

HARNESSING THE POWER OF SPORT FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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Preamble

When I received invitation to present a Keynote address at this occasion. I became excited like an electron for some obvious reasons. Firstly, it is a deliberate policy of mine to always maintain a very low public profile wherever I am. Secondly, if I have to appear in such gathering at all, I always prefer to be a very quiet listener. Thirdly, I was of the opinion that I was just not competent enough to give a keynote address in this gathering, given my professional area of specialization. However, after persistent flogging and molestation by my conscience I gave in to the invitation. I would like to say from the onset that I am not an eloquent speaker and there is no element of eloquency in me. I will therefore not pretend to be an eloquent speaker. If at the end of my address you are disappointed I will not have any reserved apology to tender, however my consolation is that this address is going to be general for very good reasons. In the first place it is a keynote address and it is in the nature of keynote addresses to be general rather than targeted or specific, for most times a keynote speaker is not a hard-boiled expert in the particular field of discourse. In this case I am not a sport psychologist. Therefore, I should not attempt to lecture the shining galaxy of experts in sport psychology assembled here for the purpose of this conference.

Introduction

Sport is any competitive physical activity that is guided by established rules. It is a competitive physical activity, utilizing specialized equipment and facilities (infrastructure), with unique dimensions of time and space, is guided by rules and regulations, in which the quest for records is of high significance (Sage and Eitzen, 1980).

Sports means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competitions at all levels (Council of Europe, 2001).

In the development context, sports include all forms of physical activity which contribute to fitness, mental well-being and social interaction regardless of whether the sport is organized or unorganized. These definitions imply that involvement in sports is valued at all levels, however casual.

Sport can lift the spirit of a nation. It can provide direction and purpose. It can develop leaders and it can teach lessons in endeavour, of winning and losing. Sport can build confidence and self-esteem, it can challenge and inspire, it can entertain us. Most of all, sport has a limitless capacity to provide endless hours of enjoyment and fun.

A great sport sociologist, Sage (1980) writing on sports in the society, it's pervasiveness and its study, observed that "Sport is such a pervasive human activity that to ignore it, is to overlook one of the most significant aspect of contemporary society."

Sport has become an important part of Nigeria's culture, as well as other cultures throughout the world. This is evidenced by the way it captures newspaper headlines, usurps television screens, it produces millions of naira a year for entrepreneurs, is a consideration in international relations and has social, political, legal and educational overtones.

Millions of Nigerians are virtually interested in sports. It consumes much of their conversation, reading material, leisure activity, and discretionary spending. Nearly one-tenth of Nigeria's almanacs is usually devoted to sports. The sports section is, for many, the most closely examined part of the daily newspaper, for thousands of Nigerians it is the only news of vital concern.

The big business of sports has influenced the nature of college and even secondary school sports. The best teams get the opportunity to appear on television, represent the school, district or the Nation. Colleges have come to realize the important drawing power a star athlete can have as such a school will attempt to attract top athletes to their institutions, ignoring at times, their academic ability. Colleges that have excellent academic programmes often become better known because of their sports endeavours.

Sports permeates any number of levels of contemporary society, and it touches upon, and deeply influences such disparate elements as status, race, relations, business life, automobile design, clothing styles, concept of the hero, and ethical values (Uever, 2001).

The dimension sport has taken in contemporary times requires not only deliberate and strategic planning but also getting all fundamental issues right from the onset. The United Nations analyzed the power of sport and observed that sport plays "an important role at the individual, community, National and global level. For the individual, sport enhances one's personal abilities, health and social well-being. At the National level, sport contributes to economic and social growth, improves public health, and brings communities together. At the global level, if used consistently, sports can have a long lasting positive impact on development, public health, peace, security, and international understanding.

Conceptual Clarification

Peace and Security

Peace is used to describe the cessation of violent conflict. It can mean a state of quiet or tranquility, an absence of disturbance or agitation. Peace can also describe a relationship between any people characterized by respect, Justice and goodwill.

Peace is regarded "as the absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, peaceful coexistence" (Francis, 2006, Igbuzor, 2011). Although this definition has captured elements of peace, it was criticized for lacking the adequate concept of peace. To overcome this limitation, Ibeanu (2006) thus defined peace as a "Process involving activities that are directly or indirectly linked to increasing development and reducing conflict, both within specific societies and in the wider international community".

In this respect, peace therefore connotes absence of violence conflict or war, the presence of justice, equality and development; the existence of rule of law, respect for human life and dignity, and tolerance among and between people, maintenance of a balanced ecosphere and more importantly, having inner peace and wholeness (Abbas, 2018).

Security on the other hand refers to all the measures that are taken to protect a place, or to ensure that only people with permission enter it or leaves it. It is a state of being or feeling secure, freedom from fear, anxiety, danger, doubt etc; State or sense of safety or certainty. Something that gives or assures safety and tranquility (www.collins_dictionary.com)

Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development “is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs”. It contains within it two key concepts:

The concept of “needs”, in particular the needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs. (World Commission on Environment and development, our common future; 1987)

We can therefore conceive of Sustainable Development as the organizing principle for meeting human development goals simultaneously and sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services based upon which the economy and society depend.

The desired result is a state of society where living conditions and resources are used to continue to meets human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural system.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2015, set out a “supremely ambitious and transformational vision” for global development (UNGA, 2015). Central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are 17 Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) broken down into 169 targets and 230 associated indicators. The SDGs seek to build on and complete progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that they replaced, but they are also more comprehensive and far-reaching in scope. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasizes that the SDGs are intended to be “integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the **Economic, Social and Environmental**” (UNGA, 2015).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs also align with the charter of the Commonwealth, which affirms the importance of sustainable development to “eradicate poverty by pursuing inclusive growth whilst preserving and conserving natural ecosystems and promoting social equity (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2013). While the SDGs have been devised to be universally applicable, there is shared recognition in the **commonwealth charter** and the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** of the particular needs of the least developed countries and small Island states. There is further shared commitment to address the needs of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable

people, with young people among those prioritized. In this respect, both the **charter** and **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** recognize the importance of creating opportunities and supportive environments through which young people can realize their own potential and actively contribute to sustainable development. (Lindsey and Chapman, 2013). Sport has an unquestionable potential to contribute to sustainable development.

Multicultural Society

Multicultural society is a society in which there is inclusion of many diverse people. It is a society in which freedom of religion, language, dress, food, religion, customs, can be expressed without the trepidation of persecution (Yilmaz, 2017). Whilst expressing one's culture they are also learning the main dominant language of the country in addition to abiding by the rules and regulations of the country. Multicultural society is a society in which one can observe the different sub-cultures, which are differentiated through language, religion, norms and values, pastimes and culture. A multicultural society would be composed of people from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures living and working together. In society where people from different backgrounds intertwine with each other's culture and background. It is a society that works well; the people have roles and responsibilities they must fulfil. They have the rights to **education, healthcare, protection from crime** and rights to be helped if in poverty.

Sport for Development and Peace

In recent years sport has been widely accepted as a vehicle to advance social development and promote peace in highly volatile contexts. This approach is known as Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) and has emerged not only as a popular social intervention strategy, but also as a Policy sector (Guiliano, 2011) and a growing interdisciplinary academic field.

Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) refers to the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific development and peace objectives, including most notably, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Successful Sport for Development and Peace programs work to realize the rights of all members of society to participate in sport and leisure activities. Effective programs intentionally give priority to development objectives and are carefully designed to be inclusive. These programs embody the best values of sport while upholding the quality and integrity of the sports experience.

Sport for this purpose includes all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games (SDP, IWG, 2008).

Strong sport for Development and Peace programs combine sport and play with other non-sport components to enhance their effectiveness. They are delivered in an integrated manner with other local, regional and national development and peace initiatives so that they are mutually reinforcing. Programs seek to empower participants and communities by engaging them in the design and delivery of activities, building local capacity, adhering to generally accepted principles of transparency and accountability, and

pursing sustainability through collaboration, partnerships and coordinated action (Cardenas, 2018).

Recognition of sport as a suitable strategy to support social development processes has in recent years led to an intensification of sport for development and peace (SDP) activity. This has taken place through a variety of strategic alliances, partnerships, programs and interventions encompassing a wide array of initiations including community based-organizations, sport federations, national governments, academic institutions, transnational organizations, international development agencies, and the private sector. These stakeholders are supportive of the idea that sport possess unique attributes that allow it to advance specific social goals, including, most notably, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Among the unique qualities recognized in sport as a peace and development vehicle, there are: **the universality of sport** (Cardenas, 2018). Sport brings people together serving as a common denominator across cultures. At the same time, the enormous appeal of sport can support social interventions as it provides a hook to bring together multiple stakeholders and at-risk populations into community welfare program where a variety of social services can be delivered. Sport is by definition **an outstanding communication platform** which can generate an unparalleled enthusiasm and actively mobilize large amount of people to act in favour of a particular social cause. An additional attribute of sport, according to the SDP international working group (SDP IWG, 2008), is its capacity to **connect people and communities effectively**. When they are inclusive, communities turn into important areas of social networking fostering a capacity to work in a cooperative manner. Sport has the ability to **inspire and motivate** participants, potentially encouraging their self-esteem, and facilitating the development of positive connections (Coalter and Taylor, 2010). Furthermore, as stated by UNICEF (2005), sport can contribute to personal and community development as sport **promotes mental and well-being**. The regular practice of sport and physical activity leads to healthy lifestyles. Sport is **an educational tool**, serving as a school of life where a sense of positive values and attributes can be learned and applied.

Evidence of sport's contribution to building and sustaining peace.

Sport in itself is not a primary vehicle for peace building, however, there have been many examples where sport has been seen as a bridge-building activity and an alternative to destructive conflict and violence (Woodhouse, 2010). In peace building efforts, the energy and enthusiasm derived from sport can provide an ideal resource which can constructively assist communities in promoting positive social transformation and fostering peace.

Scholars and SDP advocates have both concluded that, when properly managed and articulated, sport can play a constructive peace-building roles in communities affected by conflict and division (Guilianoti and Armstrong, 2011; Sugden, 1991; Woodhouse, 2010; SDP ING, 2008; Swiss Agency for Development and cooperation (SADC), 2005). Sport-based interventions have emerged as useful tools to support peace-building efforts in highly volatile contexts, due to, for instance, the ability of sport to maintain open channels of communication in hostile environments (SADC, 2005), and its capacity to connect people and develop networks of cooperation (SDP ING, 2008). These characteristics

found in sport can potentially contribute to reframing social relations between communities and groups that has been disrupted due to conflict (Rubenstein, 2011).

In academic literature, evidence of the potential of sport to contribute to processes of peace building stems from three main sources: 1) from the application of existing peace building and conflict resolution approaches to the sport field; 2) from the exploration of the role of sport as a tool for advancing peace at the international, national, intercommunal and individual level, and 3) from case studies (involving diverse geographical regions, themes, organizations, etc).

Available research in the area of sport and peace has applied models of conflict transformation and peace building to the sports arena including Galtung's (1996) 3Rs (reconstruction, reconciliation, resolution) approach to conflict transformation, and Lederach's (1997) web-approach to peace building. The holistic process of peace building, according to Galtung integrates three key processes or 3 Rs: 1) **reconstruction** of peoples and places after violence, 2) **reconciliation** of the parties in conflict, and 3) resolution of animosities. The first step includes processes such as rehabilitation and rebuilding. Sport-based interventions have provided rehabilitation and healing through psycho-social programs, as in the case of Sri Lanka (e.g. program Cricket for Change) and Sierra Leone while sport tournaments have been found to facilitate the building of relationships and the strengthening of inter/intra community ties (Kvalsund, 2005). In South Africa, a society which was divided by apartheid, both professional and recreational sports, according to Hoglund and Sundberg (2008), have contributed to reconciliation at the national, communal and individual level. In resolution, sport has the capacity to provide a controlled environment in which participants can be taught about resolving conflict. The methodology Football for Peace (which introduced a series of innovative additions to traditional football games, e.g. participants set the rules of the game; there are no referees but mediators, etc.) has facilitated opportunities for dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflict via sport among at-risk youth in communities with high levels of violence and criminality in Colombia and beyond (Cardenas, 2013).

Another useful peace building approach to examine the role of sport in peace is Lederach's (1997) **web-making approach** to peace building. This approach emphasizes the development of strategic networks (or web-making processes) which are of particular relevance to community-based organizations and NGOs. Web-making in sport-for-peace has been examined by Lea-Howarth (2006) pointing out that sport has been fundamental in forming social networks that can be sustained over time among SDP stakeholders, and Cardenas (2015), whose research on Colombia found that a network of sport-based social programs has been instrumental in shaping the government's perception of sport as a tool for national development.

The second area of evidence on the role of sport in peace building emerges from the examination of the role of sport as a tool for advancing peace at the individual, intercommunal, national and international levels. **At the individual level**, sport interventions can contribute to peace by empowering individuals as they obtain specific knowledge and skills. The program *A Ganar*, for example, conceived to combat youth unemployment in Latin America and the Caribbean, has helped thousands of youth acquire marketable job expertise using sport as a medium (Cardenas, 2015). **At the community**

level, sport can support the process of peace building by bridging relationships across groups and communities that might otherwise have the propensity to treat each other with hostility and distrust (SDP IWG, 2008). In Northern Ireland, a society divided by sectarian interests, research by Sugden (1991) examined a football project that brought together youth from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds. The research concluded that sport interventions, under carefully qualified conditions, can foster a sense of tolerance and peaceful co-existence between clashing communities.

Sport has been employed to foster peace at the national level in societies experiencing high levels of violence and conflict. In areas undergoing post-conflict recovery such as Liberia and the Balkans, research by Guilianotti and Armstrong (2011) found that sport-based interventions present the military with an innovative way to engage more actively with ex-combatants, civil society and other key individuals and organizations promoting reconciliation at the national level. Moreover, Cardenas (2015) identify key areas (positive encounters and trust- building; information; cross-cutting engagement; reconciliation; team building; construction and rehabilitation), in which military peace missions deployed in conflict-ridden countries can greatly benefit from the use of sport as a strategy to reach some of their primary goals. **At the international level**, sport has provided a platform so that countries experiencing political tensions can potentially open channels of communication and promote dialogue. This has been done through sport diplomacy initiatives, which have, in several cases, provided a stepping stone for countries to normalize diplomatic and political relations. In this regard, Stolyarov (2011) highlights the role of sport-diplomacy in the early 1970s when the USA reestablished diplomatic relations with China after decades of no official diplomatic contact partly thanks to a series of table tennis exchanges between the two nations (Ping Pong Diplomacy).

Case studies provide an additional body of evidence in the examination of the nexus between sport and peace building. Case studies, which comprise much of the research on sport for development and peace, formulate a wide array of variables for examination (specific sports, children, women, etc.) and levels of analysis (local, regional, etc.) (Schnitzer et al., 2012,). With this in mind, a case study on Columbia and Northern Ireland detailing the use of sport as a means to contribute to peace building efforts in both societies affected by conflict and war is considered.

Research on Peace Building in Conflict Zones:

Doctoral research was conducted (Cardenas, 2015) with the aim of delving into the use of recreational sport to advance peace-building in both Colombia and Northern Ireland within the conflict context of both regions, and as seen through the lenses of the personnel involved in designing, implementing and supporting SDP programs (SDP officials).

Research findings on the role of sport amid conflict indicate that in Northern Ireland, SDP officials' perspectives with regard to the role of football and other sports within this region's unique (post) conflict setting, gravitated consistently around two fundamental issues (in order of importance): a) **fostering contact among Protestants and Catholics** and, b) **promoting intercultural awareness and understanding**. Using popular sport practices to promote contact across the divide is partially associated with the

idea that interaction between individuals from opposing groups can lead to significantly decreased prejudice when certain conditions are met. This approach is known as the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), and has been one of the guiding principles of various Northern Irish SDP programs and interventions.

In Colombia, sport was found to be useful in partially tackling a wide array of issues related to the conflict including: 1) **providing a safe space** for at-risk children and youth; 2) **teaching abilities and skills** that would allow them to make proper decisions if (or when) they face recruitment by illegal armed forces (or criminal networks); 3) **helping youth build a life plan**; 4) **creating jobs** and related economic opportunities; 5) **fostering peaceful coexistence** and tackling urban violence; and, 6) **promoting social inclusion**.

Sport and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS)

The 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, sets out a “Supremely ambitious transformational vision for global development (UNGA, 2015). The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their associated targets are comprehensive and far-reaching in scope and balance the three dimension of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental dimensions (UNGA, 2015).

The growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace (UNGA, 2015) is explicitly identified in the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. The statement represents an important milestone for sport and an opportunity to build on previous commitments and progress made by the Commonwealth, the United Nations and other International, National and local stakeholders.

Previous commonwealth publications have presented analysis (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2016) and key principles (Kay and Duffield, 2013) for sport and sustainable development. Sport has effective and cost efficient contribution towards six (6) prioritized SDGs. These are SDG 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, and 16.

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages.

Universal and holistic conceptions of health and well-being are at the fore-front of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Linked to SDG target 3.4, evidence strongly shows that regular physical activity reduces the risk of a number of non-communicable diseases and indicates further the benefits for psychological and social health. Reducing globally significant levels of physical inactivity among adults and children of both sexes is therefore a priority which can, in part, be addressed through efforts to increase participation in sport. Utilization of an attractive and flexible context for health education and empowerment can also contribute to SDG targets 3.3, 3.5, and 3.7, which address various communicable diseases, substance abuse, and sexual and reproductive health respectively (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017).

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.

Established by international declarations as a “fundamental right for all” (UNESCO, 2013, 2015), physical education, physical activity and sport represent an important component of, and contributor to, holistic education. High quality physical education and sport can contribute to SDG target **4.1** through enhancing lifelong physical literacy and supporting a range of wider educational benefits.

Integrating opportunities for experiential learning and youth leadership into sport-based activities can also contribute to SDG target **4.4** and **4.7** which focus on wider personal, skill and knowledge development (Lindsey and Chapman, 2017).

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Gender equality is a cross-cutting issue throughout the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which has relevance to a number of the SDGs. Applying SDG targets **5.1** and **5.5** to sport emphasizes the need to address evident gender inequalities at all levels of participation and leadership. Enabling girls and women’s involvement in sport can also serve to challenge broader discriminatory norms and offer specific opportunities for gender empowerment. The contribution of sport to gender equality must further be underpinned by progress towards eliminating all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls in sport, in line with SDG target **5.2** and **5.3** (UNESCO, 2015).

SDG 8: Promote Sustained, inclusive and Sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

In many countries, the contribution of the sport industry to economic growth and empowerment is increasingly recognized. While this contribution is relevant to SDG targets **8.1**, **8.5** and **8.9**, there are significant complexities in precisely measuring the diverse range of economic and employment activities associated with sport. Therefore, careful analysis should inform decisions to pursue economic impact through sport event hosting and tourism and leveraging benefits requires long-term, coordinated and context specific strategies (Lindsey and Chapman, 2017).

Sport-based approaches can engage volunteers and offer specific training to enhance employment prospects and in so doing contribute to SDG targets **8.5** and **8.6**. In line with SDG target **8.3** various models of entrepreneurial practice have also been advanced by sport and development organizations. To increase their effectiveness, all such approaches should be linked to identifiable opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship within sport and other industries (Lindsey and Chapman, 2017).

In respect of SDG targets **8.7** and **8.8**, concerns regarding labour rights abuses in sport manufacturing and construction, and examples of exploitation of young people who are seeking careers in professional sport need to be addressed.

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Global trends of Urbanization have significant impacts on various aspects of sustainable development. SDG target **11.7** aligns with UN Habitat guidance that indicates that a minimum of 15 percent of urban areas should be allocated for open and green spaces and public facilities (UN Conference on Housing and sustainable urban development,

2015). Integrating opportunities for physical activity throughout such spaces and across urban environments can have widespread and long-term impacts.

Different approaches to integrated design can provide hubs for family and community based engagement in various forms of sport and active recreation, and similarly include provision for sport within facilities for education, health and other services.

Inclusion, accessibility and safety for all user groups must always be a key design consideration. Designs for sport stadiums can also prioritize reducing environmental impacts, enabling sustainable usage and supporting broader urban regeneration.

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Enhancing justice and peace within and through sport is essential to underpin sport-based contributions to other SDGs. Both the high profile of sport and more participatory approaches may be utilized to contribute to the pursuit of peace and reduction of all forms of violence, as prioritized in SDG target **16.1** (reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere). Sport based approaches can draw on the cross-cultural status of sport and the work of skilled leaders and appropriate role models, but must also be integrated with wider peace-building and violence reduction processes given that conflict and violence have complex and deep-rooted causes.

There is increasing recognition of the need to address multiple challenges to the integrity of sport. Associated with SDG target **16.2**, it is vital to combat abuse and all forms of violence against children in sport. Problems of corruption, doping and the manipulation of sporting competition serve to emphasize the need for improvements and Governance throughout sport and its institutions, in line with SDG target **16.5**, **16.6** and **16.7**.

Conclusion

Multicultural society is a society in which there is inclusion of many diverse people. It is a society in which freedom of religion, language, dress, food, customs, can be expressed without the trepidation of persecution. While expressing one's culture, they are also learning the main dominant language of the country in addition to abiding by the rules and regulations of the country (Yilmaz, 2017).

Sport with its unique quality as a socializing agent, bringing people together, its communicative nature, plays an important role in bringing about **peace, security and sustainable development in a multicultural society**.

Sport has been long considered an effective socializing agent (Grove and Dodder, 1982). More emphatically, Eitzen and Sage (2003) stated that sport is among the few social activities that are globally recognized as a vehicle for bringing people together. Such claims can be attributed to certain characteristics of sport: (a) the large number of children and youth involved; (b) that sport participation is at least for vast majority of individuals, a volitional behavior; (c) the mixed demographic and socioeconomic background of those participating; and (d) its interactive and highly communicative nature.

In addition, and in particular with regard to the integrative role of sport, it has shown that contact and sharing across members of different groups may reduce negative intergroup attitude (Allport, 1954) and enhance mutual acceptance (Amir, 1969); in particular, under conditions of equality and the pursuit of shared goals among members (Brown, Vivian, and Hewstone, 1999), conditions that are accommodated within the context of sport. Furthermore, according to the Social Identity Theory, within appropriate environments, once people identify themselves as members of a group, a sense of collective identity develops, which subsequently influences social behavior (Tajfel, Billing, Bundy, and Flament, 1971).

The role of sport in society has been stressed at different levels, from a social perspective, Seippel (2002) suggested that sport is an open and inclusive activity where young people can develop social networks of friends. Moreover, past literature suggest that sport provides an arena for the development of social skills such as cooperation and socialization (Wuest and Lombardo, 1994), intergroup relations (Wenkel and Berger, 1990), and citizenship (Elley and Kirk, 2002).

From a personal and moral development perspective, it has been argued that sport participation enhances morality and leads to positive character building (Bredemeier and Shields, 2006). There is evidence that sport can be used as an effective tool for the enhancement and improvement of moral behaviors in athletes, as well the promotion of moral development in children.

Recently, there has been a growing policy interest in the use of sport to attain a wider range of positive social outcomes, especially for young people, including developing social interaction and building citizenship in socially excluded individuals or groups, mostly focusing on disadvantaged and underrepresented young people (Kelly, 2011). Sport can play a crucial role in the social inclusion process by offering individuals and communities a place to meet, and by giving individuals a sense of belonging to a team, club or community (Ennis, 1999).

Sport contributes to the oneness of a geographical entity of a community and equally brings about a binding spirit, harnessing our diversities, detribalizes communities and buries ethnocentrism.

Sport generally helps to develop a strong and positive community identity. Since cultural diversity is dependent on community, it is worthy of mention here that sport contributes to the unification, integration or cohesion of the identity of any community. It is exciting to meet people from different ethnic groups and nations who speak different languages and yet brought together through sports. During such events like the Olympic games, World Cup and National Sport Festivals, people display their national costumes and country colours in the form of flags, ceremonial dresses, Jerseys and other materials. This helps people to learn from and appreciate each other's culture and bring them together to harness cultural diversity for peace and sustainable development.

According to Nwanko, Nweke, Okechi and Onyishi (2016) sports brings people from different cultural backgrounds together to put away all other differences and unanimously work towards a common developmental goal. During the National Sport Festival athletes come from diverse cultural backgrounds to participate, they are brought to live together as a family. During this process of living together in unity, a culturally

diverse community is created where people are free to share their culture with other people. This shows how powerful sport is in harnessing cultural diversity for Peace, Security, Unity and Sustainable development.

Thank you.

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