is the responsibility of the management to set up and support the government policies before any activities is been initiated in order to ensure that all key decisions are taken from the appropriate offices. Furthermore, the management defines the team governance in the document that outlay the role and responsibilities for decision making among team and stakeholders which may include the creation of a committee and its high-level operating rules.

In sports management, athletes and coaches level of performance depend largely on the cooperation and efficiency of the sports manager in attending to their needs. All these individuals are regarded today as practitioners in the field of sport management. Sports management is the bedrock or cornerstone for sports development in virtually all nations. This is the organ that is responsible for the smooth running of various sports in terms of planning, organizing, directing and controlling all essentials inputs in sports. Sports can succeed or failed in direct proportion to the appropriate decisions and actions of those who are responsible for managing them (Oloruntoba&Achugbu, 2018). An effective and efficient management strategy in any organization such as administration of football clubs in particular rests solely on the board of management practices adopted by the club.

According to (Ajadi&Falaye 2022) Sports management can be measured in two ways, they are vertically and horizontally. Vertically by identifying an increase in the number of new sports a country has participated in over the years. While Horizontally helps in determining the level of frequency of competition in sports within a given period. Furthermore, sports performance could be measured from the number of successes achieved in national and international sports competitions. These successes have a direct hearing on the indices of sports development especially through National sports festival. Ajadi, Babadare, Ibraheem and Adesoye (2014) stressed that sports performance is usually regarded as an aggregation of individual result such as performance over a month or season of competition as

opposed to single or isolated activity. The performance of any athlete depends largely on the type of motivational measures put in place by sports manager and sports facilities that is available for training within a period of time. Sports performance of an athlete can be measured through the outcome of result obtained in a competition or the amount of medal won in a tournament either by a team or by a single athlete. (Ajadi&Falaye 2021) Moreso, performance in sports is the high level attained or the peak of an athlete as a result of high degree of training.

Obiyemi and Abayomi (2017) observed that many sport councils are in need of sports equipment and facilities, that require heavy and substantial sum of money and because such items or equipment and supplies are vital to the health and safety of athletes or participants and to good playing conditions, it is important that this administrative phase of the specialized field of sports and physical education in Nigerian Sports should be considered critically.

The Nigerian National Sports Festival is a biennial multi-sport event organized by the Federal Government of Nigeria through the National Sports Commission for athletes from the 36 States of Nigeria including Abuja Federal Capital Territories (FCT). Started and staged in 1973 at the National Stadium, Surulere in Lagos, the game was originally conceived as a "unifying tool" with the main purpose of promoting peace and cross-cultural affiliation in Nigeria after the Nigerian Civil War in 1970. The game also serves as a development and training event to aid athletes prepare for continental and international meets. The purpose of the National Sports Festival is to build a robust talent pool of athletes, enhance and elevate sports at grassroots level, establish a standard programme for athletes' succession, enhance and elevate sports at grassroots level, curb age cheating in Sports, encourage early participation in Sports, engage young athletes in the Olympic Movement, skill development and social responsibility, enhance cultural and educational development and promote National unity. (National Sports Policy 2009)

The 21<sup>st</sup> National Sports Festival tagged (Delta 2025) was held at the ancient city of Asaba, Delta State from the 11th- 20th November 2022. In Delta 2025 National Sports

festival, the Niger State contingent was made up of 166 Athletes and 73 officials comprising of Coaches, Secretaries, Management staff of the sports Council, Drivers, Cleaners, Accompany officials and Security personnel. Out of 38 sporting event staged at the National Sport Festival, Niger state competed in 24 events and from the 36 States including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Niger state came 19th overall with 7 gold, 5 silver and 31 Bronze to make a total of 43 medals. This is the highest medal since the state's attendance at national sport Festival. The achievement is to the Governor for his tremendous contribution to sports development in the state through his giant stride in upgrading sports facilities and prompt release of fund for the participation of Niger State Contingent at the sports festival (Niger State Sports Council, 2022).

### **Statement of the problem**

In spite the contribution and efforts of the state government in terms of sports development such as provision of sports facilities and equipment for the athletes and even to change the face of sports in Niger state sports council. The Niger Athletes at the last concluded National sport festival tagged Delta 2025 came 19th overall with 7 gold, 5 silver and 31 Bronze to make a total of 43 medals. This is the highest medal since the state's attendance at national sport Festival. The achievement is to the Governor of the State for his tremendous contribution to sports development in the state through his giant stride in upgrading sports facilities and prompt release of fund for the participation of Niger State Contingent at the sports Festival. Yet, the Niger Athlete were still faced with some challenges during Delta 2025 which were observed by the researcher as follows: On Hostel accommodation, the council does not have a hostel to be used for camping of athlete. During preparation for the festival, getting a place to camp the Athlete became a problem and this affected their performance at the Mundial. Also, on issue of transportation, the council can only boost of 1 hummer bus that is used for all her activities. This is the bus that all the 28 Association used which is not sufficient in moving their contingent to Delta was the big problem which resulted to moving then in batches. This really cost the council financially

through fueling and repairs. On equipment, Athletes did not have enough equipment to train prior to the festival which resulted in hindering the performance of their athletes. Medically, the sports Council does not have its own ambulance for medical purposes. Sick athletes were moved in buses instead of ambulance by the medical personnel. Lastly, in the aspect of Tournaments and Championship, the state has not been organizing enough tournament and championship due to funding. Organizing tournament makes it easier in discovering Talent which can be nurtured to represent the state at national and international competitions. Championships like the inter local government championship and state sports festival have been a thing of the past.

### **Objective of the study**

The objectives of this study is to examine the administrative strategies as correlate of Niger State athletes performance at National Sports festival Delta 2025. The objective is specifically meant to:

1. investigate the relationship between funding and performance of Niger State Athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival.
2. examine the relationship between availability of Sports facilities and Performance of Niger State Athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival.
3. find out the relationship between Bureaucratic Process and performance of Niger State Athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested for this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between Funding and performance of Niger State Athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival.
2. There is no significant relationship between availability of sports facilities and performance of Niger State Athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports festival.

3. There is no significant relationship between bureaucratic process and performance of Niger State Athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Descriptive research design of survey type was used for the study. The population of the study comprise of all Athletes, Sports Administrator and Coaches in Niger State Sports Council. A multi stage sampling procedure of Stratified, and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the sample size for the study. Purposively all the 141 athletes, 20 Coaches and 84 Sports Administrator were samples for the study. In all 255 respondents were sampled for the study. The research instrument that was used for the study was a Researcher structure questionnaires and it was tested for reliability using Pearson product correlation PPMC. A correlation coefficient of 0.65 was obtained. The instrument was administered by the researcher and five trained research assistants. The data collected were analysis using descriptive statistics of percentage for personal data of the respondents and answer research questions while inferential statistics of Pearson product correlation coefficient was used to test the postulate hypotheses set for the study at 0.05 alpha level.

## RESULTS

### Hypotheses Testing

**HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between funding and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival.**

**Table 1: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis showing the correlation between funding and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National sports festival.**

| Variable    | N   | Mean  | Std.  | Cal.<br>r-value | df  | Crit. | Value<br>Sig | Remark |
|-------------|-----|-------|-------|-----------------|-----|-------|--------------|--------|
| Funding     | 255 | 41.10 | 34.12 | 0.321           | 243 | 0.164 | 0.002        | Reject |
| Performance |     | 26.22 | 33.14 |                 |     |       |              |        |

P < 0.05 alpha level

Table 1 indicates the calculated 'r' value of 0.321 and the critical p-value of 0.164 with the degree of freedom of 243 at 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated 'r' value is greater than the p-value, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant relationship between funding and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival was hereby rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between funding and performance of Niger state athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports festival.

**HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between availability of sports facilities and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports festival.**

**Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis showing the correlation between availability of sports facilities and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National sports festival.**

| Variable          | N   | Mean  | Std.  | Cal. r-value | df  | Crit. | Value Sig | Remark |
|-------------------|-----|-------|-------|--------------|-----|-------|-----------|--------|
| Sports facilities | 255 | 60.93 | 4.824 | 0.572        | 243 | 0.164 | 0.000     | Reject |
| Performance       |     | 24.01 | 3.475 |              |     |       |           |        |

P < 0.05 alpha level

Table 2 indicates the calculated 'r' value of 0.572 and the critical p-value of 0.164 with the degree of freedom of 243 at 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated 'r' value is greater than the p-value, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant relationship between availability of sports facilities and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival was rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between availability of sports facilities and performance of Niger state athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports festival.

**HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between bureaucratic process and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival.**

**Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis showing the correlation between bureaucratic process and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National sports festival.**

| Variable             | N   | Mean  | Std.   | Cal.<br>r-value | df  | Crit. | Value<br>Sig | Remark |
|----------------------|-----|-------|--------|-----------------|-----|-------|--------------|--------|
| Bureaucratic process | 255 | 60.73 | 3.221  | 0.393           | 243 | 0.164 | 0.000        | Reject |
| Performance          |     | 43.11 | 31.250 |                 |     |       |              |        |

P < 0.05 alpha level

Table 3 indicates the calculated 'r' value of 0.393 and the critical p-value of 0.164 with the degree of freedom of 243 at 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated 'r' value is greater than the p-value, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant relationship between bureaucratic process and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports Festival was hereby rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between bureaucratic process and performance of Niger state athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports festival.

## Discussion of the Findings

The finding from tested hypothesis revealed that there was a significant relationship between funding and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National Sports festival. This result supported the findings of Obiyemi and Abayomi (2017) that stated that funding of sports programmes required huge amount of money and that only the government that can finance such programmes as far as administration of sports is concern. Also Aluko and Adodo (2011) stressed that under the present management structure, sports must be properly funded so as to improve on the infrastructural development by training and recruitment of competent personal especially in the sports council. Lack of incentives for athletes and coaches considering the economic situation of the country can pose a threat to the performance of state athletes to any major competition both within and outside the state.

The finding from tested hypothesis indicated that there was a significant relationship between availability of sports facilities and performance of Niger State athletes at Delta 2025 National sports festival. This result is in line with the finding of Orunabaka (2011) who pointed out that, when sports facilities are provided, it would go a long way to enhance active participation of sports especially among youth. Availability of sports facilities are fundamental to the growth and development of sports in any given society. Dufur (2007) observed that the performance of athletes in sports may be influence positively or negatively depending on the quality of availability of sports facilities and equipment to be used for training. The place of facilities in the organization and administration of sports cannot be overemphasis or neglected because, it often determine the involvement of athletes in sports. The finding from tested hypothesis three shows that there was a significant relationship between bureaucratic process and performance of Niger state athletes at Delta 2025 National sports festival. This result is in agreement with the finding of Park (2016) who affirmed that bureaucratic organization like that of sports tend to use rules as a decision making crutch. In this regard, sports administrators tend not to search extensively for alternative solutions to problems thereby lend to unintended results. And as such rules become flexible not rigid as

regards fund released. In the same vein Morakinyo and Aluko (2008) argued that rules in bureaucratic act are substitute for orders, since they comprise an explicit body of standing obligations. Bureaucratic have the virtue of securing corporation between the numbers of people without those people necessarily feeling cooperative.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusion were made:

- (1) Funding has significantly contributions towards the excellence performance of Niger state athletes at the National sports festival.
- (2) Availability of sports facilities has significant impact on the performance of Niger state athletes at the National Sports Festival.
- (3) Bureaucracy procedure is very crucial in determine the performance of Niger state athletes at National festival.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendation were made:

- (1) Government should endeavor to increase the allowances given to athletes before, during and after the competition so as to improved their performance in a competition.
- (2) There is need for government and sports administrators to always provide adequate sports facilities for the athletes to prepared themselves for a competition so as to bring about excellent achievement.
- (3) There should not be delay in the process of releasing and attending to the needs of the athletes while they are preparing for a competition.

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