

LIBRARIES CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPORTS DEVELOPMENT IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF AKWA IBOM STATE NIGERIA

¹ I. N. Jona,, Ph.D, ²Mercy E. Ukpanah, ³Elijah P. Etuk

¹Department of Physical and Health Education, University of Uyo,

^{2,3}University Library, University of Uyo, NIGERIA.

merc yukpana_mrs@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Libraries provide information which is a vital tool for the pursuit of academic excellence at all levels of education and development of sports in tertiary institutions. Athletes in four tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State were used for the study. The study had four objectives, four research questions and three hypotheses. This study sought to determine the contributions of libraries to the development of sports skills in Nigeria. Survey research method was used for the study and the instrument was questionnaire. Data were analyzed using simple percentages and chi square to test the relationship between libraries and sports development. The findings from the study revealed that there is a relationship between libraries and sports development and those libraries have greatly contributed to the development of sports in Nigeria.

Keywords: Libraries, sports development, athletes

INTRODUCTION

Athletics on university campuses is one of the oldest traditions in tertiary institutions. To this day, most institutions of higher learning have intercollegiate athletic programmes which means that a large number of student-athletes exist on Nigerian campuses. Student-athletes, like other special populations on campus, have unique needs that make them different from other students. One area that student-athletes need help is in accessing and learning how to use the library system on their campus. Issues such as heavy practice and travel schedules make it difficult for student-athletes to make effective use of library resources. Further, many in higher education are biased in their dealings with student-athletes and are reluctant to give the special population assistance even if other special populations on campus are receiving similar assistance. Libraries are social institutions, created to conserve knowledge; provide information and to serve as fountains of recreation and development. Different types of libraries tend to emphasize on one or more of these social roles.

The realization of the enormous power of information has made libraries and information resource centers inevitably present in all sectors of a nation's economy. Hence today, libraries are found in all the three levels of our educational system including public libraries, research institutions and private organizations such as banks and insurance companies (Umar, 2004). Libraries have always served as tools for educational advancement at all levels of education (Akintunde, 2004). This is because libraries contain information which is a vital tool for the pursuit of academic excellence at all levels of education.

Libraries and information centres are considered the first port of call for updating information and development in all fields of life. Keeping abreast with information means; reading lots of literature on sports activities. Athletes make use of a library for a variety of reasons. Some use it for specific reading, especially for professional development, research and related needs. Others use the library not only for reading but also for recreation, entertainment and solving personal information problems.

Athletes have information needs. This could be for meeting tasks considered critical to competition or development of professional skills in sports. The library according to Aina (2004) tries to meet all the information needs of all its users. Hence libraries through its services provide an overview of how Information Communication Technology (ICT) is changing the nature of management practices in sport; how the tools of today's "technological revolution" can be applied to the administration of sport and how the development of Internet and World Wide Web help in specific sports management functions such as training.

The library is currently used by professional sports teams for information gathering and dissemination. Fans wanting to hear the play-by-play in English can only do so by the use of internet facilities available in these institutions libraries to call up the team's Website and listen to it coming across as an audio feed. Availability of internet facilities in libraries has penetrated professional sports as some pro hockey teams now require their players to have e-mail addresses as a means to interact with both the team administration and their fans. What will emerge are the networks of teams and users bound together by a common interest and driven in part by advances in information technology in libraries. One of the basic functions of libraries is to encourage wholesome recreation and constructive use of leisure time. The library provides light reading materials like sports newspapers and special sports magazines to keep its users abreast of the political events and the sporting activities in the country.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Libraries are at the centre of the academic excellence of all educational institutions providing all the relevant information resources necessary for sustaining the teaching, learning and research functions of these institutions. The academic health, intellectual vitality and effectiveness of these educational institutions in producing high quality athletes depend largely on the quality of information resources available in their libraries to support the teaching, learning and research activities. Libraries according to Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) are conceived not as an archive or reading room but as the foyer of living ideas that permeate and animate all aspects of national life. As social agencies for progress, they are repositories of information that provide underpinnings for socio-economic, political and sports development on any civilization. Libraries, like other human organizations are parts of larger social systems. The value of libraries in sports development can be readily seen for the organization of a competition. Lorenze and Lucas (2003) noted that ICT facilities in libraries are even more important for the day-to-day operation of the sport organization as can be seen by the kinds of sport program information that can be contained within library databases. In terms of education, the concept of "distributed learning" or "distance education" gains more adherents with every passing day. Through libraries, one can do the entire course of study for an accredited Master of Sport Science degree through the Web. The same possibilities exist at the undergraduate level through the International Sports Academy (Kotana, 2007).

We are in the 21st century, an age that is powered by information in all its ramifications. It is the age of information explosion in which the internet and its associated technologies are being used to take advantage of the immense knowledge of man all over the globe for the benefit of the accelerated development of society. It is the information society. Consequently, it is only a nation which is conscious of the importance of libraries and information in the drive towards the accelerated development of a nation that can survive and thrive in the comity of nations of this age.

Information access and dissemination are some of the key empowerment tools for development of sports in universities as noted by Ying and Koh (2006). This is because information is needed in all spheres of life, to facilitate in decision making and engender sports development at all levels. In the university system, sports activity is an essential component of quality education. Not only does it promote physical activity, but also correlate to improved academic performance under certain conditions.

For effective development of sports activities in the universities, the athletes must be adequately informed. This is in agreement with Moronkola, Adesipo and Abayomi (1995) that researches are lifelong processes, therefore research by athletes are not only essential but ensures optimal performance by athletes at national and international competitions. It is important to note that computer networks need not be limited to a single site or facility. Wide Area Networks (WANs) can link together sports administrators located throughout a country. For example, all of the regional offices of a national sports governing body such as the National Football Association can be linked together regardless of their geographic location. All of the operatives so linked can share administrative and programming information and communicate with each other cheaply and efficiently through the internet facilities in libraries.

The classical Greek model of a well-rounded individual postulated that the person should work towards excellence in both athletics and in scholarship. These two areas have been disconnected from each other by many individuals in higher education who have chosen to hold athletes in contempt. The dumb jock stereotype of athletes (Zingg 1982) is widely believed by many in higher education and as a consequence many student-athletes have difficulty in being taken seriously by their peers, faculty, and administrators. Zingg also found that other students on campus tend to waver from being avid fans of the athletes to holding condescending stereotypes of all athletes. Another researcher (Sellers 1992) found that a large portion of the campus community believe student-athletes are both socially inept and do not do well in the classroom.

Librarians have been attempting to help student-athletes by starting special programs for them in some instances. Indiana University started a programme in the early 1980s that addressed a large number of academic issues including library skills for student-athletes. The first apparent write up about a library run student-athlete program (Jesudason, 1984) dealt with a program at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in the mid-1980s. Jesudason wrote about how important library education was for athletes in regards to Proposition 48 that had been passed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to require minimum academic standards of new student-athletes. This meant that many new athletes were not eligible to play their first year in college and that remedial education was needed for these athletes to make them eligible. This gave academic libraries an opening to make an impact on the education of student-athletes. The library approached the athletic department at the University of Wisconsin and was given

permission to create an education module for student athletes. This module included the development of a brochure and sending student-athletes through two library instruction sessions.

Like the University of Wisconsin program, the library instruction program for student-athletes at the University of Central Florida also put athletes through two library instruction sessions. It was noted by Ruscella (1993) that contrary to stereotype that the student-athletes had a higher graduation rate than the rest of the student population. Despite this, a program was started for the special population of student-athletes because it was believed that the student-athletes needed more library help due to their extensive athletic schedules. The programme was well received and in evaluating the program the student-athletes found the program to be successful.

The most popular part of the special library services for student-athletes has been on-site reference assistance in academic libraries. It is observed by (Opeke, 2004) that the librarian assists the athletes in finding information in the electronic library collection and on the World Wide Web. Other appropriate help is also provided such as assistance with using application software, ideas for papers.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Sports provide a forum for young people to learn how to deal with competition and how to cope with both winning and losing. These learning aspects highlight the impact of physical education and sport on a child's social and moral development in addition to physical skills and abilities. Sport is an attractive activity for young people, and is often used as a draw card to recruit children and young people to health and education programmes. Development projects that focus on educational outcomes use sport as a means to deliver educational messages to participants, and spectators in some cases. The library enables the individual to obtain spiritual, inspirational, and recreational activity through reading, and therefore the opportunity of interacting with the society's wealth and accumulated knowledge. The question is can libraries serve as agents of sports development in the nation. This is the question which this study seeks to answer.

OBJECTIVES

The study was designed to examine the libraries contribution to the development of sports activities in tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically it intends to:

1. Examine whether the athletes make use of the library in developing their sports skills
2. Find out whether there are facilities in the libraries that can help in the development of sports skills of athletes in tertiary institutions?
3. Determine the ways that information sources in the libraries enhance the development of sports in the tertiary institutions.
4. To find out how libraries motivate athletes for better participation in sports.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Where do athletes go in search of information for the development sports skills?
2. Are there facilities in the libraries that can help develop the sports skills of athletes in tertiary institutions

3. In what ways do information sources in the libraries enhance the development of sports in tertiary institutions?
4. Have the libraries motivate athletes in better participation in sports.

HYPOTHESIS

1. There will be no significant relationship between facilities in library and sports development.
2. There will be no significant relationship between information sources in the libraries and sports development.
3. There will be no significant relationship between libraries and sports participation.

METHODOLOGY

The study population includes all athletes in four tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State: University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic Ikot Osurua, College of Education, Afaha Nsit and Akwa Ibom State University, Mkpat Enin. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Researchers developed questionnaire served as the research instrument. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 30 athletes from each of these institutions making a total of 120 respondents for the study. Captains from each of the institution served as the research assistants who administered the questionnaire on the athletes. Of the 120 questionnaires administered, 95(79%) were properly completed and returned. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and chi square analysis.

Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown below in Table 1. It indicates that 63(66.3%) of the respondents are male while 32(33.7%) of the respondents are female. The age group of athletes in these institutions range between 17 and above 26 years with majority of them (55.8%) in the age between 21 and 25 years of age. Their years of experience in sports range from below 10 years and above 20 years with majority of them (60%) having between 11 to 20 years of experience. This is shown in the table below.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	Responses	Percentage
Sex		
Male	63	66.3
Female	32	33.7
Age group		
17 -20	18	18.9
21-25	53	55.8
26 and above	24	25.3
Years of experience in sports		
1-10 years	25	26.3
11-20 years	57	60
20years and above	13	13.7

Table 2. Where do athletes go in search of information for the development of sports skills?

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Students canteen	5	5.3%
Cybercafé	23	24.2%
Libraries	51	53.7%
Sports centre	3	3.1%
Colleagues	13	13.7%

On where the athletes go in search of information. The result indicated that 51(53.7%) go to the libraries; 23(24.2%) go to cybercafé; 13(13.7%) gather information from colleagues; 5(5.3%) indicated students canteen while 3(3.1%) indicated that they go to sports centre in search of information.

Table 3. Are there facilities in the libraries that can help in development of sports skills

Facilities	Responses	Percentage
Reading facilities	12	13.3%
ICT facilities	58	64.4%
Recreational facilities	20	22.3%

In examining the types of information that athlete need for development of sports, the result indicated that 43(45.3%) need information on skills acquisition; 15(15.8%) need information on health and fitness; 12(12.6%) need technological information and team rosters respectively; 8(8.4%) need information on their professional development while 5(5.3%) indicated that they need information on opportunities.

Table 4. How do these information resources in libraries enhance the development of sports skills in tertiary institutions?

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Textbooks	14	14.7%
Journals	3	3.1%
Internet facilities	20	21.1%
Sports newspapers/magazines	51	53.7%
Databases	7	7.4%

In examining how libraries contribute to sports development, 51(53.7%) respondents indicated through the provision of the textbooks; 20(21.1%) indicated internet facilities; 14(14.7%)

indicated textbooks; 7(7.4%) indicated sports databases while 3(3.1%) indicated the provision of journals.

Table 5. How do libraries motivate athletes to more participation in sports?

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Provision of electronic resources for life long development	52	54.8%
Provision of infrastructure for stress relief	8	8.4%
Providing an avenue for shared experiences	12	12.6%
Provision of print materials for quality education in sports	23	24.2%

From Table 5 above, the result shows libraries motivate athletes to participate more in sports. The respondents 52(54.8%) indicated the provision of electronic resources for life long development; 23(24.2%) indicated the provision of print materials for quality education in sports; 12(12.6%) indicated the provision of an avenue for shared experiences while 8(8.4%) indicated that libraries motivate athletes through the provision of infrastructure for stress relief.

In testing the hypotheses to determine whether there exist a relationship between libraries and development of sports skills the chi square analysis was as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant relationship between facilities in library and sports development.

X ² Calculated	Calculated Table value	P	df	DECISION
175.1	12.59	0.05	6	null hypothesis rejected

The analysis yielded a chi square of 175.1 which was greater than the Table value of 12.59 and significantly high at P>0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship between facilities in libraries and sports development was rejected and restated that there is a significant relationship between facilities in libraries and the development of sports skills.

Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant relationship between information sources in the libraries and sports development in Nigeria.

X ² Calculated	Calculated Table value	P	df	DECISION
134.5	12.59	0.05	6	null hypothesis rejected

The analysis yielded a Chi square of 134.5 which was greater than the table value of 12.59 and the degree of freedom 6 was significantly high at P>0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship between information sources in libraries and sports development in Nigeria was rejected and restated that there is a significant relationship between information sources in libraries and the development of sports skills in Nigeria.

Hypothesis 3: There will be no significant relationship between libraries and sports participation in Nigeria.

X ² Calculated	Calculated Table value	P	df	DECISION
142.5	12.59	0.05	6	null hypothesis rejected

The analysis yielded a Chi square of 142.5 which was greater than the table value of 12.59 and degree of freedom 6 was significantly high at P>0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship between libraries and sports participation in Nigeria was rejected and restated that there is a significant relationship libraries and sports participation in Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

The findings in Table 2 show that athletes use the library in search for information for the development of sports skills. This agrees with Okiy (2008) which states that the library is central to the provision of the right type of information resources that empowers the educational institutions to produce highly resourceful people to impact positively on national development.

Table 3 indicated that the facilities that are available in libraries are useful in development of sports skills in tertiary institutions. It revealed that ICT facilities are available and useful to athletes. This agrees with Lorenze and Lucas (2003) that libraries have ICT facilities for information dissemination which are available to help the athletes in their search of information.

The findings in Table 4 agrees with Moronkola and Abayomi (1995) that libraries have contributed immensely to the development of sports in institutions of higher learning by the provision of sports newspapers and magazines which helps the athletes to be relaxed over the days sports activities and prepare for the next training exercise and sports competitions.

The study further revealed in Table 5 that the libraries have greatly motivated the athletes to participate greatly in sports activities by provision of electronic resources in the libraries for life long development of the athletes as explained by Ying and Koh (2006) that electronic resources in libraries enhances professional development. The three hypotheses tested indicated that there is relationship between the libraries and sports development in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The library as a conduit for information serves a wide spectrum of information seekers and plays a critical role in the facilitation of knowledge and development of sports skills. Libraries are continuously changing and engaging in evolving technology to make information more readily available in the medium associated with the era. There exists a strong relationship between libraries and sports skills development.

REFERENCES

Jesudason, Melba. (1989). *Proposition 48 and user education for athletes*. RSR, 17, no. 1:13-20.
 Katona, G. (2007). The use of digital materials for instruction in sport topics at the University of West Hungary(2007). *International Journal of Education and Development using ICT* [Online], 3(1).

Available: <http://ijedict.dec.uwi.edu/viewarticle.php?id=275>.

Moronkola, O.A., Adesipo, T.A and Abayomi, B.O.(1995). Status of research efforts on Nigerian athletes health issues in V.C,Igbanugo (ed.) research in Health , physical Education sport and Dance. *Proceedings of the 10 annual and anniversary conference of Nigerian Association of Sports ,Science and medicine*.

Okiy, R.(2008). *Using libraries in Nigeria as tools for education and national development in 21st century*. available at <http://libr.org/isc/articles/21/13.pdf> accessed 28/8/2011

Opeke, R. (2004). Information for education and development in Nigeria. *A Compendium of Papers Presented At the 2004 NLA Annual National Conference/AGM, Akure, June 41-47*

Ruscella, Phyliss L. (1993). Scoring: Bibliographic instruction helps freshman athletes compete in the academic league. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 19(4):232-236.

Sellers, Robert (1992). Racial differences in the predictors for academic achievement of student-athletes in Division 1 revenue producing sports. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 9(1):48-59.

Lorenze, M. and Lucas,N. (2003).Introducing first year student athletes students to the library: the Michigan state university experience available at <http://www.libraryinstruction.com/athlete.html>. 18/8/11.

Ying, L.W. & Koh, M (2006) E-learning: New opportunities for Teaching and Learning in Gymnastics, *The British Journal of Teaching Physical Education* , 37/1. 22-25.

Zingg, P. J. (1982). Advising the student-athlete. *Educational Record*, 63(2):16-19.