

## **Exploring Athletics, Coaching and Officiating in Sports as Careers for Youths' Employability among Undergraduates Training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined exploring athletics, coaching and officiating in sports as careers for youth employability among undergraduates training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study while multistage sampling procedure was used in selecting 640 participants. The instrument for data collection were self-developed questionnaires with the modified four points Likert scale. The instrument has four scales with reliability value of 0.71 for Athletics Career Scale (ACS), 0.74 for Coaching Career Scale (CCS), 0.79 for Officiating Career Scale (OCS) and 0.81 for Youth Employability Scale (YES) through Cronbach alpha statistical tool while the instrument has five (5) items each. The demographic data of the respondents were analyzed with frequency counts and percentages while an inferential statistic of chi-square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The finding revealed that athletics, coaching and officiating as careers would significantly be youth employability. It is therefore, recommended that the management of higher institutions should make provision for sports facilities and equipment that would enhance all undergraduate's involvement in sports activities which will serve as a spring board for careers in athletics, coaching and officiating among youth in their institutions. That governments should mandate sports activities for all students irrespective of their status in all tertiary institutions with all measures and incentives in place.*

**Keywords:** Athletics, Coaching, Officiating, Sports, Careers And Youth Employability

### **Introduction**

Globally, sport is an instrument of development which has the potential of equipping the youths with the require career opportunities in athletics, coaching and officiating as well as qualifications that can help them to secure, sustain and maintain job in various field of endeavours. According to the (United Nations, 2011), sport has become a universal language that can bring people of different age, status and societies together by breaks down all barriers. It is a global industry whose objectives can have a widespread effect on societies, it is a strong tie for progress and development. (Olubiyi, 2021), sports have potentials of creating more job opportunities and commercialization on the continent for companies, investors, talent scouts, agents,

coaches, referees, trainers, sports analysts, media companies, facilities management companies and sport wears companies, when the channels are well established. Most of the Nigerian undergraduate's youths needed skills present in sports for employment opportunity that may come their way either during their undergraduate days or even after they might have graduated from their universities such as physical development skills, social development skills and emotional development skills that could make them to be employable after transition from school to the labour market. For nearly twenty years now, sport has been considered a useful experience for the development of skills transferable to different areas of life, (Caterina, et al., 2023), with a recent emphasis on the specific pairing of sport and employability. In addressing youth unemployment, there is need for "resilience thinking" among the youths, where they may find employment, generate income, and innovative ways of coping with adversity, (Tutu & Busingye, 2018).

In recent time researchers have reported youth unemployment to be critical issue that has been bedeviling the development of some countries such as Nigeria, (Olojuolawe et al., 2022) One of the main reasons for this challenge in most of the Africa countries is the lack of employability skills. According to (Dacre & Sewell, 2007) the concept of employability refers to the ability of a young person to gain employment, to maintain employment, and to obtain new employment if required. They defined employability as a "set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make young person capable of getting, keeping and successfully fulfilling the work. However, peer-reviewed research studies have examined the instrumental role of sport in contributing to broader social outcomes which have frequently highlighted the potential in sport-based interventions to enhance employability, most prominently through the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes in athletics, coaching and officiating as careers for youths which may provide opportunities in the employment market, (Morgan et al., 2022).

According to (Miland, 2022) an athlete's career attributes may be influenced by the sport they play. Participation and winning in mega sport events by a large number of talented and professional athletes along with cricket, football, badminton and hockey successes the year round, give many youngsters motivation to take up a career in sports as an athlete. With more and more money pouring in to the sports, the role of media attention and interest, those with potential and talent can now earnestly bear in mind a

professional athletics career. Awards, ranking, prize money, sponsorship, contracts, scholarships endorsements, revenue from the T.V telecasts have all boosted the prospects for career in athletics. Apart from providing source of income for the athletes, these athletes have also promoted the images of their country, positively most especially professional athlete that are doing well in their chosen sports in the world. For instance, in Nigeria we have Haruna Quadri, a table tennis player, Mikel Obi, a footballer, Tobi Amusan, a sprinter and Chioma Ajunwon, a long jump athlete all made their career in sports. As an athlete you can be recruited as a police, navy, army and air force officer among others. “Athletic career” is a term for a multi-year sport activity, voluntarily chosen by the person, and aimed at achieving his/her individual peak in athletic performance in one or several sport events, (Stambulova, 2020). Career that relates to all levels of competitive sports, depend on the highest level of sport competition achieved by the athlete, an athletic career can be local, regional, national, or international and depending on the athlete’s status, the career can be amateur or professional.

Coaching is the development or training in which an individual coach, supports the learner in attaining specific professional or personal goals. In the discipline of sports, sports coaching refer to the process of guiding, motivating and training individuals in their preparation for a sporting hobby, sporting event or sporting career, (American Psychological Society & Association for Psychological Science, 1992). Individuals and teams hire the services of sports coach in several scenarios. In the event that one wishes to start playing a sporting activity, a sports coach comes in handy to impart the basic skills of the particular sport. Likewise, sports coaching helps individuals and teams improve and enhance their skills in a particular sporting activity that they are already part of. Sports coaching has helped and will continue to aid athletes to advance their professional levels in their respective sporting events. Coaching career is a traditional career in the field of sports, while many athletes prefer to choose coaching as a career, (Sunita, 2020). There are number of job opportunities for coaching as in the field of sport. Opportunities of jobs are available to coach in middle schools, high Schools, senior secondary schools, (especially in private Public Schools), in colleges and Universities.

Most organized sports, including basketball, football and soccer, require officiating officials who acts as an arbitrary third party that enforces the laws of the sport and game. Officiating officials are also known, to be umpires, judges, time-keepers,

linemen etc., and they play prominent roles in ensuring success of any sport. However, there is a shortage of officiating official across all sports (Zvosec, et al., 2021) in which the gap can be bridged through career for youths' employability among undergraduate students engaging in sports. The termination of an athlete's sporting career occurs through a myriad of events, both sport related and non-sport related, (Stambulova, 2020). At the end of an athletic career, not only does an individual's identity shift, but so does their career path. Approximately four out of every five active sport officials have participated in the sport they officiate (Livingston & Forbes, 2016). Officiating officials are also frequently encouraged by significant others (e.g., teachers, coaches, or other role models) to enter into the role. They value the sport identity and the social connections they gain through their participation, (Johansen, 2015). Financial remuneration may attract some, especially younger officials, to enter officiating, but it does not influence retention, (Livingston & Forbes, 2016). Both males and females are intrinsically motivated to officiate, gaining both a sense of enjoyment and excitement from their participation. For males, their sense of excitement and enjoyment remains relatively stable while that of females declines over time, (Kim & Hong, 2016).

### **Statement of Problem**

In order to address unemployment rate among Nigeria undergraduate youths there is need for resilience thinking among our youths, where they can find employment, generate income and cope with the adversity of life. For years back, sport has been considered a useful experience for the development of skills transferable to different areas of life, (Caterina, et al., 2023), with a recent emphasis on the specific pairing of sport and employability. However, peer-reviewed research studies have shown the pivotal role of sport in contributing to broader social outcomes which have frequently highlighted the potential in sport-based interventions to enhance employability, most prominently through the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes in athletics, coaching and officiating as careers for youths which may provide opportunities in the employment market (Morgan et al. 2022). It is on this note that the researcher intends to ascertain athletics, coaching and officiating in sports as careers for youths' employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

### **General Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this work is to ascertain athletics, coaching and officiating in sports as careers for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

### **Specific Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine athletics in sports as a career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State
2. To assess coaching in sports as a career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.
3. To evaluate officiating in sports as a career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between athletics in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.
2. There is no significant relationship between coaching in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.
3. There is no significant relationship between officiating in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

### **Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population for this study consisted of undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State, while multistage sampling procedure was used in selecting 640 participants. In the first stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select undergraduates training at Durbar stadium. In the second stage, the respondents were stratified into four, that is, those in universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and other institutions. In the final stage, convenient sampling technique was adopted to select those that responded and filled the questionnaires from those stratified based on their institutions. The instrument for data collection was self-developed questionnaire which was in two sections (Section A and B). Section A was on demographic data of the respondents, while section B was structured in line with the independent variables of athletics, coaching and officiating in sports as careers as well as the dependent variable of youth employability with the modified four points Likert scale of summative rating to show the extent of agreement

or disagreement viz: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with 4, 3, 2 and 1 values respectively. The instrument has four (4) scales with reliability value of 0.71 for Athletics Career Scale (ACS), 0.74 for Coaching Career Scale (CCS), 0.79 for Officiating Career Scale (OCS) and 0.81 for Youth Employability Scale (YES) through Cronbach alpha statistical tool while the instrument has five (5) items each. The demographic data of the respondents were analyzed with frequency counts and percentages while an inferential statistic of chi-square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

## Results

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 1:** Frequency counts and corresponding percentages showing the institutions of the respondents

<b>Institutions</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Universities	235	36.7
Polytechnics	245	38.3
Colleges	110	17.2
Others	50	7.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The above Table 1 indicated the frequency distribution and the percentage of respondents according to the institutions. The 235 (36.7%) respondents were from universities, 245 (38.3%) were from polytechnics, 110 (17.2%) were from colleges of Education while 50 (7.8%) respondents were from other higher institutions.

**Table 2:** Frequency counts and corresponding percentages showing the careers for youths' employability of the respondents

<b>Careers for youths' employability</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Athletics	270	42.2
Coaching	254	39.7
Officiating	116	18.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The above table 2 showed the frequency distribution and the percentage of careers for youths' employability of the respondents. 270 (42.2%) respondents filled athletics, 254 (39.7%) opted for coaching and 116 (18.1%) went for officiating.

**Table 3:** Frequency counts and corresponding percentages showing the sex distribution of the respondents

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	310	48.4
Female	330	51.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The above Table 3 indicated the frequency distribution and the percentage of respondents according to sex. There were 310 (48.4%) males and 330 (51.6%) females.

**Table 4:** Frequency counts and corresponding percentages showing the age distribution of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
16-20	160	25
21-25	295	46.1
26-30	180	28.1
31-above	5	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The result from Table 4 showed the age distribution of the respondents. 160 (25%) respondents were between age 16-20 years old. 295 (46.1%) were between the age 21-25 years while 180 (28.1%) were between 26-30 years old. The table also revealed that 5 (0.8%) were between age 31 years and above.

**Table 5:** Frequency counts and corresponding percentages showing the status of the respondents in the institutions attending

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Freshers	160	25.0
Staylites	480	75.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5 above showed that 160 (25.0%) respondents were freshers, while 480 (75.0%) were staylites.

### Testing of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between athletics in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

**Table 6:** Athletics in sports as a career for youth employability chi square table

Variable	N	DF	X <sup>2</sup> Calc.	X <sup>2</sup> Crit.	Remarks
Athletics as a career for youth employability	640	12	74.41	21.03	Sig.
X <sup>2</sup> Calc. Value= 74.41 > Crit. X <sup>2</sup> value= 21.03, df 12, p< .05					

Table 6 showed that the calculated value of 74.41 is greater than the critical value of 21.03 at .05 alpha level with 12 degrees of freedom. This implies that the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between athletics in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State, is hereby rejected. This connotes that there is significant relationship

between athletics in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between coaching in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

**Table 7:** Coaching in sports as a career for youth employability chi square table

Variable	N	DF	X <sup>2</sup> Calc.	X <sup>2</sup> Crit.	Remarks
Coaching as a career for youth employability	640	12	32.71	21.03	Sig.
X <sup>2</sup> Calc. Value= 32.71 > Crit. X <sup>2</sup> value= 21.03, df 12, p< .05					

Table 7 showed that the calculated value of 32.71 is greater than the critical value of 21.03 at .05 alpha level with 12 degrees of freedom. This implies that the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between coaching in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State is hereby rejected. The implication of this is that there is significant relationship between coaching in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant relationship between officiating in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

**Table 7:** Officiating in sports as a career for youth employability chi square table

Variable	N	DF	X <sup>2</sup> Calc.	X <sup>2</sup> Crit.	Remarks
Officiating as a career for youth employability	640	12	67.37	21.03	Sig.
X <sup>2</sup> Calc. Value= 67.37 > Crit. X <sup>2</sup> value= 21.03, df 12, p< .05					

Table 7 showed that the calculated value of 67.37 is greater than the critical value of 21.03 at .05 alpha level with 12 degrees of freedom. This implies that the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between Officiating in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State, is hereby rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between officiating in sports and career for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

### Discussion of Findings

Based on the above finding, the result was in line with the opinion of (Stambulova, 2020) who opined that athletic career is a term for a multi-year sport activity, voluntarily chosen by the person, and aimed at achieving his/her individual peak in athletic performance in one or several sport events.

The result further showed that undergraduates training at Durbar stadium agreed that coaching career in sport is a youth employability career, this was similar to the finding of (Sunita, 2020), who reported that coaching career is a traditional career in the field of sports, while many athletes prefer to choose coaching as a career. The professionalization of coaching has made the growing body of research on the development of expertise in high-performance sports increasingly relevant (Christensen, 2014). There are number of job opportunities for coaching as in the field of teaching. Opportunities of jobs are available to coach in the schools, (especially in private and public schools), in Colleges, Polytechnics and Universities.

Finally, the finding revealed that officiating in sports will significantly be a career for youths' employability this is similar to the opinion of (Zvosec, et al., 2021) when they opined that officiating official across all sports, in which the gap can be bridged through career for youths' employability among undergraduate students engaging in sports. For an athlete, officiating would be a sport-related career, approximately four out of every five active sport officials have participated in the sport they officiate (Livingston & Forbes, 2016). The most frequently cited reason for entering into officiating is enjoyment or love for the sport, (Johansen, 2015). The athletes always think of rewards, achievements, promotions and other benefits to be derived from the recruitment of officials. Undergraduates who made the decision to enter into the career of officiating with objectives involved around building relationships, gained more development and achievement than officials that did not, (Hill, 2019).

## **Conclusion**

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: That athletics, coaching and officiating in sport would be careers for youth employability among undergraduate training at Durbar Stadium Oyo, Oyo State.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made that:

1. Governments, both at federal and state levels should embark on educational policy that would compulsory sporting activities for all students in higher institutions, just like general studies that are compulsory for all students.
2. Management of higher institutions should provide enabling environment for sport to thrive in their various institutions by providing well equipped, attractive and functional sporting facilities and equipment for students.
3. Intramural sport programmes should be organized regularly while students are motivated to participate in the programme in all our higher institutions.
4. Professional athletes should be invited once in a while for a career talk on prospect inherent in sport programme such as in athletics, coaching and officiating among others for students.

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