

SPORTS, SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION IN CURBING YOUTH RESTIVENESS

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Abstract

Sport, religion, and spirituality intersect in diverse ways, the widespread youth restiveness and involvement in crimes of violent nature have become serious concern to the government and those genuinely interested in the peace, unity and stability of Nigeria. There was need to find out how sport and religion could be used to curb youth restiveness. The method used for this study was a simple random sampling technique, 400 senior secondary school students (both Christians and, Muslims) were randomly selected from ten secondary schools. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire which consists of 15 items tailored to the research hypotheses to guide the study. The questionnaire was made up of three sections. Section A deals with the demographic data; section B deals with the attitude, mode of worship and mode of dressing of students, while section C deals with sports participation. The response pattern of the questionnaire was of the four point Likert scale of (Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Three hypotheses postulated for this study were accepted. The combination of sport and religion strengthen national unity, church membership, self-discipline and character molding to cope with uncertainty, to stay out of trouble, to give meaning to sport participation. The paper found out that sports, spirituality and religion in curbing youth restiveness is significant. It concluded that symbiotic relationship between sport and religion could bring peace, unity, and cohesion among youth.

Key Words: Spirituality, Sport, Religion, Youth Restiveness

Introduction

Sports, religion, and spirituality can play a significant role in addressing youth restiveness by offering alternative avenues for identity formation, social interaction and personal growth. These avenues can help divert youth from engaging in destructive behaviours associated with values and behaviours. Sport can foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie among youth, reducing feelings of isolation that can contribute to restiveness. Religious and spirituality can offer a moral framework and that guides decision-making and promotes ethical behavior. Various research exploring the intersections of sport, spirituality

and religion has been growing at a very fast pace in recent years (Watson & Parker 2013). Several commonalities exist between sports and religion. For instance; character building, discipline, competition, physical fitness, constant practice, mental fitness, fairness, playing according to rules, nationalism, and religiosity etc. A study by Jeroh (2011) on the multi-dimensional relationship between religion and sport viewed religion and sport as social institutions which have engaged large portions of many societies. The functions of both are highlighted to include social bonding and interaction, promotion of integration as well as socialization. Tijani (2021) was of the opinion that engaging youths in sporting activities will go a long way in curbing restiveness and other social vices among them. Irabor (2021) also described sports as the foundation for discipline and a great weapon to curb youth restiveness in the country.

Among the Aztecs of Mexico, sports began as fertility magic, to ensure survival by supernatural means. During drought, these people played particular games convinced that this would magically bring rain to enable their crops to grow. This association of prehistoric games with worship permeated with the classical period. Sporting pictures adorned the walls of Egyptian temples. The pharaohs and their nobles enjoyed sport, not merely as spectators but as participants. The Pythian Games were closely linked with the oracle of Apollo and his shrine at Delphi (Brasch, 1972). The Olympic Games centered on the magnificent temple of Zeus at Olympia; and when the ancient Olympics began in 776 B.C the Greeks offered and took oaths in honour of Zeus to emphasize the games' religious significance. This religious phenomenon continued to be used by Pierre de Coubertin in his writings of the modern Olympic movement. The Rastafarian movement, which started in the West Indies in the 1930s, believed in spreading their religion through the reggae music and dance. They regard all rastafarians to be followers of their god Jah and insist that the reggae dance is part and parcel of their religion.

In the traditional African society, sports and religion were one functional unity. The wrestling contests of the Ibo of West Africa (Nigeria) could not take place before the oracles of the hills gave their consent through the priests and priestesses of the clan. According to Achebe (1980) the elders of the two communities involved in the wrestling contest visited the shrines and consulted their gods, offering sacrifices, led by their priests and priestesses, for blessings to ensure they won the contest. During the contest, the drummers beat their drums like those possessed and this it was believed signified the presence of the spirits who were the determinants in the results of the contest. In the modern society today, there are a number of interesting parallels between sports and religion, including the "worship" of athletes as gods and heroes (e.g. Michael Jordan, Taribo West and Sebastian Coe etc), of "symbols of Faith" such as trophies, baseballs, game balls, and sport-related souvenirs, and the charisma that is attached to the elites and leaders in the sport milieu.

Sport and religion have often been used to create strong collective emotions and celebrate selected group values through rituals and public events. There are many anecdotal examples of how religion has been used to simply reaffirm and intensify orientations that lead to success in competitive sports. Hoffman (1992) challenges those with doubts on the co-existence of sport and religion by emphasizing dimensions of training and sport participation that fit well with the certain aspects of the Protestant Ethic. Athletes and coaches may use their religion as a source of psychological support as they cope with the challenge and uncertainty of competition, and as they try to find special meaning for their

sports lives. Coaches may also use various forms of religion and religious beliefs to produce team unity and establish a basis for social control over their athlete. This habit is very common in schools and college sports (in some parts of the world) where special religious services are conducted prior to any crucial match. Players converging and praying or performing some rituals before a kick-off is not an unusual or uncommon sight in today's sporting competitions.

Womack in Hoffman's (1992) says about these rituals that "They frequently use rituals to make them feel as if they have some control over what happens to them. The use of rituals among athletes has become so widespread that it has been described by journalists and voted by many spectators". It should not escape one's mind that rituals are grounded in religion, magic and personal habits. Moreover, ritual and ceremony whether in religion or sport, reinforce values and beliefs. In terms of ceremony, the spectacle of the modern Olympic Games with the ritualistic and lavish opening and closing ceremonies complete with torch, oath, flags, and symbolism cannot go unmentioned. Religious beliefs and rituals can provide athletes with physical and spiritual reinforcement, relieve anxiety, help them concentrate and face competition with confidence, and supply reasons for practicing and developing physical skills" (Prebish, 1984, Croakley 1994). Willy White a former gold medalist in the women's long jump explained her success in the Olympic Games this way: "I was nervous, so I read the New Testament. I read the verse about have no fear and I felt relaxed. Then I jumped further than I ever jumped before in my life" (an open interview, 1984). Not all religious athletes' use their beliefs in this manner, but there is a tendency for some to call on their religion to help them successfully face challenges and uncertainty. Even though religion and sports have exhibited some form of social co-existence in many societies, it has not been without social inhibitions in other societies.

Among the Muslim and Hindu communities, religion controls the extent to which women can participate in sports. This is manifested in international sporting events (e.g. the Olympics) Hindu and Islamic countries seldom have women athletes or women teams because women are not permitted to expose any parts of their bodies in public. Verma and Derby (1994) in their study of sports among the minority groups came up with findings that Muslims... do not participate in sports at all and the main reason is deeply rooted in their religious obligations. "It may not be that simply professing allegiance to a religion is important.

According to Coakley (2007), religion is a socially shared set of beliefs and rituals that people use to transcend the material world and give meaning to important aspect of their lives. Religion beliefs and rituals are unique because people connect them with a sacred and supernatural realm and accept this connection on faith, which is the foundation for all religions and religious beliefs. Religion is further defined as a relation to Human being which they regard as holy, sacred, spiritual, and divine. It is commonly regarded as consisting of a person's relation to God or to gods or spirits. Worship is probably the most basic element of religion, but moral conduct, right belief and participation in religious institutions are generally also constituent elements of the religious life as practised by believers and as commanded by religious sages and scriptures" (Encyclopaedia Britannica). Religion is thus seen in one such model where all the rules, norms, values, dogmas, truth, denomination, conviction, and principles come out with one common meaning Beliefs, Creed, Doctrine, and Faith. Because religious beliefs and rituals are shared, they can provide a basis for group integration and unity, and because they are related to the sacred and supernatural, they can be used as a powerful basis for social control on both the individual and group levels. It is partly because religions can do these things that religious beliefs have become used in certain sport context.

Sports are recreational or competitive activities that involve some amount of physical strength or skill that has a form of disport meaning a diversion and an amusement. It also has a rooted meaning in Latin which means carry away (Brasch, 1972). Although, definitions of sports vary, many scholars agree that sports are institutionalized competitive activities that involve rigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex skills by participants motivated by internal and external rewards (Coakley, 2007). While, other Professionals define sports as an institutionalized physical activity in which rules are fixed externally and beforehand. In its broader concept it embraces athletics, games, play, gymnastics and activities of an individual and team variety, competitive and non-competitive" (Bennett, 1975).

The word "youth" is defined by Chambers Dictionary "as the state of being youth, early life, the period immediately following childhood" Hornby sees youths as "the time when a person is young, especially the time before a child becomes an adult, the youth is seen as young people considered as a group." Also, a youth is elastic in its definition but it can be describe as the state of being young. That is, young man of a fair countenance. Youth is also see as a period or state or quality of being young. This definition however puts us in a dilemma as to the determination of what age brackets fall within the classification of youths. Some scholars believed that, the youth fall within the "teens" bracket. Others extend it to age of 40 and that last, believes that anybody irrespective of his or her age that possesses the traits of a youth, falls within this classification. One would want to associate with the last school of thought, which has no age restriction.

However, the conventional definition is that youth is a transitional period between childhood and manhood. He is possessed by idealism on and the needs for change. A youth is optimistic person, who is aware of himself and cannot relent in his efforts to exist in spite of all odds. He is an asset to progress and development.

Youth is always associated with some significant changes from the social and personal view points, which include developing sexually and the ability to procreate. It also involves further psychological awareness and social training as well as acquisitions of specific skills by the youth which allows him to behave. In fact, being a youth is an era in a historical sense⁹. It is also, opined that whatever the perception of people on the concept of youth, the fact remains that it is a universally held belief that the youth of any nation are the leaders of tomorrow.

They are seen as the vehicle through which positive changes can be realized. Furthermore, no nation in the world ever plays with the future development of its youths. Government, parents, guardians, school etc. devote a lot of time and resources in order to explore and harness the potentialities of the youth. The societies that play down or relegate the orderly developing of its youth are in effect toying with the future progress and be development of that particular societies because their disorganized foundation will lead to grave consequence

The advanced learners dictionary defines insecurity as inadequately guarded or protected, unsafe, lacking stability, being plagued by anxiety or the state of being subject to danger and being exposed or susceptible to harm. This can be seen in the experience of the Niger- Delta people, and the country at large. Enochukwu, David (2000), holds that the roots of insecurity in the Niger-Delta lies in the history of struggles for self determination, local autonomy and democracy of the ethnic minorities in the region which goes as far back as

the second decade of the 20th century. By the 1970s the Niger- Delta became the main source of oil, the new fiscal basis of the Nigerian state (replacing agriculture) accounting for over 80% of national revenues and 90% of export earnings. According to a 2007 Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) report, armed militant groups operating in the Niger- Delta have graduated to a new level of lethality. The report further estimates that the availability of AK-47 rifles in the Niger- Delta has increased fivefold in the past two to three years and militant groups likely possess remote detonation and night vision equipment's as well as anti-air craft missiles even more sophisticated than the ones handled by security agencies thereby causing insecurity.

Insecurity in Niger- Delta and Delta State in particular always emerge as a result of resistance campaigns through the kidnapping of expatriates and demonstrating the inability of Nigerian Security Forces to stop attacks, as well as the Sabotage of oil Installations and the effective use of the global news Media. Oil has largely brought about escalating violence in the Niger Delta, which in 2006 resulted in the reduction of Nigeria's oil export by 25%. The general Insecurity caused by the activities of the restive youths and the Security agencies costs the country treasury billions of naira each year. It should also be noted that in order to control unrest and boost Production, the government has adopted strategies ranging from direct negotiation with the Militants to all-out Military assaults on them. However these methods have not been successful. Nigeria's government recently offered a sixty day amnesty to Militants willing to trade their weapons for promises of immunity from persecution and access to vocational training. The insecurity in the Niger-Delta region has grown to another level where everyone can be kidnapped. Today expatriates go through the agony when kidnapped and the trauma is unimaginable.

Securing the pipelines and other oil and gas assets in the country has become a heavy burden to the government; because it is on record that this insecurity problem the federation loses about 120,000 to 150,000 BPD to smugglers talk more of refined products. Since the hostility began in 1997, most especially in Warri North and South of Delta State, very few investors have come into the region because, no one will naturally invest in an insecure environment. Many companies with considerable investment in Warri have moved headquarters from the region to other parts of the country. The insecurity issue drifts off investors away from the aggravated region and now most of these companies now maintain only skeletal services in the region, which brings up the problem of unemployment and that in turn makes the youth to indulge in violent activities. The jobless youth roam about the streets and seem to device their livelihood from cycles of violence that has visited the region since 1997. Without the rehabilitation of these youths, they resulted into illegitimate occupational endeavors and it became extremely difficult to restore peace in the region.

As discussed earlier, that the youth is characterized by physical as well as emotional vigour to carry out task of building and moving the nation to greater height, there is no guidance and proper brought up will doom to such a nation. The uprightly brought up youths are part and parcel of instrument of reforming of the society. This onerous duty cannot be carried out effectively, except the fundamental challenge of knowledge acquisition in all its ramification must be embraced in order to make this work of propagation and religious awareness effectively

Religion fosters friendship; most societies see it as a means of recreation. People converge in churches and mosques on days of worship to meet friends and business associates. Some regard it as a form of leisure. There is no racial prejudice as it knows any bounds; religion advocates for love, brotherhood and social cohesion: the Roman Catholic Church used Latin as a medium of worship to promote this co-existence up to mid twentieth century. This is a manifestation of religion acting as a guide to society's moral values and winning people's souls to the creator. Religion promotes discipline; the mind is always put

to rest in a state of relaxation during the examination of conscience. This serves as an antidote to stress and depression. Processions and pilgrimages are a way of exalting God's name and relaxing the body and mind. The role of religion could thus be summarised in the following:

- Is concerned with the sacred and supernatural realm.
- Its purpose is to transcend the circumstances and conditions of material life in the pursuit of spiritual goals.
- It is fundamentally rooted in faith.
- Emphasises a spirit of service and love.
- Its rituals are essentially expressive and process-oriented.
- It is fundamentally mystical and pure.
- Emphasises asceticism; stress discipline, self-denial, repetition and the development of character.

Though there are differing views on the matter of sport and religion's involvement with each other, it should be apparent that sport and religion do have various common bonds (Lee, 2004). The association of sport and religion, as further asserted by Lee (2004) "can be found in nearly every part of the sports world".

Just as Christianity recognizes sports, even to professionalization, so also is Islam. Muslims are commanded to be of sound bodies and sound minds in addition to having sound morals. To them "a strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than a weak one". A sound strong body is capable of fulfilling both the religious and the worldly duties. Islam never accepts anything that leads to neglecting these duties, except in some cases where some exemptions are made so as to make matters easy for believers (Atiyya, 2011). According to him, Islam rejects all games and sports that stir sexual urge or encourage moral perversion such as women practicing dancing and being watched by the public. Islam also does not allow matches or games that involve both sexes, in a way that opens channels for seduction, temptation and corruption. Males are to practice sports that suit their nature and vice-versa. In Islam, it is not allowed for females to practice sports that are unique for men. These injunctions probably explain the absence of Muslim girls in the National Female Football Teams (The Super Falcons and the Falconets).

Judaism also encourages sport but for a Jew embarking upon a career of high-level participation in sports, the major obstacle is Sabbath observance. In Israel, whether or not Shabbat is a key day for competition (as it is for soccer, swimming and tennis), the day is utilized heavily for training by all branches of sports (Weinberger, 2010). He avers that playing professional sport on Shabbat might not violate any of the 39 prohibited activities codified by the rabbis, but certainly it would seem to violate the spirit of the biblical commandment that says in part: "you shall not do any work." Some religious Jews are not prepared to be flexible with the definition of "work," and relatively early in their sports careers, they rule out Sabbath sports play – and, in doing so, decide against a career in professional sport. He opines that in practice, religious Jews in Israel are usefully underrepresented in the elite corridors of Israeli sports. As one who believes in the benefits of sports he concludes that "I only can look on with envy at religious Christian professional athletes in America".

Lee (2004) opines that a religious scholar Charles Prebish (1992) claims that it is both necessary and expected to look at the newest revolution in sport, the growing relationship of religion and sport. The relationship can be seen through the “use” of sport by religion and the “use” of religion by sport (Coakley, 2001; Eitzen and Sage, 1997). Each of these concepts is addressed thus. From a position of strong opposition to recreation and sport activities, the church has made a complete turnaround or reversal within the past century. The church now heartily supports these activities as effective tools to promote “the Lord’s work”. Eitzen and Sage (1997) aver that religion has utilized sport through churches, religious leaders, church affiliated institutions and various religious organizations that are centered on sport.

The prevalence of sports relationship with religion can be seen in the form of various organizations that have been centered on linking sport and religion. Lee, (2004). Previous studies (Aitken, 1992; Coakley, 2001; Eitzen and Sage, 1997; Hoffman, 1992; Hubbard, 1998; Ladd and Mathisen, 1999) have shown that groups such as Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and Athletes in Action (AIA) are among the various commonly found organizations. Lee (2004) adds that the joint union between sport and religion has also taken place through use of sport by quasi-religious institutions. Among such movements have been the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA), Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) (Kraus, 1984; Ladd and Mathisen, 1999).

Religious leaders making use of sport have also become quite common (Lee, 2004). A notable religious figure promoting the virtue of sports is Oral Roberts, the founder of Oral Roberts University. When establishing his university in 1965, one of his first actions was the establishment of an athletic programme to bring recognition and prestige to the university. With respect to the programme Roberts was quoted as saying: *Athletics is part of our Christian witness... Nearly everyman in America reads the sports pages, and a Christian school cannot ignore these people... Sports are becoming the Number 1 interest of people in America. For us to be relevant, we had to gain the attention of millions of people in a way that they could understand* (Eitzen & Sage, 1997).

Additionally, scholars (Atcheson, 1994; Coakley, 2001; Kerrigan, 1992; Ladd and Mathisen, 1999; Prebish, 1992) have pointed out that Reverend Billy Graham and Pope John Paul II have been strong proponents of sport and physical activity through encouraging the promotion of sport activities in the lives of their followers (Lee, 2004). In contemporary Nigerian society, we are aware of the contributions of Christian mission and Islamic schools to the pool of sportsmen/women who had represented the country in international sports competitions. St. Finbarr’s College, Akoka, Lagos, a Catholic mission school, is credited with producing star footballers such as Henry Nwosu and Stephen Keshi who at various times captained the Super Eagles. Another Catholic school – St. Gregory’s College, Lagos, produced the likes of Franklin Howard. The Anglicans are not left out as late Sydney Asiodu, a prolific sprinter and footballer came from Igbobi College, Yaba, Lagos. Dr. Bruce Ijirigho, an Olympic 400 m runner is a product of Holy Trinity College, Sabo-gida, Ora in Edo State. Modupe Oshikoya is a product of Methodist Girls High School, Yaba. Harunallerika and Tunde Disu are products of Ansar – ud – Deen Grammar School, Lagos. The list is endless (Jeroh, 2011).

By recognizing that the American society is highly sport oriented, many churches and church organizations understandably look for ways to meet these interests (Morrow and Morrow, 1986). Churches provide sport opportunities including church leagues and tournaments, as well as various other sport, fitness and recreation programme activities (Lee, 2004). In Nigeria, the Bendel Province of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has blazed the trail and is very much alive in soccer competition for the youths which started

two years ago. Fortunately, the Warri Diocese which was the runner up in the maiden edition in 2009 became the champion in the 2011 edition recently concluded at the Oghara Township Stadium. Congratulations to Warri Diocese. In line with the purposes of church sport, Lee (2004), while quoting (Drinkford, 1996; and Eitzen and Sage, 1997) opined that churches have used sports for functions such as evangelism, fellowship, church growth and discipleship. It is in view of this that Hartzell (1996) notes that the involvement of sport activities can serve as a means of catching the interest of many un-churched people that might generally be reluctant to attend church, but may be much more open to sport.

In addition to the aforementioned uses of sport by religion, Lee (2004) argues further that there are also variety of ways in which sport makes use of religion. That is why Eitzen and Sage (1997) opine that religion can be used to help coaches and athletes deal with stressful situations. For example, utilizing religious practices has been commonly implemented by coaches as a means of supplementing practical athletic techniques. Prayer activity has been found throughout professional sport, collegiate sport, interscholastic sport and even youth sport (Lee, 2004). Prayer is perhaps most frequently used by athletes. Quoting Eitzen and Sage (1997), Lee (2004) gives examples of issues often requested for in prayer to include protection, good performance and victory in competition. The uses of prayer have taken place in a variety of contexts as well. Some individuals see prayer as a means for being able to build unity and cohesion. Others may see prayer as being more of a ritual. An example of such can be seen when some individuals recite the Lord's Prayer as a form of team ritual. Another example for prayer use is as a means for dealing with the uncertainties that are part of sport. Furthermore, some have used prayer as a vehicle for bringing forth God's intervention.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested

1. Religion doesn't have significant effect on youth participation in sports.
2. Faith based doctrines will reduce the effect of deviant behaviours and breed peace among youth participation in sports.
3. Condemnation of violence or restiveness by faith based organization will have significant influence on youth behaviour

Methodology

The study was essentially a survey method. The population consists of all the senior secondary school students in Lagos State. Ten schools were randomly selected for the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to sample forty students from each school. The study sample therefore consists of 400 senior secondary school students (both Christians and Muslims) randomly selected from ten secondary schools. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire which consists of 15 items tailored to the research hypotheses to guide the study. The questionnaire was made up of three sections. Section A deals with the demographic data; section B deals with the attitude, mode of worship and mode of dressing of students, while section C deals with sports participation. The response pattern of the questionnaire was of the fourpoint Likert scale of (Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Two experts in Measurement and Evaluation were engaged to ascertain the face and content validity of the instrument, and their expertise

judgment and inputs were adequately incorporated. To determine the reliability of the instrument the questionnaire was pilot tested in a study. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach reliability method, and the index of 0.87 was obtained.

Data Analysis and Results

Data collected for the study were analyzed using t - test. The analysis are shown in tables 1,2 and 3.

Table 1: Analysis of the Difference between Christians and Muslims mode

Variables	N	X	SD	t-cal
Christian mode of worship and sports	200	9.45	7.02	7.65
Muslims mode of worship and sports	200	7.23	3.55	

$P < 0.05$, $df = 398$, critical $t = 1.96$

The result of table 1 reveals that there is a significant difference between Christians and Muslims mode of worship with regards to their participation in sports. The calculated t-test value of 7.65 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant with 398 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a significant difference between Christians, Muslims traditionally mode of worship with regards to their participation in sports.

Table 2: Analysis of the Difference between Christians and Muslims Mode

Variables	N	X	SD	t-cal
Christian mode of Dressing and sports	200	7.41	4.10	5.68
Muslims mode of Dressing and sports	200	5.25	3.40	

$P < 0.05$, $df = 398$, critical $t = 1.96$

The result of table 2 reveals that there is a significant difference between Christians and Muslims mode of dressing with regards to their interest in sports participation. The calculated t-value of 5.68 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant with 398 degree of freedom. So, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a significant difference between Christians and Muslims mode of dressing with regards to their participation in sports.

Table 3: Analysis of the Difference between Attitude Christians and Muslims Mode

Variables	N	X	SD	t-cal
Christian Attitude and sports	200	8.60	4.35	4.76
Muslims Attitude and sports	200	6.55	4.20	

$P < 0.05$, $df = 398$, critical $t = 1.96$

The result of table 3 reveals that there is a significant difference between the attitude of Christians and Muslims with regards to their interest in sports participation. The calculated t-value of 4.76 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant with 398 degree of freedom. So, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is a significant difference between the attitude of Christians and Muslims with regards to their participation in sports.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study on table one has revealed that Muslims mode of worship does not encourage their participation in sports. The result is contrary to what great Islamic scholars like Sheik Al-Munajjid (2011) and Sheik-Attiya (2011) who said that body building aims at making the body strong and sound. That Islam is concerned with man's well-being in both body and soul. They said further that it encourages all kind of sports that will strengthen the body and maintain good health. They emphasized that a strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than a weak believer. As a general principle, Charles (1998) and Sheik Al-Manujjid (2011) have all maintained that, the Islamic mode of worship has set forth that Muslim men and women minimize casual mixing in Physical Education classes and segregated sporting activities are preferred by Muslim parents.

For the Christians and their Muslims counterparts, sporting activities are highly encouraged, but not to the detriment of church activities. That when athletes are preparing for competitions, most of them pray to God for a successful and safe competition. Corroborating the above, Hoffman (1992) opined that, the use of religious rituals in sports especially the Christian players, is one area of research that has begun to receive particular attention. In line with the above, a number of investigations have been shown that the use of prayers by athletes before, during and after competition is a common and valuable practice for enhancing performance and overall wellbeing (Czech & Burke, 2003; Czech, Weisberg, Fisher, Thompson & Hayes, 2004; Park, 2000).

Vernacchia, McGuire, Reardon, and Templin (2000) noted that these players engage in praying whether they win or lose, so the mode of worship or religion may or may not have an effect on people's participation in sporting activities. All depend on skills acquisition and interest or value derived from participation in sporting activities.

In trying to ascertain the influence of mode of dressing on sports participation in table two, it was discovered that Muslims mode of dressing has a significant effect on sports participation as compared to Christians. This agrees with the views of Adewunmi (2008) that, Muslim women are not supposed to wear shorts, shirts, and trousers in public places. She also reported that it is an offence for the men to expose their body parts which is in line with the Sharia Law. Similarly, Charles (1998) in support of this noted that Islam places great emphasis on modesty in dressing and behaviour for both sexes. Men and women are expected to dress in clothing that do not reveal the features of the body. He further stressed that Physical Education classes can pose certain problems for Muslim children, since such courses typically require students to wear shorts and trunk tops. Such attire, he maintained is not permissible for Muslim women and men.

On attitude towards sports participation in table three, it was discovered that attitude of Muslims have a significant difference on sports participation from their Christian brethren. This finding corroborates with the findings of Carol (1993) and Adewunmi (2008) who reported that the negative response or attitude of Muslim boys and girls toward sports in the North is as a result of either actual or perceived restriction placed on them by their culture and religion. Conversely, Ali (2011) however is in support of Muslim parents and their children developing attitude of having similar hobbies such as playing football or wrestling games which he said can prove critical in the upbringing of a child. He further stated that, when a child and parent have bonding time due to a common hobby, a friendship is established which would allow the parent to also serve as a friends whom the child talks to.

Conclusion

The combination of sport and religion strengthen national unity, church membership, self discipline and character molding to cope with uncertainty, to stay out of trouble, to give meaning to sport participation and Christianity, to put sport into proper perspective, to establish solidarity and cohesion among teams, and to reaffirm the rules and authority of coaches and the faith of Christians. This paper revealed various aspects pertaining to sport and religion's union, including measures by which sport makes use of religion. Such associations and their implications will continue to leave strong implications in curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria.

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