

## SPLISS MODEL ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATION ON ELITE SPORTS STATUS IN NIGERIA



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**Research question:** This study examined if the structure of the National Sports Federation (NSF) will promote elite sports status in Nigeria, using Pillars 1 and 2; and, if the functions of the National Sports Federation will promote elite sports status in Nigeria, using Pillars 3 to 9.

**Research hypothesis:** The study hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between the structure and functions of the National Sports Federation on Elite Sports Status in Nigeria.

**Research methods:** Mixed method research design (explanatory sequential) was adopted for the study. Data was collected from a total of 332 respondents from athletes, coaches, presidents/secretaries, technical director of 23 National Sports Federation (NSF), as well as staffers of the Elite and Athletes' Department (FEAD) unit. The SPLISS (Sports Policy Factors Leading to International Sporting Success) questionnaire was adaptively employed. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was carried out revealing Cronbach alpha reliability of  $r = 0.84$ . The second phase of the study involved an in-depth interview. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), Standard Deviation (SD), Thematic Analysis, and the inferential statistic of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results and findings:** Findings revealed the structure of the NSF cannot promote elite sports in Nigeria. Also, the functions of NSF cannot promote elite sports in Nigeria. In other words, the structure of the NSF is weak and cannot promote elite sports success in Nigeria and is so related to its functions.

**Implications:** By implication, there may not be processes(s) to drive sports excellence in the country where there is no structure in place. There is the need for the political and economic will of the government in adapting sports policies that can promote sporting excellence as highlighted in the SPLISS model. There is an urgent need to review the National Sports Policy to accommodate changes and development that can promote the Nigerian sports industry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by adopting a sustainable scientific process involving all segments of the polity and by extension, a sports system that can promote Nigerian sports, just like the countries in the vanguard of sporting excellence have done and promote

### IMPLICATIONS

- The study laid a scientific foundation and provided athletes, coaches, sports managers, psychologists, physiologists, policymakers and the sports federations in the country with the knowledge needed to implement best practices that may enable them to move the sports industry forward.
- The study has added to the scanty literature on sports policy direction and the growth of sports in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa at large.
- There is the need for a modern public-private sponsorship for sports in the country.

### STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

- The structure of the NSF cannot promote elite sports status in Nigeria.
- The functions of the NSF cannot promote elite sports status in Nigeria.
- There is a strong positive relation between the structure and functions of the NSF on elite sports status in Nigeria.
- The SPLISS model should be adaptively employed in the Nigerian sports system in order to promote excellence in elite sports; this requires the political and economic will on the part of the government.