

INFLUENCE OF MOTIVATION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF ATHLETES IN UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN

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Abstract

In sport, motivation is widely accepted as an essential prerequisite in getting athletes to fulfill their potential. This study examined the influence of motivation on the performance of athletes in University of Ilorin, Kwara State. The variables investigated are social reinforcement, self enhancement, sense of accomplishment, social benefits and fringe benefits. Descriptive research of survey method was adopted for the study. The population comprised University of Ilorin Football League Team, totaling 360 from twelve teams having thirty (30) players each. 50 % of the population (180) were sampled for the study. Self-structured and validated questionnaire was used for data collection. Co-efficient of 0.75r was obtained through test re-test method using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Data was collected by the researcher and two research assistants. Frequency and percentages was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that; all the variables tested are predictors of sport Performance. It is therefore recommended that school management, coaches, club owners and managers should provide necessary incentives so as to motivate players to perform well.

Keywords: Motivation, Performance, Athletes

Introduction

The importance of sports to a nation cannot be ignored especially among the youths who serve as prime movers in diverse national issues. Motivation is a dynamic and multifaceted phenomenon that can be manipulated, to certain extent in the pursuit of superior sporting performance (Fasan, 2004). Motivation is the foundation for all athletic effort and accomplishment and without the desire and determination to improve sports performances, all other factors such as mental enhancement, intensity, focus, and emotions, are meaningless. To perform at best, an athlete must be motivated to do what it takes to maximize the ability to achieve desired goals.

Motivation is an internal force that determines all aspects of our behavior; it also impacts on how we think, feel and interact with others. In sport, motivation is widely accepted as an essential prerequisite in getting athletes to fulfill their potential (Singer, 2016). However, given its inherently abstract nature, it is a force that is often difficult to exploit fully. Most definitions of motivation refer to having a drive to take part and to persist in an activity. A sport-specific definition is the tendency of an individual or team to begin and then carry on with the activities relating to their sport. Motivation refers to the ability to initiate and persist on a task. To perform at the peak, one must begin the process of developing as an athlete and must be willing to maintain your efforts until the goal is achieved. Motivation in sports is so important because athletes must be willing to work hard in the face of fatigue, boredom and pain, among others (Ames, 2012)

The reason is that it is the only contributor to sports performance over which you have control. There are three factors that affect how well athletes perform, first ability, this include; physical, technical, tactical, and mental capabilities. Because ability is an innate and it is difficult to change because it is outside one's control. Second, the difficulty of the

competition influences performance. Thirdly, motivation will impact performance since it is the only factor over which one has control. If athletes are well motivated to improve their performance, then they will put in the time and effort necessary to raise their game (Lakes, 2002). Motivation will also influence the level of performance when athletes begin a competition. If they're competing against someone of nearly equal skill, it will not be ability that will determine the outcome. Rather, it will be the athlete who works the hardest, who doesn't give up, and who performs their best when it counts (Alderman, 2014).

There are other factors such as social reinforcement, sense of accomplishment, self enhancement, social benefits and fringe benefits which motivate athletes on sport performance. Therefore, social reinforcement is seen as central to the Meditational Model of Leadership and the sense of accomplishment goal theory emphasizes the social environment as having motivational significance (Ames, 2012; Nicholls, 2011). More specifically, Ames accentuates how structures established by the coach can motivate athletes' adoption of a mastery or performance orientation. Media recognition and appreciation have long been recognized by philosophers and psychologists as critical to human happiness especially among athletes (Duda, 2005). Managers and parents also know that recognition and praise are among the most powerful motivational tools at their disposal for athletes (Duda & Balaguer, 2007).

Self-enhancement may defend the high self-esteem person against unflattering self-assessments, and thus, help to maintain high self-esteem (Jones, Pelham, Mirenberg, & Hetts, 2002). The indices of self-enhancement were an unrealistic optimism scale, responses to a series of personality profiles that ranged from very unflattering to very flattering, and actual-ideal self-discrepancies among athletes.

Sport may, therefore, provide indirect social benefits by creating conducive social climate which encourages athletes about their performance in sports (Richards & Palmer, 2010). Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity and Payne, (2013) are of view that social benefits include positive relationships with coaches, making new friends, and developing teamwork and social skills. Sport England (2003) found that 'social benefits' derived from volunteering are dominant, with the related concepts of 'enjoyment' and 'giving something back' also frequently cited as benefits.

Fringe benefits include various types of non-financial compensation provided to athletes in addition to their basic salaries. They are designed to make a compensation package more attractive (Weathington & Tetrick, 2000). The mandated ones belong to athlete rights or entitlements, while discretionary benefits are designed to increase loyalty of individuals and increase satisfaction (Coon & Mitterer, 2010). Thus, fringe benefits started to be applied but the outcome was different based on age, health and other personal features of athletes'. Fringe benefits motivate athletes, increase their commitment and performance, decrease athletes' turnover rates, help them balance between work and life, and raise athletes (Olsen, 2006). Against this background, this study examined influence of motivational factors on sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Often time's athletes are concerned about how to earn more pay and enjoy attractive conditions of service. They would be striving to cut costs so as to post impressive profit (Milkovitch & Newman, 2004). Meanwhile, studies have shown that provision of motivators has been resulting in athletes' increased interest in the job, enthusiasm and absence of motivators has been the other way round (Mathis & John, 2003). Previous research have shown that motivation facilitates athletes' productivity (Milkovitch & Newman, 2004). Given

the absence of empirical evidence on the relationship between athlete motivation and sport performance and the escalating cost of benefits, it is clear that there is a research gap and that further research needs to be conducted to find out whether motivational factors predict sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Research Questions

- (i) Will social reinforcement as a motivational factor influence sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?
- (ii) Will self-enhancement as a motivational factor influence sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?
- (iii) Will sense of accomplishment as a motivational factor influence sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?
- (iv) Will social benefits as a motivational factor influence sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?
- (v) Will fringe benefits as a motivational factor influence sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population for this study were 360 University of Ilorin Athletes playing the 2017/2018 University of Ilorin league. There are twelve teams in the University of Ilorin football league and each team consists of thirty (30) players according to the Athletes Union Sport.

Proportionate sampling technique was used to select 50% from each team which comprised thirty (30) players. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and eighty (180) athletes as total respondents for this study.

The instrument was questionnaire tagged motivational factor as a predictor of sport performance among athletes (MFPSPA). The responses was constructed in Likert format of strongly Agree (SA), Agree(A), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree(SD).The questionnaire was validated by three lecturers in Human Kinetics Education, University of Ilorin. Reliability of the instrument was through test re-test method, conducted within an interval of two weeks. A correlation co-efficient of 0.75r was obtained.

Results

The following research questions were answered using frequency count and percentage:

Research Question One: Will Social reinforcement as a motivational factor influence sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?

Table 1: Descriptive analysis on social reinforcement as a motivational factor and sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Recognition from the media helps to motivate athlete performance	130 (76.5%)	38 (22.4%)	2 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	170
2	Awards and trophies motivate me in the sense that I want to achieve more by improving on my performance.	89 (52.4%)	81 (47.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	170
3	Verbal praises from fans have great impact on the performance of an athlete	138 (81.2%)	30 (17.6%)	2 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	170
4	Individual recognition from coaches and teammates helps me to improve on my performance.	93 (54.7%)	69 (40.6%)	7 (4.1%)	1 (0.6%)	170
Column Total		450 (66.18%)	218 (32.06)	11 (1.62%)	1 (0.14%)	680 (100%)

Table one revealed that 66.18% of the respondents strongly agreed that social reinforcement as a motivational factor significantly influenced sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin, 32.06% agreed, 0.14% disagreed while 1.62% strongly disagreed.

Research Question Two: Will Self-enhancement as a motivational factor influence sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?

Table 2: Descriptive analysis on self-enhancement as a motivational factor and sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Self-identity is a major factor that enhance my athletics performance.	94 (55.3%)	65 (38.2%)	8 (4.7%)	3 (1.8%)	170
2	Self-esteem improves my athletics performance.	48 (28.2%)	114 (67.1%)	7 (4.1%)	1 (0.6%)	170
3	Self-monitoring gives room for me to improve on my performance	65 (38.2%)	78 (45.9%)	26 (15.3%)	1 (0.6%)	170
4	Self-evaluation provides forum for me to know the area am lacking and ways of improvement.	80 (47.1%)	64 (37.6%)	25 (14.7%)	1 (0.6%)	170
5	Self-reactions to mistakes is necessary in making me a better athletes in the sport I play	112 (65.9%)	50 (29.4%)	8 (4.7%)	0 (0.0%)	170
Column Total		399 (46.94%)	371 (43.65%)	74 (8.71%)	6 (0.70%)	850 (100%)

Table two revealed that 46.94% of the respondents strongly agreed that self-enhancement as a motivational factor significantly influenced sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin, 43.65% agreed, 0.70% disagreed while 8.71% strongly disagreed.

Research Question Three: Will Sense of accomplishment as a motivational factor influence sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?

Table 3: Descriptive analysis on sense of accomplishment as a motivational factor and sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Winning as a sense of accomplishment help motivate athletes' performance.	125 (73.5%)	38 (22.4%)	6 (3.5%)	1 (0.6%)	170
2	Physical fitness motivate athletes perform better compare to athlete with lack of fitness.	54 (31.8%)	89 (52.4%)	21 (12.4%)	6 (3.5%)	170
3	Fame is also a hindrance to athletics performance.	59 (34.7%)	51 (30.0%)	41 (24.1%)	19 (11.2%)	170
4	Sport as a source of income for me motivates me to perform well during sport.	79 (46.5%)	74 (43.5%)	15 (8.8%)	2 (1.2%)	170
Column Total		317 (46.62%)	252 (37.06%)	83 (12.21%)	28 (4.11%)	680 (100%)

Table three revealed that 46.62% of the respondents strongly agreed that sense of accomplishment as a motivational factor significantly influenced sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin, 37.06% agreed, 4.11% disagreed while 12.21% strongly disagreed.

Research Question Four: Will Social benefits as a motivational factor influence sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?

Table 4: Descriptive analysis on social benefits as a motivational factor and sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Enjoyment of the sport I choose motivates me to perform well.	118 (69.4%)	49 (28.8%)	3 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	170
2	Companionship between teammates help influence athlete performance.	78 (45.9%)	91 (53.5%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	170
3	Creating an atmosphere for interaction between athletes is a factor of motivation.	111 (65.3%)	56 (32.9%)	3 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	170
Column Total		307 (46.62%)	196 (37.06%)	7 (12.21%)	0 (4.11%)	510 (100%)

Table four revealed that 46.62% of the respondents strongly agreed that social benefits as a motivational factor significantly influenced sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin, 37.06% agreed, 4.11% disagreed while 12.21% strongly disagreed.

Research Question Five: Will Fringe benefits as a motivational factor influence sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin?

Table 5: Descriptive analysis on fringe benefits as a motivational factor and sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Travelling opportunity is a means of motivating athlete performance.	103 (60.6%)	55 (32.4%)	12 (7.1%)	0 (0.0%)	170
2	Wearing a customized uniform is a factor .which aids athlete performance	70 (41.2%)	71 (41.8%)	26 (15.3%)	3 (1.8%)	170
3	Medical and dental insurance motivate an athlete to better.	56 (32.9%)	76 (44.7%)	32 (18.8%)	6 (3.5%)	170
4	Education reimbursement of athletes motivates them to perform better.	58 (34.1%)	95 (55.9%)	15 (8.8%)	2 (1.2%)	170
5	Time off, paid vacation and use of team car have influence on athletes performance	67 (39.4%)	72 (42.4%)	26 (15.3%)	5 (2.9%)	170
Column Total		354 (41.65%)	369 (43.41%)	111 (13.06%)	16 (1.88%)	850 (100%)

Table five revealed that 41.65% of the respondents strongly agreed that fringe benefits as a motivational factor significantly influenced sports performance among athletes in University of Ilorin, 43.41% agreed, 1.88% disagreed while 13.06% strongly disagreed.

Discussion

Findings on research question one revealed that social reinforcement is a motivational factor influencing sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin. The finding agree with Horn, (2017) who stated that athletes' receive consistent, positive social reinforcement of their performance, they develop a high regard for their abilities and competencies, which can cause them to develop and exhibit other positive attributes and behaviours such as intrinsic motivation. High self-esteem, low performance anxiety and persistence at achieving task mastery.

Research Question two revealed that self-enhancement as a motivational factor influenced sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin. Based on data gathered from the respondent which they are in line with Bandura, (2016) who suggested that self-enhancement is considered one of the most influential motivators and regulators of behaviour and performance in people's everyday lives including athletes.

Research Question three that sense of accomplishment as a motivational factor influenced sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin. Based on data gathered, it was clear that the question is the finding in support of a study conducted by Feichtinger and Honer (2003) which revealed that development of sense of accomplishment motives, volitional components and self-referential cognition have a long way in maintaining athletic performance.

Research Question four stated that social benefits as a motivational factor influenced sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin. Based on data gathered, it was clearly agreed the finding with Brookes and Wiggan (2009) opinion that delivery of sport services contributed significantly to social and economic wellbeing which serves as a motivational factor which can improve the performance of athletes in one sport or the other.

Research questions five said that fringe benefits as a motivational factor influenced sport performance among athletes in University of Ilorin. Based on data gathered, it was clear that this finding is in line with Mathis and John, (2003) who suggested that an employer that provides a more attractive benefits package often enjoys an advantage over employers in hiring and retaining qualified athletes because this will motivate athletes enjoying these benefits to perform well.

Conclusion

This study concludes that Social reinforcement, Self-enhancement, Sense of accomplishment, Social benefits, and Fringe benefits as a motivational factors influenced sport performance among athletes. By implication, all these variables are vital factors that impact on athletes' performance. To assist athletes to improve in their sports there is need to strengthen these variables.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were proffered:

- (i) Necessary feedback should be provided by coaches and trainers to athletes to improve their athletic performance. Praise and criticism should be adopted when needed to motivate the athletes by coaches to perform well in his or her chosen sport.
- (ii) Athletes should condition themselves to series of personal training so as to improve their athletic potential.
- (iii) Athletes should possess the urge for winning and success as these aid positive performance in sport.
- (iv) Athletes should be open minded and interact with teammates, coaches and club managers as this helps in maintaining proper athletic performance in sport.
- (v) School management, club owners, managers should provide necessary incentives for the players to perform better.

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