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CONSORTIUM STRATEGIES AND SUSTAINABLE GRASSROOTS SPORT DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the efficacy of consortium strategies approach on sustainable grassroots sport development in South-West Nigeria. It examines how the collaboration between various stakeholders—including government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and private entities—can enhance the growth, development and sustainability of grassroots sport. The research explores the operational frameworks of successful consortiums, identifies key factors such as resource pooling, shared expertise, and community engagement, which contribute to the sustainability of sports initiatives at the grassroots level. The descriptive research method was adopted in carrying out the study. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select participants. A total of 300 participants including (185 males and 115 females) took part in the study, while data was collected through Consortium Capacity-Building Sports Development Questionnaire (CCSDQ). The data collected was analysed using the univariate analysis of variance at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that consortium, strategies significantly contribute to the sustainability of grassroots sports development in South-West Nigeria, with an R^2 value of 10.1% ($R^2 = 0.101$) and a significant F-value ($F = 11.045$; $p < 0.05$), joint ventures had a significant positive impact on grassroots sports development ($t = 2.607$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that joint venture consortium strategy is effective in driving sustainable grassroots sport development. However, technical and financial consortiums did not show significant contributions ($p > 0.05$). This result suggests that while joint venture is a critical component of successful consortium strategies, the effectiveness of technical and financial consortiums may depend on specific contextual factors. The study therefore, proposes solutions for overcoming challenges faced in implementing consortium-based strategies in achieving long-term sustainability in sports programmes across South-West Nigeria.

Keywords: Joint venture consortium, technical consortium, financial consortium, sustainable grassroots sport development.

Introduction

Consortium primarily deals with the association of two or more persons, entities, organisations or governments (or any combination of these) with the rationale to partake in a common activity or pooling their resources for achieving a communal goal beyond the resources of one entity. Consortium shares similarity with the conventional partnership arrangements engaged in by various organisations, which usually involve formal arrangements by two or more parties coming together with the sole aim of managing and operating a business. What makes a consortium agreement distinct from the regular partnership agreement is the fact that the former presents the opportunity for entities to pool resources towards accomplishing a common purpose which is developmental in nature. This concept is prominent in the health care sector of advanced countries (Kenton, 2021).

According to Gordon (2022), consortia are usually formed as joint ventures. When two or more firms or enterprises come together to establish a joint venture, the ownership of the venture is usually shared which means that all proceeds, stake and risks of the established venture are shared equally among participants. Businesses in a joint venture also work together and they all participate in the governance, risks, and losses of the venture. However, a consortium is established when two or more organisations pool their resources together for the purpose of actualising a common goal, which is often short-termed. The day-to-day operations of the firms that make up the consortium are run independently which may not be part of the consortium agreement.

Onifade (2021) examined the development of grassroots sports through a community-based sponsorship approach, emphasising the relevance of mobilising support from within the community to enhance sports development initiatives. Such an approach underscores the importance of collaboration among stakeholders and the mobilisation of resources beyond what individual sports organisations may be able to provide. In this regard, consortium strategies provide a broader collaborative framework through which government agencies, private organisations, community stakeholders and other relevant actors can pool resources, expertise and support towards achieving sustainable grassroots sports development.

A technical consortium is actualised when two or more organisations, governments or entities come together to contribute towards a project, common goal or objective for developmental purposes. Most often, the participants pool their resources together in this pursuit. Consortium become a necessary initiative or idea when such projects are beyond what a single organisation, individual or government can accomplish. Consortia are usually created for non-profit purposes (Gordon, 2022). Research has revealed two forms of approaches to consortia formation and three common types of consortia business models have been identified, namely; Proactive approach where consortium members initially come together, articulate their shared offering and joint value proposition, then identify opportunities in

congruence with the consortium's collective offering and strengths, e.g., Online Educational Services (OES) & Swinburne Online; and Queensland Education and Skills Consortium; and the reactive or opportunistic approach where consortium is formed in proportionate response to a presented opportunity and organisations agree to work together to mutually achieve a common goal. Having a recognised and trustworthy network increases the likelihood of accomplishment of a consortium, for instance, Victoria Oil & Gas; UK colleges in Saudi Arabia. For state / territory focused consortia, education and training providers from a territory combine effort together. State / territory government may make available funding, developmental support and opportunities, and bring the right parties together and facilitate communications. What adds impetus is government support which brings credence to the venture especially in developing economies where the formal endorsement and approval is important, usually in response to foreign government led opportunities and request for proposals, or specific geographical pursuits.

Recently, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan (UI), Professor Kayode Adebowale, solicited a collaboration and assistance from the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) towards the establishment of a football academy in the university. Consequently, the leader of the FIFA team, Solomon Mudege, a member of the associations' sector of FIFA, responded by saying his organisation is always ready to encourage development programmes to advance football in Africa (Agboluaje, 2022).

In Canada, Provincial and Territorial Governments, Private and non-profit organisations on a regular basis deliver programs and financial consortium (investment) that aid and support engagement and excellence in sport (Canadian Heritage, 2012).

Most often, when failure is encountered in sports, major attention is drawn towards the amateur and professional levels of sport, without taking into consideration the base, that is, grassroots sport (Fasan, 2013). With the increased assertive attention placed on highly competitive and professional sports, as well as enhanced participation and improved civic engagement and cohesion, the role of grassroots sport organisations within the broader national sports system is emphasized to a greater extent (Canadian Heritage, 2012). The grassroots remain the most vital segment of a nation's sport development system, as they provide participation opportunities for the underprivileged as well as talented youngsters who will eventually improve performance and ultimately be selected into the professional and elite sports system in the nearest future.

On the basis of the fact that major attention as well as literature relating to sports development in Nigeria has predominantly focused on elite sports development, while little attention is being paid to grassroot sports. Thus, it is observed that initiatives such as consortium as a strategy with proven potentials to promote grassroot sports has received less consideration over the years, which has relegated and cost the nation her

rightful place in the world of sports despite the huge resources spent on sports. This study therefore aims to investigate the influence of consortium as a strategy for sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria. To this end, the following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There will be no significant composite contribution of consortium to sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria.
2. There will be no significant relative contribution of consortium (joint ventures, technical and financial) to sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria.

Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive research method was adopted in carrying out the study. Furthermore, the researcher adopted the use of a 'self-developed questionnaire' in observing and describing the phenomena namely; consortium of community stakeholders and sport organisations, vis-a-vis sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria.

Population and Sampling

The population for the study includes all Local Sports Councils in South-West Nigeria. The sample for the study was selected from the Local Sports Councils of Three (3) states in South-West Nigeria, comprising of; Lagos, Ogun and Ondo. To this end, a total of Three Hundred (300) respondents including; sports personnel comprising of administrative and technical sports officers, of sports councils, coaches of individual and team sports, and officiating officials were selected from Fifty-Eight (58) Local Sports Councils across South-West, Nigeria. The sampling technique employed is the multi-stage sampling technique, i.e., four-stage sampling process involving: stage 1 – selection of states; stage 2 – selection of administrative divisions; stage 3 – selection of local governments; and stage 4 – selection of participants. The self-developed CCSDQ content and construct validated by a panel of three experts in sports administration and management was used for data collection. The reliability of the validated CCSDQ was carried out by the test-retest method administering five (5) copies of the research instrument on five (5) respondents from the Nigeria School Sport Federation who were not part of the study sample, twice with two weeks interval between the first and second administrations. Data collected were compared and correlated using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) and an r-value of 0.81 was used to consider CCSDQ reliable for data collection in the study.

Instrumentation

The self–developed CCSDQ was hosted online with the help of fifty-eight (58) District sports officers across South-West, Nigeria. The sports personnel under the various districts were directed to complete the questionnaire. A total of 300 respondents completed the CCSDQ online. The completed instrument was collated and subjected to analysis. The stated hypotheses were tested using the univariate analysis of variance, and inferences were drawn at 0.05 significance level.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Sex			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	185	61.7
	Female	115	38.3
	Total	300	100

The study included 300 respondents, with a majority of them being male 185 (61.7%) and 115 (38.3%) females

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	20 - 30 years	44	14.7
	31 - 40 years	93	31
	41 - 50 years	98	32.7
	51 years and above	65	21.7
	Total	300	100

The age distribution of respondents shows that the majority are within the 41-50 years age range (32.7%), followed by those aged 31-40 years (31%), and those aged 51 years and above (21.7%). A smaller proportion of respondents are aged 20-30 years (14.7%).

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Status

Status			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Junior Officer	35	11.7
	Middle Management	102	34
	Senior Management	82	27.3
	Coach	81	27
	Total	300	100

The respondents' statuses were diverse, with Middle Management (34%) and Senior Management (27.3%) making up the bulk of the participants, followed by Coaches (27%) and Junior Officers (11.7%).

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Highest Qualification

Highest Qualification			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SSCE	3	1
	Diploma/NCE	84	28
	B.Sc./B.Ed.	141	47
	M.Sc./M.Ed.	58	19.3
	MPhil/PhD	14	4.7
	Total	300	100

In terms of educational qualifications, the majority of respondents hold a B.Sc./B.Ed. degree 141 (47%), followed by those with Diploma/NCE 84 (28%), M.Sc./M.Ed. 58 (19.3%), and a small number with MPhil/PhD 14 (4.7%).

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Department or Section

Department or Section			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Administrative / Sports Officer	155	51.7
	Coach / Trainer	97	32.3
	Officiating	48	16.0
	Total	300	100.0

The respondents were primarily from the Administrative/Sports Officer department (51.7%), followed by Coach/Trainer (32.3%) and Officiating (16%).

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by State

State			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Lagos	100	33.3
	Ogun	100	33.3
	Ondo	100	33.3
	Total	300	100

The study equally represented respondents from Lagos, Ogun, and Ondo states, with each state contributing 33.3% of the sample.

Hypothesis One

Table 7: Composite contribution of consortium to sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria.

Model	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
R = 0.317	Regression	414.173	3	138.058	11.045	0.000
R^2 = 0.101	Residual	3700.023	296	12.500		
AR^2 = 0.092	Total	4114.197	299			

a. Dependent Variable: Grassroot Sports Development
b. Predictors: (Constant), Financial Consortium, Joint Venture Consortium, Technical Consortium

From table 7 above, it could be observed that the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable could be predicted at 10.1% (R^2 = 0.101). The table further showed that a significant F-value (F=11.045; P<0.05) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis one as stated is hereby rejected. This goes to imply that a significant composite contribution of consortium to sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria was recorded.

Hypothesis Two

Table 8: Relative contribution of consortium (joint ventures, technical and financial) to sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria.

	Coefficients				
	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	27.093	2.755		9.834	0.000
Joint Venture Consortium	0.573	0.220	0.182	2.607	0.010*
Technical Consortium	0.313	0.228	0.118	1.372	0.171
Financial Consortium	0.162	0.206	0.065	0.786	0.432

a. Dependent Variable: Grassroot Sports Development

Table 8 shows the result of relative contribution of consortium sub-variables to sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria. The result showed that a significant t-value (t=2.607; P<0.05) was recorded for joint venture consortium as against the other two variables. Thus, hypothesis two stated above is hereby rejected regarding joint venture consortium. This implies that joint venture consortium significantly contributed to sustainable grassroot sports development in South-West, Nigeria. The positivity of the t-value indicates that the stronger the joint venture consortium, the higher the sustainability of grassroot sports development in South-West Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The finding on the composite contribution of consortium to sustainable grassroots sports development analysis demonstrated that

consortium, as a collective strategy, significantly contribute to the sustainability of grassroots sports in South-West Nigeria, with an R^2 value of 10.1% ($R^2 = 0.101$) and a significant F-value ($F = 11.045$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that while consortiums are not the sole factor influencing sustainable sports development, they play a critical role. The significance of this result is consistent with Veriene (2018) who opined that pooling of resources, knowledge sharing, and coordinated efforts are consortium opportunities which are essential for sustaining community-based sports programs. Furthermore, Gareth et al. (2017) pointed out that consortiums often serve as a platform for aligning various stakeholders' interests, harnessing skills, knowledge, and resources, thereby creating a leveraging approach to grassroots sport development. In addition, Misener and Schulenkorf (2015) opined that as the social value of sport and events gains more recognition, there has been a notable shift in the focus of managing and developing event projects and their outcomes. This shift involves adopting a more strategic approach that prioritizes the development of social benefits. By forming consortiums, organizations can effectively identify and leverage resources crucial for grassroots sport development. These consortiums enable a collaborative effort to maximize the positive social impact of sports, ensuring that available resources are utilized in a way that enhances the long-term benefits for communities.

The second key finding of the study focused on the relative contributions of different consortium sub-variables—joint ventures, technical consortiums, and financial consortiums—to sustainable grassroots sports development. The analysis revealed that joint ventures had a significant positive impact on grassroots sports development ($t = 2.607$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that this type of consortium is particularly effective in driving sustainability. However, technical and financial consortiums did not show significant contributions ($p > 0.05$). This result suggests that while joint ventures are a critical component of successful consortium strategies, the effectiveness of technical and financial consortiums may depend on specific contextual factors. Svensson and Hambrick (2019) emphasize that joint ventures are particularly powerful because they foster collaboration and resource sharing, which are crucial for sustaining sports programs. They also note that joint ventures can facilitate the pooling of expertise and infrastructure, leading to more robust sports development initiatives. Also, Svensson and Hardie (2024) highlight that technical and financial consortiums may require more sophisticated management and alignment with local needs for effective grassroots sport development. This aligns with the findings of Varmus, Kubina, Mičiak, Šarlák and Greguška (2023), who argue that technical and financial support in consortiums must be carefully tailored to the specific context of the sports programs to ensure they contribute effectively to sustainability. Moreover, Guevara-Pérez, Llena and Moneva (2024) suggest that the success of financial consortiums in sports development often hinges on transparent and accountable management practices, which

can enhance the impact of financial resources.

Conclusion

The study establishes compelling evidence that consortiums play a significant role in improving the sustainability of grassroots sports development. The findings indicate that while consortiums are not the sole factor driving sustainable development in grassroots sports, their contribution is substantial. The composite analysis lays emphasis on the overall effectiveness of consortiums, which demonstrates that these collaborative efforts positively impact grassroots sports sustainability, as evidenced by the results above. The study also explored the relative contributions of different consortium sub-variables, revealing that joint ventures are particularly effective in driving sustainability, while technical and financial consortiums may require more contextual alignment and intensive management to be impactful. This suggests that joint venture can be a viable and robust strategy for sustainable grassroots sports development, while the success of technical and financial consortium may depend on certain existing local conditions as well as strategic management of available resources. Generally, the research accentuates the importance of strategic collaborations and tailored approaches in consortium-based strategies for grassroots sports development. It emphasises the need for careful consideration of local contexts and the potential of joint venture consortium to significantly contribute to the sustainability of grassroots sports development in South-West, Nigeria. These findings present valuable insights for makers of policies, sports administrators, and leaders of communities seeking to enhance the sustainability and social impact of grassroots sports through innovative strategies such as consortium.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Stakeholders should prioritise creating such partnerships as a joint venture, involving local sports organisations, private sector entities (corporate organisations), individuals and private sports organisations to pool resources, share expertise, and enhance infrastructure. This collaborative approach can bring about a more robust and sustainable sports development initiatives.
2. Given the relative contributions of technical and financial consortiums in the study, there is a need to reassess and realign these strategies with the specific contexts of grassroots sports programmes. Consortiums involving technical and financial support should be carefully designed to meet the unique needs of the local communities they serve. This may involve conducting needs assessments and involving local stakeholders in the planning and implementation phases to ensure these consortiums are effectively established.
3. To enhance the effectiveness of financial consortium, it is essential to establish transparent and accountable

management practices. Stakeholders of grassroot sports should implement rigorous financial management protocols, including regular audits and clear reporting mechanisms, to ensure that funds are used efficiently and for their intended purposes. This will build trust among partners and maximize the impact of financial resources on grassroots sports development.

4. To ensure the long-term sustainability of grassroots sports development, it is recommended that consortiums invest in capacity-building initiatives for all stakeholders involved. This includes providing training, workshops, and other educational opportunities to enhance the skills and knowledge of those managing and participating in consortiums. Knowledge sharing among consortium partners should also be promoted to disseminate best practices and innovative strategies.
5. It is crucial to establish robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the effectiveness of consortiums in achieving their objectives. Regular evaluation should be conducted to identify areas of improvement and to ensure that consortium strategies remain aligned with the evolving needs of grassroots sports development. This will help to refine and adapt consortium approaches for greater impact over time.

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