

USING SPORT AS AN AGENT TO FACILITATE PEACE, SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

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Introduction

The most singular unifying agent in Nigeria today is sport. It knows no ethnicity, religion and politics, does not also discriminate using football as an example which can rightly be described as the opium of the people of our dear country Nigeria. It is played at all nooks and crannies of the Country, on the field, in the sand, on the streets, the bare ground and lawns, any available space is used to play it. Football exhibits an example of the power of sport in our National life. This paper therefore x-rays the various roles sport can play in the facilitation of Peace, Security and Sustainable Development in a Multicultural Society like Nigeria.

In other parts of the World Sport has been used to achieve these goals for the progress of Society. The case of Nigeria will not be different from those of other countries which have experienced some of the crisis which we now experience in our present day society. We have arrived at a point where we have to use what we have to better our society, and that is sport. What this country needs most now is Peace, Security and sustainable development which can rightly be achieved through the medium of sport if properly applied.

The theme of this conference is the most appropriate at this time in our National life, as it depicts what we actually lack and intend to attain through the medium of sport using sports and exercise psychology specialization as a spring board in realizing our goals.

Definition/Nature of Sport

Sport include all forms of competitive physical activity or games which through casual or organized participation, aim to maintain or improve physical ability and skills while providing enjoyment to participants, and in some cases, entertainment for spectators. Hundreds of sports exist, from those between single contestants, to those with hundreds of simultaneous participants, either in teams or competing as individuals. Sport is generally recognized as a system of activities which are based in physical athleticism or physical dexterity, with largest major competitions such as Olympic Games admitting only sports meeting this definition.

However, a number of competitive but non-physical activities claim recognition as mind sports. Some of them recognized as such are Chess, Scrabble, draughts etc. Sport is usually governed by a set of rules or customs (Wikipedia 2018).

What is Peace?

From the perspective of this paper, peace can be defined from the social point of view as a condition of social harmony in which there is said to be no social antagonism. In other words, peace is a condition in which there is no social conflict and individuals and groups are able to meet their needs and expectations from the society (Ibeamu 2007).

Peace is also referred to as the concept of harmony and the absence of hostility. In a behavioural sense, it is described as a condition where there is lack of conflict and freedom from fear of violence between individuals and heterogeneous social groups. (Wikipedia 2018)

Peace is furthermore defined as a stress-free state of security and calmness that comes when there is no fighting or war, everything co-existing in perfect harmony and freedom. In our war-torn world, it seems like there's not nearly enough peace. However, it is said peace can be big and small in some aspects seen in entire countries or brief moments. (Vocabulary.com.2018)

As at today our country can be said to be in pieces we need through the medium of sport get our country in peace. It is only through this important agent of socialization that cuts across all strata of society that can get us peace.

Peace however, does not mean total absence of any form of conflict. However, it refers to the absence of violence in all forms and the unfolding of conflict in a very constructive way. Sporting events and competitions seems to provide this kind of peace. An avenue is provided where peace exist. Sport participants are able to interact none violent and manage their conflicts positively with respect to the legitimate needs and interest of those involved. There are laid down rules and regulations for all types of sports that must be adhered to by its participants. Any deviant behaviour is given specified punishment inherent in the rules. This is respected by everybody involve. It therefore paints a very beautiful scenario to every one involved. Knowing that the rules must be enforced instantly and not delayed everyone abides strictly by it thereby creating a peaceful atmosphere for everyone. In facilitating peace in our dear country, sport has provided this unique opportunity to do that for ourselves.

Peace Education through Sport

Sport certainly provides avenues for Peace Education. Peace Education can be regarded as deliberate attempt to educate youth in the various dynamics of conflict and the promotion of peace making skills in schools, communities and even in the house by using this medium of socialization which is sport.

Peace education through sport is targeted at youth that usually become ready instruments used for causing conflicts and organized violence. As Gumut (2007) put it, peace education actually concerns itself with human and social dimensions of peace which introduces the concept of human dignity and human rights with specific reference to values such as economic equity, political participation etc.

On the whole peace education is really an investment in the younger generations. By educating the youth or younger minds in virtues of peace, certainly a peaceable future can be secured for our communities, country and the World over. Sport provides the best avenue for this. Gumut (2007) further assert that historically peace education openly

acknowledges its purpose as education to facilitate the achievement of peace related sets of social values, largely through learning to recognize, confront, and practice alternative multiple forces of violence. (P.166.)

Sport has contributed through various simple means to maintain World Peace. For instance FIFA takes any case of racism in football seriously. Anybody involved is sanctioned appropriately which provides a peaceful atmosphere for the game of soccer to grow. Even in the Nigerian professional football league, teams that misbehave are usually punished either by paying a fine or banned from the use of one of their venues or the two depending on the gravity of the offence. All in a bid to maintain a peaceful competitive atmosphere.

In years gone by players violently attack themselves on the field of play, this has reduced greatly. You observe players of opposing teams assist injured players of the opposing team, coaches of teams embrace themselves after matches. It happens in tennis the opponents must at the end of the game embrace each other win or lose. In volleyball the players must shake each other at the end of the game. There are several more examples. These are examples of contributions of sport towards community and global peace.

Sport can go further in the promotion of peace by providing deliberate peace education for fans and spectators in large stadia.

This is an area that needs to be emphasized. Locally fans with unfavourable comments trigger off tension during competitions which at times lead to violence. If proper and deliberate effort is made towards spectator education a lot of progress will be made in this direction therefore obtaining the desired peaceful atmosphere.

In settling World Peace the 1976 Olympic Games provided such a wonderful opportunity. The participation of New Zealand in the Montrel Olympic Games became an issue of the strongest protest by African nations (Oduyale 1983). African Sports leaders met and urged the International Olympic committee to send New Zealand out of the Games scheduled to open in Montrel in July 1976. This was because of that country's open support for racist policies of South Africa. However the Games went on as scheduled. Tanzania withdrew followed by Mauritius. Nigeria withdrew from the Montrel Games; following Nigeria's withdrawal about thirty-two African and Arab nations withdrew in protest against the participation of New Zealand because of sporting link with South Africa. This is one way sport was used to attain World Peace when South Africa practiced apartheid, which did not continue in the next Games in Moscow in 1980. So Sport is a veritable institution that can be utilized to attain both local and International Peace. Today South Africa is free. Sport was one instrument used to free South Africa from the apartheid regime where minority rights was emphasized over the majority. As the Olympic is often regarded as the biggest political example. In the case of Apartheid, sport was used to isolate South Africa and brings about a major overhaul in the Country's social structure (Wikipedia 2019).

In countries where there has been upsurge of migration due to crisis that made people refugees. Sports have played very tremendous roles in such societies. Sports have also played wonderful roles in reintegrating child soldiers in war torn countries into the

society. In a report by Peace & Sport, in less than 10 years, the dynamics of sport has already enabled some communities to resettle child soldiers back into society, to help war orphans rebuild their self confidence, to reintegrate refugees, facilitate access to education and more. The use of sport as Pedagogic tool has motivated the International sports movement into tangible action. In parallel, our success in the field has made political leaders and governments aware of how sport can be genuine and effective mechanism for peace.(Peace & Sport 2018). Further, the report asserted that sports has played the role of reintegrating orphans and displaced and especially rebuilding their confidence and given them hope. Even widows benefit from this. Most internally displaced camps in this country organize sporting activities to keep the children busy and rebuild confidence in them. These competitions keep them happy and provide an avenue for the old and the young either as participants or fans to fine moments of succor and laughter through organized soccer competitions in the camps.

Another way of making sport become a true instrument of peace in the larger society is to introduce what Oduyale (1983) refer to as Mass consumption of sports. He argued that for sports to achieve the desired objective it must change from its present system of training an elite athlete group but move towards mass participation/mass consumption. Reason been that competitive sport is restricted to a few compared to the World population. Once mass participation is attained among youth, in the primary school to University levels, then we may be on our way to establish sport consumption for all strata of society. When all strata are involved in sport, peace education can be taught in the mass participant groups. Sport can therefore be used effectively to preach peace among all the strata of society when there is this mass consumption of sports.

This mass consumption will also improve the health of the general populist, thereby maintaining a peaceful and healthy community through mass sport consumption.

Sport and peace building in Nigeria is not a new tactics. The Peace Initiative Network (PIN) since December 2013 has been using sport to teach young people tolerance, co-operation and respect (Peace Initiative Network 2013).

According to Peace Initiative Network Nigeria has several cases of conflicts of various magnitude. It is believed that sport has a Universal language as such is a powerful tool to promote Peace, tolerance and understanding by bringing people together from various background (PIN 2013). This is already been practice in our country. It should be encouraged by everybody.

Security

‘Security is generally accepted as a contested concept but is generally about the condition or feeling safe from harm or danger, the defense, protection and preservation of core values, and the absence of threats to acquire values. Put simply, security is about survival and the conditions of human existence’. (Frances 2007)

Security is also defined as “the state of being free from danger or treat, a thing deposited or pledged as a guarantee of fulfillment of an undertaking”. (Oxford Dictionary 2018)

The key issue in using sport to facilitate security in this country is first of all to recognize that sport is the only binding force that puts Nigerians on one page when

involved, either locally or internationally, so there are a lot that can be done in this direction. It is usually said the youth are the leaders of tomorrow and these same youths are the people most involved in sport, be it competitive or recreational. It becomes necessary to deliberately carry out security education through the medium of sport. This can be done by several means or through many available channels. The channels can be in schools to deliberately teach security. In communities through the use of physical/recreational activities to teach security.

Insecurity as it is, is caused mostly by the youth who are willing tools in the hands of unscrupulous individuals. If these youth are properly occupied with useful sporting activities they certainly will not find time to cause mayhem in various communities.

The popularity and visibility of sport contest make them attractive targets for all kinds of disruptive activities from tuggery to terrorist attack, the attack on athletes by various groups light the need for increased measure surrounding sports events as the importance of comprehensive planning and follow –through by security services. Governing bodies and event host are no longer simply responsible for staging the event itself but rather for insuring the safety of athletes and spectators care of venues, and insuring the financial integrity of the event. (Wikipedia 2018)

The International Centre for sport security (ICSS) is an independent and non-profit organization that plays an integral role in addressing the most prominent challenges facing the world of sport today. Having assembled a team of top International experts in sport safety, security, integrity and good governance, the ICSS works with multiple sectors with the aim of safeguarding sport. ICSS is an international not-for-profit organization based in Doha, Quatar (Wikipedia 2018).

It is high time we started doing studies in sport security in Nigeria whereby all spectators coming to the stadium feel safe. Intelligence gathering will serve our sport security a lot of good. This can attract fans, and other spectators to our venues.

Sustainable Development of Sport

“Investing in sport is investing in the sustainable development goals” He said further, “the enormous potential of sports – its global reach, its universal language, its impact on communities in general, and young people in particular is a fact and is increasingly recognized around the World” (PI). He furthermore said the overarching mission of the International Olympic Committee and the entire Olympic movement is to put sport at the service of the peaceful development of humanity (Samaranch 2018).

Sustainable Development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while at the same time sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services, upon which the economy and society depend. (Wikipedia 2018).

Sustainable development is a concept that appeared for the first time in 1987 with the publication of BrundHand Report, warning of the negative environment consequences of economic growth and globalization, which tried to find possible solutions to the problems caused by industrialization and population growth (Acciona undated).

The main purpose of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) otherwise known as the global Goals, are universal call to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. (UNDP undated).

The Role of Sport in Sustainable Development

Sport is an important enabler of sustainable development as regular participation in sport and physical activities provide various social and health benefits. (UN 2016)

The U.N further claims that sport has proven to be a cost effective and flexible tool for promoting peace and development objectives. Sport is said to be an important enabler of sustainable development. The UN recognize the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in the promotion of tolerance and respect and contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and young people, individuals and community as well as to health, medication and social inclusion objectives.

It furthermore adduced that regular participation in sport and physical activities provides various social and health benefits. Not only does it have a direct impact on physical fitness, but it also instills healthy lifestyle choices among children and young people, helping them remain active and combat non-communicable diseases. Physical exercise can stimulate positive mental health and cognitive development. Exercise has been linked to improvements in self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as positive effects for people struggling with depression and anxiety as evidenced in sport psychology literature.

According to (Samaranch 2018) “Investing in sport is investing in the Sustainable Development goals”. He commented further, that the enormous potential of sports, its global reach, its universal language, its impact on communities in general and young people in particular is a fact and is increasingly recognized around the World”.(pi)

Five Most Sustainable Sport Venues in the World

Surprisingly sport venues are pioneers in the promotion of sustainability. Many sports venues have jumped on the sustainability bandwagon to construct or renovate their structure in a race to minimize their carbon footprint, preserve their green legacy, and take lead in innovation.

Here are the five top stadiums which have incorporated some of the most impressive sustainability elements into their operations, thereby raising the bar in what is expected from sustainability in sport Manogdo (2018) list them as follows:

1. Amsterdam Arena, the home of Ajax, is presently preserved by more than 4,200 solar panels and one wind turbine. The main building comprises an impressive energy generating escalators and the stadium has also installed an energy system powered by second-life batteries from used electronic vehicles.
The storage system of the building is said to be made from used Nissan LEAF batteries which not only provides backup power for the stadium but also distributes energy to the surrounding neighborhood when needed, to alleviate pressure on the grid.
Rainwater from the stadium roof is collected and re-used to water the grass field, which significantly reduces consumption of valuable freshwater. Residual heat is

used to keep frost off the playing field, this move requires no additional energy to be wasted.

It is made in such a way that the authorities encourage fans to reduce their travel emissions by using active mobility, electric vehicles or trains. The stadium car park offers free charging points and every visitor is entitled to discounts on train tickets.

2. Mercedes-Benz Stadium official home of Atlanta Falcons for the US National Football League and other clubs. This stadium also employs solar PV panels and consumes 29 percent less energy than an average does. The Stadium is equipped exclusively with LED lighting and LED video boards and is less radiant on the grid due to the 4,000 rooftop solar PV panels installed.
The stadium has a storm water management system with a capacity to store over 2million gallons on site preventing flooding in the surrounding areas. It uses 47 percent less water than baseline standard stadiums.
3. Levi's Stadium the home of San Francisco 49ers. It also uses 1,000 plus state-of-the-art solar elements. The stadium has a 27,000 square foot "Green Roof" on top of the stadium's suite tower.
4. Golden 1 Centre the home of Sacramento Kings that was awarded the World's greenest and most technologically advanced sports and entertainment facility for 2017. Though it is an Urban venue but, the venue meets 100 percent of its power needs through solar energy. The stadium uses 45 percent less water than what California code requires setting a good example for the local community especially when water is scarce in that region.
5. The fifth Venue is FIFA World Cup 2022 stadiums. Qatar have pledged that for the 2022 Football World Cup all the 12 venues will be zero-carbon emitting.

Olympic Stadium London: the Olympic stadium's sustainability achievement came after the 2012 summer Olympics and Paralympics Games, when the stadium was demolished in its place, the Environment Agency, working with the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and the London Development Agency planted some 300,000 wetland plants and 2,000 native plants, built cycle ways and footpaths, and turned 44 hectares of land into reed beds, wet wood lands, grassland, and ponds to attract wildlife. There are plans to build 6,800 new homes where the stadium used to be, and the Olympic village has been repurposed as a new neighborhood with 1,500 homes.

Sport having been recognized by the United Nations as an important enabler of sustainable development. As part of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the inception of (SDGs) at a UN summit, sport was highlighted as a key contributor to each of the development goals. Here Wilfried Demke, special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on sport for development and peace sport illustrates sports potential related to a few selected SDGs sport has consistently been proven to be a cost-effective and flexible tool for prompting peace and development objectives.

Sport contributes to the mental and physical well-being of all people regardless of age, gender or ethnicity, its reach is unrivalled. In addition to having a direct impact on

physical fitness and combating non-communicable diseases, sport also plays a role in educating communities on sexual and reproductive health as well as promoting the adoption of active lifestyles (Goal 3: Good health and well being)

Youth benefit tremendously from the practice of physical activity. Integrated into the school curriculum, sport and physical activities can act as innovative means to provide comprehensive and quality education (Goal 4: Quality Education). For those living in areas of conflict, sport can also offer a welcome distraction by providing a safe environment in which to play and regain a sense of normalcy. (Global Sustainable Development).

Nigeria has enough sunshine and enough rains that can assist the development and maintenance of sustainable developed stadiums. By using solar for our source of energy to reduce the emission from generating plants. Collect and utilize the rain water to water our green field, flush our toilet to reduce sinking of bore holes and pumping of water which experts suspect that, too many sinking of boreholes may lead to earth tremor.

Sport in Multicultural Societies

Sport participation having been recognized the World over as a major agent of socialization which is true; the sport environment is therefore suitable for the development of social and moral values when it involves the youth. Sport participation may reinforce understanding and respect of cultural diversity and further enhance our national integration. Nigeria with 250 ethnic groups, sports is the most powerful instrument to be used in this diverse multiculture, to respect each other and preserve the sanctity of each group.

However, the multi-tribal nature of Nigeria may excite someone especially when such tribes begin to display their unique culture, dialect etc tribes provide for a better understanding of the beautiful and united country called Nigeria.

According to psychology Research, culture refers to the context in which persons develop their perspectives on, and their approach to life. Psychology Research and Reference (undated). However, it is recognized that numerous cultures exist in our country representing the various geo-political zones, ethnic and groups across our dear country.

In the field of sport and exercise psychology little or no attention has been paid to the idea of multiculturalism in literature. This should be properly addressed in the coming years.

Integrative Role of Sport in Multicultural Societies

Having realized the integrative power of sport in a multicultural society like Nigeria, the government of the federation introduced the National sports Festival in 1973 which had a main purpose of integrating the country after a 30 month civil war among other reasons thus: To check declining standards of sport in Nigeria and to arrest the drift towards inter-tribal moral occasioned by the 1967-1970 civil war, the Federal Government resolved to institute the biennial Multi- sport competition involving all the states of the federation. The sport had the twin objectives of:

- i. Promotion of mass participation in amateur sports from grassroots level throughout Nigeria with a view to discovering hidden talents.
- ii. Promotion of healthy and keen competition amongst the competitors and states under a climate of sportsmanship and friendly interaction, thereby enhancing and strengthening National Unity (Edo 2002)

Sport participation has been recognized as an important socializing agent, the sport environment is considered a suitable setting for the development of social and moral values, particularly for the youth.

Therefore, it can be argued that participation in sport may reinforce understanding and respect of cultural diversity and foster the integration of migrants and the general population.

Recommendations

Peace education should be introduced through physical education in schools, primary, secondary and tertiary Institutions.

On the issue of Peace and Sport a lot can be done in our country, to bring this to fruition. One of the key issues is peace through sport it is recommended that we should start now in our primary, secondary and tertiary institutions by deliberating using sports to promote peace. One way of encouraging peace education is the removal of element of competition and encourages mass sports consumption. An example is currently being practiced in the University Staff Games whereby there is no more medals table for Universities instead it is certificate of participation for members. The purpose is to allow very healthy participating spirit, it has reduced mercenaries. Participants come with the aim of participation for its sake. Make more friends, keep healthy and build network. This can be carried out in our community's social clubs everywhere. This will build bridges of peace in places where conflict has ravaged. Nothing at stake but peace building through friendship using the medium of sport.

Sport security should now be included in our various school curriculums from primary to tertiary level. This will enable both players and participants to be aware of the essence of sport security. Another aspect is by means of intelligent gathering to make our sport areas safer for all involved both athletes and spectators.

Nigeria should henceforth follow the modern trend in the World in terms of developing and constructing sustainable sport venues.

To achieve national integration, in this our well known multicultural society through sport, staging the biennial national sport festival is not enough. There should be deliberate effort to develop traditional sport of various major ethnic groups that will be made to be studied and participated in various primary and secondary schools across the country. This may not necessarily be Olympic sport but should form the unique aspect of our sport outings. It should be done in such a way that individuals can freely compete in them as they do in Soccer. However, I am aware that Abula and Langa are there but they are not deliberately taught in schools as it is done with Soccer and athletics. The various major ethnic groups should be encouraged to develop traditional sports in such a way that any child in any part of the country can participate in them as if they are participating in soccer no matter the ethnic origin of such a sport or game.

In this presentation, the author has been able to touch on the key words in this year's theme. It is however, not exhaustive. The actual aim is to stimulate debate and argument from experts in this conference who will expand and analyze each of the sub-themes of this conference to the satisfaction of both organizers and participants. May I therefore, use this opportunity to thank the organizers for considering me worthy to present the lead paper II in this 33rd Annual Conference of the Sport Psychology Association. I hope that all participants will go home satisfied with the information that will be gathered from participation in this conference.

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