

**AN ASSESSMENT OF COMPETITION MANAGEMENT AS A PRECURSOR TO
IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF TAEKWONDO PRACTITIONERS IN NIGERIA:
A CASE STUDY OF YOUTH GAME, ILORIN 2017**

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Abstract

Performance in Taekwondo like most other sport at national and international levels has dropped lately. While a lot of reasons could be advanced as responsible for this dismal outing of late, the responsibility of the newly inaugurated Taekwondo board by the Honorable Minister for sport; Solomon Dalung is enormous. The board must take immediate steps in reversing the fortune of Taekwondo since this was part of their campaign manifesto. Effective competition management comprising fair officiating, latest scoring equipment and up to date facilities as witnessed at the youth games in Ilorin and became a test run to implementing and achieving set goals. A self-designed data collection sheet was validated and used for data collection and documentation. A sample of 44 participants consisting of athletes and officials at the games of a population of 74 athletes and officials present at the taekwondo arena responded to the research questionnaire. The hypotheses focused on; officiating, equipment and organization. The data collected were coded and analyzed using simple percentages. The findings of this study showed that participants tilt favorably toward accepting the research questions at various percentages irrespective of gender and state of origin. While 29% agreed that screening was excellent, 30% falls on very good, 25% sees it as good, 16% feels it is fair, all other responses to the variables postulated in the hypotheses are shown on the histogram in the results analysis. In the analysis, excellent and very good are lumped together, while good and fair are categorized, with bad and terrible coming together in the same class.

Keywords: Competition, Management, Performance, Practitioners, Taekwondo

Introduction

Taekwondo has been in Nigeria for over two decades. Its impact was not felt until in the middle eighties. Taekwondo was brought into Nigeria in 1974 by Master AikpaAime. His first set of students were

graded to the black belt rank in 1977 Dominic Bassey, (Boniface Nwachukwu), Koffi S. Anani, Emmanuel Ikpeme (in order of seniority) represent the first generation of Taekwondo Black Belts in Nigeria. Taekwondo has continued to play a leading role in the history of martial arts in Nigeria (Ugboko, 2017).

Ugboko further explained that in the early eighties, the traditional taekwondo clan broke into two factions. The Nigerian National Taekwondo Association (NNTA) and Nigerian United Taekwondo Association (NUTA). The former, led by Kofi Anani and Dominic Bassey, and later by Emmanuel Ikpeme, Charles Owa and Pious Ilukhor. These factions formed formidable opposition against each other. And towards the end of the oil boom in the eighties, a group of taekwondo black belts from Ghana led by Elias Awad, a Lebanese business man and Abraham Papafio, a Ghanaian stormed the Nigeria taekwondo scene. They were, however, surprised to find an organized but fractionalized system of taekwondo in Nigeria

In 1982, two Korean foreign instructors arrived in Nigeria on cultural exchange. Master Moo Cheon Kim and Jung Rae Park were seconded to the Nigerian army to help train the military in unarmed combat. The arrival of these instructors was believed by a school of thought to be the beginning of the history of taekwondo in Nigeria. This school argues that what was in existence was a mixture of Korean Jido-kwan and Japanese Shotokan Karate. According to this school of thought, most of the techniques used were merely Karate techniques. Even the set of forms, the school argued, were an incomplete mixture of traditional taekwondo palgwepoomsae. On arrival, the instructors helped to unify the warring factions, and introduced the World Taekwondo Federation style of Taekwondo poomsae and fighting techniques. The Tae-Geukpoomsae was brought in, the deep stances were changed to the more sublime, natural and easy walking stances and elevated front stance (Ugboko, 2017).

On Saturday, July 13th, 1987, Taekwondo Association of Nigeria (TAN) was inaugurated with Lt. Col. J. M. Madaki as first national Chairman. Miss UcheNebedun first TAN Secretary and Master Moo Cheon Kim first National Coach. After inauguration, TAN was directed by the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports to present a team to the 4th All Africa Games in Nairobi Kenya. It hurriedly invited 15 players to camp and eventually selected 7 players to participate in the games. At the end of the Games,

Nigeria topped the Taekwondo medal table with 3gold, 1silver and one bronze medal. However, those medals would not count because Taekwondo was a demonstration sport at the games

ROLL CALL	MEDAL	WEIGHT CATEGORY
Pius Ilukhor	Gold	Heavy
Tony Ilukhor	Gold	Middle
George Ashiru	Silver	Welter
Emmanuel Dominic	Gold	Light
AdamuBuba	Bronze	Feather
Yusuf Yaya	-	Bantam
Emmanuel Ogu	-	Fly

In its first participation in a world championship, that same year in Barcelona, Spain, Nigeria won the best fighting spirit trophy at the World Taekwondo Championship. However, there were some minor changes in the team list. James Ademuyiwa replaced Pius Ilukhor in the heavy weight class; Michael Mbagwu replaced AdamuBuba in the feather weight division, while OsitaEgwim came in for George Ashiru in the Welter Weight category. Tom-Ben Effiok came in to complete the team list for the fin weight category. In 1988, the hard working chairman of TAN J. M. Madaki was appointed military governor of Bauchi State. He was eventually replaced by Lt. Col. A. B. Gankon as TAN chairman.

In 1992, Nigeria won an Olympic silver medal(demonstration) through Emmanuel Peters Oghenejobo in the heavy weight class, and a substantive bronze medal by Chika Chukwumerije at the London 2012 Olympics. Since then, lack of vision, administrative incompetence, government insensitivity to sports development, corruption and greed have continuously affected the growth of Taekwondo in Nigeria and for the first time since Nigeria Taekwondo was established, Nigeria failed to qualify for the Olympics at the 2017 Rio games; Nigeria presented a dismal outing for the first time since 1997 All Africa Games winning just one gold and a few silver and bronze medals in 2016: very poor showing for a country that

was taunted to be the next Taekwondo power house in Africa after Egypt. To make it worse, indiscipline and corruption has continued to be on the rise (Ugboko, 2017). In the last four years, Taekwondo has been battered, bruised and left to suffer. Evil propaganda has been elevated to a cult status. The psyche of the practitioners of this regal art has been on the low. The country has lost its position as the preferred Taekwondo destination in Africa. Taekwondo has lost its position as one of the top five sports in Nigeria (Ugboko, 2017). The new board assumed office with majority of the practitioner's morale on the low side due to allegation and counter allegation of professional impropriety on the side of those who have been managing the sport.

With all these challenges in mind, the immediate step of the newly inaugurated board was to lay down unbiased, fair and effective competition management that gives equal chances to the very best to emerge as champions, as these will eliminate situations where medals are favorably awarded during championships. After the games, a feedback survey through questionnaire was administered; a random poll was taken during the event to get public opinion of the taekwondo event. A carefully designed questionnaire was randomly distributed to all who indicated interest to participate.

Methods

The descriptive survey research design was found appropriate for this study; hence was adopted. The population consists of Nigeria athletes and officials who participated in the youth games of the taekwondo events of the National Youth Games tagged "Ilorin 2015" in Ilorin, and a total of 44 athletes and official consisting 12 athletes, 19 coaches, 9 referee, who took part at the Ilorin Games taekwondo events were purposively sampled to participate in this study. The main instrument used in the study was a self-developed, but validated questionnaire; with reliability level of 0.71. This questionnaire is in two parts (A and B); Part A sought information on the demographic data of the participants, while part B elicited information on the investigated variables. The researchers introduced the questionnaire to both official and athletes after a brief explanation of how to fill it. The data forms that were administered to the sampled athletes and officials were collected immediately, and this gave 94.9% of retrieval.

Participants were asked to rate (Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Bad, terrible) if the following metrics will not significantly affect the growth and performance of taekwondo.

1. NTF Screening & Accreditation Exercise
2. Weigh-In Exercise
3. Balloting Exercise
4. Tournament Layout
5. Availability of Information
6. Tournament Organization
7. Professionalism of Referees
8. Fairness of Officiating
9. Quality of Competition Equipment
10. Adherence to WTF Rules

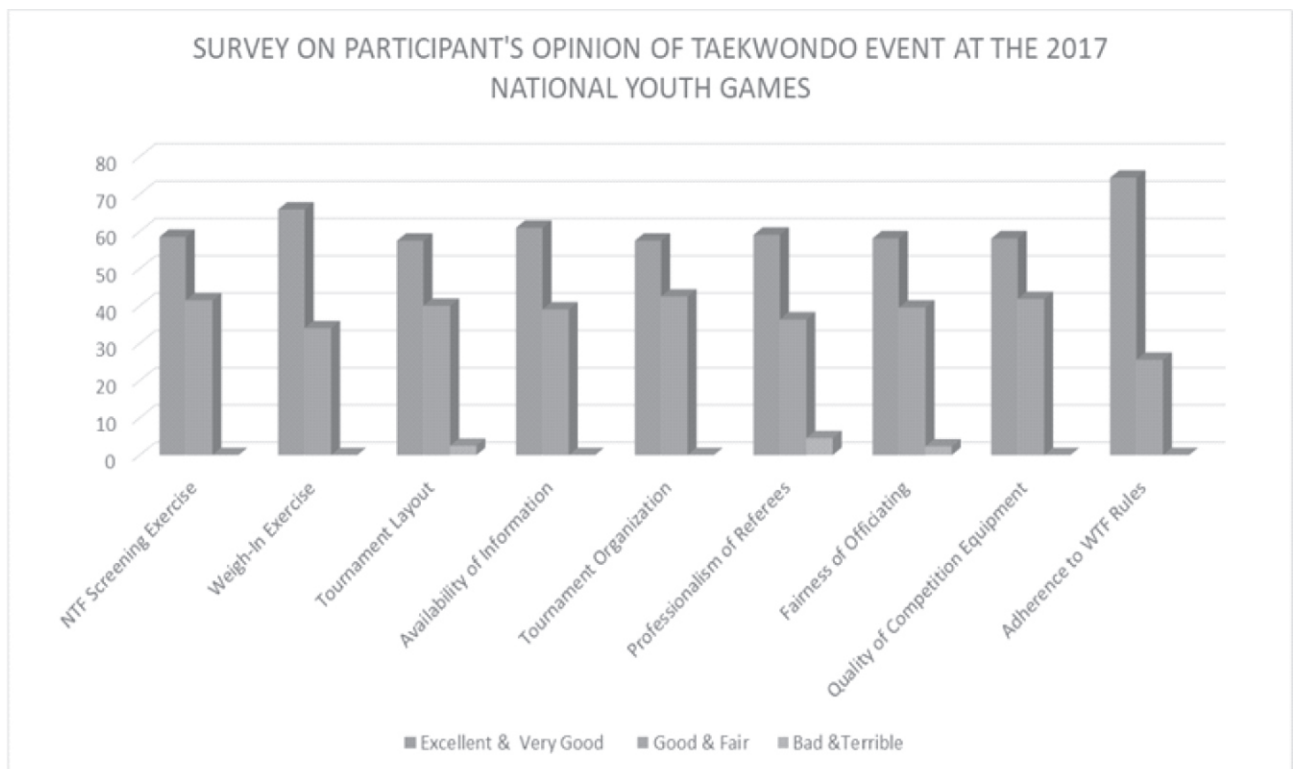
PARTICIPATION STATISTICS

S/N	STATE	109	25	84	10	74	37	37	74
		Total Entries	Number Absent	Number Present	Number Screened Out	Number Cleared to Compete	COMPETING		Total
							Male	Female	
1	Abia	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
2	Adamawa	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
3	Akwa Ibom	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
4	Anambra	4	0	4	1	3	2	1	3
5	Bauchi	4	2	2	0	2	1	1	2
6	Benue	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Borno	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
8	Cross River	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
9	Delta	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
10	Ebonyi	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
11	Edo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Ekiti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Enugu	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	FCT	2	0	2	0	2	1	1	2
15	Gombe	4	0	4	1	3	2	1	3
16	Imo	4	3	1	0	1	1	0	1
17	Jigawa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	Kaduna	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
19	Kano	3	0	3	1	2	1	1	2
20	Katsina	4	2	2	1	1	0	1	1
21	Kebbi	4	0	4	1	3	1	2	3
22	Kogi	4	1	3	0	3	2	1	3
23	Kwara	4	2	2	0	2	1	1	2
24	Lagos	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	Nasarawa	4	0	4	2	2	1	1	2
26	Niger	4	1	3	0	3	2	1	3
27	Ogun	4	1	3	0	3	1	2	3
28	Ondo	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
29	Osun	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
30	Oyo	4	2	2	0	2	1	1	2
31	Plateau	4	0	4	1	3	1	2	3
32	Rivers	4	0	4	0	4	2	2	4
33	Sokoto	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	2
34	Taraba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	Yobe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	Zamfara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
									74

I. MEDAL TABLE

S/N	REGION	TEAM	MEDALS			TOTAL
			GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	
1	South East	Ebonyi	1	0	1	2
2	North West	Kebbi	1	0	0	1
	South West	Oyo	1	0	0	1
	South South	Bayelsa	1	0	0	1
3	North Central	Plateau	0	1	1	2
	South South	Delta	0	1	1	2
4	North West	Sokoto	0	1	0	1
	South South	Akwa Ibom	0	1	0	1
5	South West	Ogun	0	0	1	1
	South West	Osun	0	0	1	1
	North West	Kaduna	0	0	1	1
	North East	Borno	0	0	1	1
	South West	Ondo	0	0	1	1
						16

Results



Analysis:

Overall, there was a very significant feedback from the participants on the conduct and organization of Taekwondo at the games..

- NTF Screening Exercise: 29% of respondents rated it “Excellent, 30% Very Good, 25%,of respondents rated it Good while 16% rated it Fair”. No respondent ticked bad or terrible.
- Weigh-in Exercise: 30%% of respondents rated it Excellent, 36% Very Good, 20% of respondents rated it Good, while 14% rated Fair”. No respondent rated it bad or terrible
- Tournament Layout: 28% of respondents rated it Excellent, 30% Very Good, 27% rated it Good while 13Fair”, 2% of respondents rated it Bad and 1% Terrible”.
- Availability of Information: 30% of respondents rated it Excellent, 31% Very Good, 22% rated it Good while 17% Fair”. No respondent rated bad or terrible
- Tournament Organization: 31% of respondents rated it Excellent, 30% Very Good” 30% rated it Good while 13% rated Fair”. No respondent rated bad or terrible.
- Professionalism of Referees: 29% of respondents rated it Excellent, 30% Very Good”, 20% rated it Good, 16% Fair, and 3%% of respondents rated it Bad while 2% rated Terrible”.
- Fairness of Officiating: 30% of respondents rated it Excellent, 28% Very Good, 20%% rated it Good, 20% Fair, and 1% of respondents rated it Bad while 1% rated Terrible”.
- Quality of Competition Equipment: 40% of respondents rated it Excellent, 18% Very Good, 30% rated it Good while 12% rated Fair. No respondent rated bad or terrible.
- For Adherence to World Taekwondo Rules: 60% of respondents rated it Excellent, 14% Very Good, 20% rated it Good while 6% rated it Fair. No respondent rated bad or terrible

Cumulative of Excellent & Bad, Good & fair and or Bad& Terrible is shown below.

ANALYSIS FIGURES [in %] OF FEEDBACK SURVEY			
Performance Metric	RATING		
	Excellent & Very Good	Good & Fair	Bad & Terrible
NTF Screening Exercise	59	41	0
Weigh-In Exercise	66	34	0
Tournament Layout	58	40	3
Availability of Information	61	39	0
Tournament Organization	58	43	0
Professionalism of Referees	59	36	5
Fairness of Officiating	58	40	2
Quality of Competition Equipment	58	42	0
Adherence to WTF Rules	74	26	0

Discussion of Findings

From all the responses to the various hypotheses of officiating, up-to-date equipment and organization reflecting in the indices above were postulated. It agrees with Adebayo, Andronikos, Martindale and Westbury (2016), that environmental factors have been considered as critical to successful talent development in sport. The entire backgrounds of development including the organization, which embraces the totality of the hypotheses indices postulated. It is important to note that, the variables of the hypotheses do not alone determine development and performance outcome, but that effective competition management, consisting of all the variables above can facilitate other factors of successful development and performance enhancement.

In terms of what constitute an effective competition management model Martindale, Collins, & Daubney, (2005), underscored the importance of an integrated, holistic and systematic model involving long term aims and methods which embraces fair and unbiased competition management as a precursor to enhancing sport development.

Conclusion

This study has unearthed some of the characteristics of competition management in Nigeria, which hitherto have been becoming a debating issue, as many athletes cite various reasons from biased officiating to obsolete equipment as for reasons behind the subjective selection of athletes into teams that variously lead to dismal outing in the international arena.

The Taekwondo event of the 2017 National Youth was a success and achieved its objectives of organizing a fair, professional event while discovering talented athletes at the same time. In addition to using the same equipment used on the international circuit, NTF also ensured that gender equality and quality was achieved for invited referees. The internal NTF screening was very effective in removing suspected age cheats and the eventual medal table which harbors 13 states within the 16 medalists is a clear pointer to the fairness and transparency of the event. The quality of organization of the Taekwondo event of the 2017 National Youth Games has set a high standard for future editions to follow.

Recommendation

There is the need for further studies, particularly the role of effective staging of competition and its aftermath on sport development, since the account here only presents the opinion of the athletes, official and coaches in the competition venue of the competition, other studies need to focus on the ministry of youth and sport, and federal government itself, since triangulation method have reportedly added value to previous talent development studies (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 2002).

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