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SEXUAL EXPLOITATION THROUGH SPORT: IMPLICATION ON THE HEALTH OF NIGERIA UNIVERSITY ATHLETES

* *Suleiman M.A.* ** *Dominic O.L* & * *Umaru M.*

ABSTRACT

All over the world, people are exploited by those involved in human trafficking and those that needs very cheap labour. This happens within Nigeria as well as across it's borders. Poverty and inequality, unemployment and political instability mean that there are people who, in the hope of a better life, fall victim to criminals and networks that exploit them unscrupulous (Anna, 2005). Most young and talented sports men and women are potential victims of criminal organization as they are vulnerable to false promises of job opportunities, becoming champion athletes and giving traveling opportunities, out side Nigeria in pursuance of sports endeavours. This study examined the health implication of sexual abuse of Nigerian University athletes during camping and in completion. A structured questionnaire develop by the researchers were administered on a total of one hundred subjects randomly selected from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Federal University of Technology, Minna, and University of Ilorin respectively. The responses collected were analyzed using simple frequency and percentages. It was found that the mode of living and accommodation of athletes predispose them to sexual abuse. The study made appropriate suggestions on ways of controlling and minimizing sexual exploitation of athlete during competitive sports at various levels.

INTRODUCTION:

Exploitation of a child and or an athlete involves the use of their person in work or other activities for the benefits of others or self gratifications. According to World Health Organisation (WHO, 1999) as cited in Federal Government's action plan (2003) it is not only strip of self esteem but it also involves activities that are detrimental to the victims physical or mental health, education, spiritual moral or social emotional development. According to the Federal Government's plan of Action for protection of young children and youths (to which athletes belong) from sexual violence and exploitation, (FGN, 2003), the subject of sexual

* *DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA*
** *DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN.*

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abuse and sexual exploitation of children has become a far stronger focu of public interest since mid 1980s.

Sexual abuse or exploitation in sport is the involvement of an athlet either male or female in sexual activity that he/she does not fully conser to or comprehend and is unable to give informed consent to or tha violates the laws or taboos of society, (WHO, 1999) cited in Federa Government 's Action Plan(2003). It is the exploitative use or th inducement/coercion of athletes to engage in an unlawful activity fo personal gratification especially by coaches, team officials or spo managers or even athletes to athletes. According to Mulchlenard Goggins, Jones and Satter field (1991), sexual exploitation or harassmer can be through the use of physical force or threats of physical force, an non violent sexual abuse which includes both verbal sexual exploitatio by threatening to terminate the relationship and non verbal that result from social norms gender roles and the relative power of women and me in the society. This is a predominant event in sports as foun demonstrated between athletes-coaches,- (especially female athletes and sports managers; varsity athletes and their accompanying official who are mostly lecturers and principal officers of their various institutions Howe(1989) added that others exploit sexually because of the manner o dressing to expose almost all parts of the body as found mainly in athletic and because others are doing it within their own domains.

The economic and social implications of sport participation at loca National and International levels make the athletes vulnerable to sexua exploitation. Anna (2005) explained that the crucial factor is th awareness that these groups of athletes being exploited have had thei human dignity severely impaired and have been forced into a position o subjugation to such an extent that this constitutes a breach o fundamental human rights. Most young and talented sports men an women are potential victims of criminal organization as they ar vulnerable to false promises of job opportunities, becoming champio athletes giving traveling opportunities out side Nigeria in pursuance o sports endeavours. Many of those who accept these offers from wha appear to be legitimate source find themselves in situations where thei document are destroyed or forced into immorality and exploitation o [illegible] kinds (Haveman, 1998). Therefore there is a need for the spor

organization to rise to combat such menace to athletes sport career and health. Ibraheem and Ogunsanwo (2005) pointed out that sexual exploitation and harassment has become a phenomenon in the field of sport and physical education.

The sexual exploitation of female athletes have led to qualitative athletes dropped for low standard athletes leading to poor performance of our athletes in most outings. Kanin & parcel (1977) in their studies of twenty years interval established that University Students' sexual exploitation is a natural phenomenon transferred into sport world. Warner (2004) added that sexual exploitation makes victims vulnerable to unwanted diseases, conception and psychological trauma. Therefore athletes who are desperate for a career in sports are susceptible to inordinate sexual relationship, sexually transmitted infections (STIS), unwanted pregnancy and baby, abortions, drug addiction and alcoholism.

This paper therefore looks into sexual exploitation through sport and its health implications on University Athletes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were formulated for the study;

1. Does mode of living and interactions between genders significantly predispose University athletes to sexual abuse or exploitation during camping and competition?

2. Does certain behavioral patterns among Nigerian University athletes, lead to sexual exploitation?

3. Which group in sport sector prominently involves in common sexual practices and exploits athletes the most?
4. Does common sexual practice and exploitation have health implications for Nigerian University athletes, coaches and officials?

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

A descriptive survey was adopted for gathering information for the stud Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample use from three Universities in Nigeria which is made up of athletes fro athletics, Ball games and racket games:- Thirty athletes each fro Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Federal University of Technology, Minn and University of Ilorin. In all, a total of 90 athletes, (male 45 and fema 45) served as subjects in this study.

INSTRUMENT: - A structured questionnaire was developed by th researchers which three experts in physical and Health Educatic validated. The questionnaire elicited information on mode of living durir camp and competition, sexual practices among athletes ar coaches/officials; common behavioural patterns and forms exploitation, sexual exploiters and health implications for athletes. Th questionnaire was administered by the researchers. The questionnaire were collected immediately. Only twenty six were retrieved from Feder University of Technology Minna. In all, eighty-six questionnaires wer retrieved for analysis of data, frequency counts and simple percentag were used.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Below are the analysis of the results obtained and the demographic dat of the athletes.

Table I: Demographic Data

Table 1a

N	Age in years	N	%
I	15-18yrs	12	14.96
	19-25	42	48.83
	26 and above	32	37.21
	Total	**86**	**100**
II	Gender:		
	Male	56	65.15
	Female	30	34.88
	Total	**86**	**100**
III	Academic level		
	100 200	33	38.37
	300 400	49	56. 98
	500 above	04	04.65
	Total	**86**	**100**

Table 1b

N	Sport	N	%
I	Athletes	23	26.74
	Ball games	44	51. 16
	Racket games	19	22.10
	Total	**86**	**100**
II	Level of participation		
	NUGA	58	67.44
	WAUG	10	11.63
	World University Games	05	05.81
	Sport festival	23	26.74
III	Years of Experience		
	1 3years	44	51.16
	4 6years	33	38.37
	7years and above	09	10.47
	Total	**86**	**100**

The above table shows the personal information about t subjects. Majority of the athletes are youths and adolescents, whi makes them vulnerable to being sexually exploited.

Table II below presents the result on mode of living and sexu exploitation.

TABLE II: Mode of living in camping and competition and sexu exploitation

N		A	%	D	%	U	
1.	I have been camped before for Competition	69	80.73	17	19.27	-	
2.	Male / female live in the same Rooms/halls during camping	43	50.00	36	41.86	7	8.
3.	I have enough sleep during Camping/competition	48	55.81	36	41.86	2	2.
4.	I like male and female athletes sleeping together in camp.	25	29.07	56	65.12	5	5.
5.	I am always harassed sexually by my coaches	44	51.16	37	43.03	5	5.8
6.	I am always harassed sexually by the opposite sex	47	54.65	33	38.77	6	6.5
7.	Female athletes follow men for money and material goods During camping	29	33.27	55	63.95	2	2.3
8.	Athletes submit sexually to coaches officials for favour during camping	60	69.11	22	25.58	4	4.6
9.	Coaches/officials usually force Female athletes into sexual Relation	60	69.77	22	25.58	4	4.65
10.	Drinking and smoking are Common practice during Competition	47	54.65	36	41.86	3	3.49

The table above reveals the mode of living and interactions between male and female athletes and coaches cum officials. Majority (80.73%) of the respondents has been camped for competition before and 50% indicated that male and female lived together in the same rooms/halls while in camp. However, majority (65.12) still showed dislike for female and male athlete staying together in one accommodation and 55% agreed that they do not have enough sleep when in camp or during competition. This may lead to fatigue and stress and may not give enough room for the body restoration of lost energy and strength.

In response to research question one, the mode of living predispose athletes to sexual abuse and exploitation. This supported by the study of University student by Muchlenhard and Cook (1988) which revealed that the most reason given by male gender for engaging in unwanted sexual intercourse were enticement or seduction (57%), inexperience (34%) altruism (35%) and intoxication (31%). Further more, the research question two is supported by the fact that mode of living of Nigerian University athletes during camping/competition could also lead to sexual abuse due to the sexual invitations through mode of dressing in sport, degrading languages, insulting jokes or sounds, inappropriate touching, consensual relationships that lead to favoritism and or even placing sexual materials like pictures, video tapes, literature in place of practice arena or camp. This was equally supported by Anderson (1993), Ibrahim & Ogunsanwo (2005).

In response to research question three, the study reveals that in item 5 and 6 majority of the athletes (51.16%) and (54.65%) were sexually harassed by their coaches and opposite sex during camping and competition, thus indicating the sexual exploitation of the athletes which is done mostly by the athletes themselves. Howe (1989) buttressed that people indulge in sexual harassment because of the advantages they have over the opposite sex, abuse of power in an organisation and as a result of what others are doing in their domains as seen in players also, indulging in sexual exploitation of others. This agreed with the majority of the respondents that female athletes do not follow men for money and material goods during sport competition.

Smoking and drinking was supported by the majority as common practice among sport groups during camping and competition which can lead to sexual abuse of others and unprotected sex. Fahey, Insel & Roth (2001) revealed that women who use alcohol are vulnerable to all types of sex assaults and are unable to practice safer sex.

Table III below presents the ratings of common sexual practices and behavioural patterns among Nigeria University athletes during camping and competition in order of priority.

TABLE III: SEXUAL AND BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.

Table IIIa

Sexual Practice and Those Involved	**Freq.**	**%**
1. Sexual intercourse.	33	25.38
2. Touching of breast.	33	25.38
3. Slapping of buttocks.	32	24.62
4. Kssing	14	10.77
5. Touching of private part	10	7.69
6. Being watch by the opposite sex.	7	5.38
Those Involved		
1. Athletes	38	48.10
2. Coaches/officials	31	39.24
3. Referees	10	12.66

Table IIIb

Behavioural Patterns	**Freq.**	**%**
1. Alcoholism	33	37.50
2. Fighting	21	23.86
3. Drug addiction	14	15.91
4. Prostitution	12	13.64
5. Stealing	08	09.09
Sexual Exploiters		
1. Coaches	38.	46.34
2. Officials	23	28.05
3. Strangers	11	13.41
4. Athletes	10	12.20

Sexual intercourse and touching of breast were rated highest as the commonest sexual practice while athletes and the coaches cum officials were rated as the groups in sport that prominently involve in them with referees following behind. This indicates that sexual practices could significantly have health implications for Nigerian University athletes and coaches.

Alcoholism. (57.50%) tops the list, followed by fighting (37.50%) and drug addiction (15.91), prostitution (13.64) in the 4th place exposed them to risk of such behavioural patterns in relation to the health of athletes and officials cum coaches. These behavioural patterns will not only lead to sexual exploitation but also has serious health implication for the university athletes. In Engenderhealth (2005) it was established that the use of drugs and alcohol could increase the risk for getting an STI or HIV/AIDS, because the people under their influence may be less careful about practicing safer sex.

TABLE IV: AWARENESS AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

	A	%	U	%	D	%
1. Use condom/contraceptives.	47	54.65	-	-	39	45.35
2. Once being pregnant/pregnant before.	27	31.39	5	5.81	54	62.80
3. Prefer to have an abortion rather than having the baby.	58	67.44	3	3.49	25	29.07
4. Aware of HIV/AIDS, STIS	66	76.74	2	2.33	18	20.93
5. Victim of HIV/AIDS	-	-	7	8.14	79	91.86
6. Victim of sexually transmitted inflections	10	11.62	2	2.33	74	86.05
7. Wish to know HIV/AIDS status	39	45.35	5	5.81	42	48.84
8. Athletes under go abortion as a result of unwanted pregnancies.	54	62.80	5	5.81	27	31.39

In the table above, it shows that majority (54.65%) use condom when in Camp and during competition and that 31.39% of the athletes have been pregnant before. But most of the respondents prefer to have abortion rather than having the baby while only 29.07% did not.

However, majority (76.74%) of the university athletes are aware of HIV/AIDS and STIS, but none agreed to be victims of HIV/AIDS while Only 15 admitted to once been sexually infected with STIS. Furthermore, Most (62.80%0) of the university athletes agreed that athletes frequently undergo abortion as a result of unwanted pregnancy. This greatly endangers their lives to quackery and destruction of the Womb or even death.

The 45.35% of Nigerian university athletes who indicated they do not use condom may be expose to unwanted pregnancy, use of quackery drugs, contracting of STIS, increasing contact with the partners body fluid including ejaculation from man's penis (semen) vaginal fluids, blood and other types of discharge from open sores.

According to EngenderHealth (2005), those using condoms/contraceptives greatly reduce the risk but are not totally free because STIS that cause genital ulcers, such as syphilis, herpes and canchroid and others are transmitted through contact with genital skin and mucosal surfaces. This can occur in areas where the condom does not cover. However the consistent and correct use of condoms can significantly reduce risk of transmission of STIS.

However, to reduce the risk of transmission of these STIS and AIDS, the varsity athletes and all the officials must submit themselves to HIV test six months after engaging in risky behaviours United State Centre for AIDS prevention Studies (UCSF 2005), youths have the highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS which damage their health and reproductive ability. Therefore the most reliable way to be protected from STIS including HIV/AIDS is total abstinence from sexual intercourse risky sexual practices and behavioral patterns that predisposes to sexual intercourse and STIS including AIDS.

CONCLUSION

Base on the iimitations of this study, the following conclusions are drawn

(1) The mode of living and health accommodation of athletes (Male and female) predispose university athletes to sexual abuse

(2) The common sexual practices and bahavioural patterns of the Respondents were negative. This is reflected in the sexual intercourse, Alcoholism fighting and drug abuse and even prostitution by athletes which have significant health Implications on the reproductive health Due to unwanted pregnancy, abortion and spread of STIS includir HIV/AIDS.

(3) Sexual harassment of the athletes is prominently performed among the athletes. While coaches are rated second in the practic

(4) The fear syndrome hinders athletes to find out the STIS status especially AIDS which further complicate issues and endangering the university athletes to infections, psychological Trauma and short life span.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper therefore makes the following recommendations base on th findings of the research study.

1. There is need for seminars and health campaigns during camp And competitions in order to discourage the mode of living and Accommodation of university athlete.

2. Disciplined coaches and officials should be used during any University sport venture while undisciplined ones should be dealt with.

3. Laws of Human Rights in sport sector should be emphasized in order to control and curb sexual abuse and exploitation

4. Female officials and coaches should be use for female athletes

5. Extra curricular activities should occupy the leisure time Of athletes and stipends/allowances should be given to meet athletes Financial needs rather than submit to sexual abuse

Because of needs

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