

## DEMYSTIFYING APPROACH TOWARDS VIOLENCE CONTROL IN SCHOOL SPORT

BY

**Ebenezer Oluyemi Adelekan**

**Department of Physical and Health Education, School of Sciences, Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State.**

**Email: ebenezeradelekan@gmail.com**

### Abstract

*This study is designed to investigate the topic “Demystifying approach towards violence control in school sport among primary schools pupils in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State. The population comprised of all male and female primary schools pupils, head teachers, sports masters and mistresses in conjunction with officiating official, security officers and media men and women in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State. Two Hundred and four (204) respondents (student-athletes and sport officials) were used as sample in this study. A random sampling method was used for the selection of respondents. A Stratified random sampling method was used for the selection of respondents (one hundred and ten (110) student-athletes, while ninety four (94) were athletic officials which comprises of sports masters and mistresses. Data was collected using a self designed questionnaire to elicit responses from the respondents. Four research hypotheses were formulated and data was analyzed. using descriptive method of frequency counts and percentages for demographic data, while inferential statistical tool of chi-square was used to test the variables used in the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. All the four hypotheses raised in the study were rejected. The selected variables of the hypotheses raised in this study such as media coverage, officiating, adequate security arrangement and use of side attraction were found to have significant influence on the control of violence in sports. The study recommended that sports administrators and officials should develop written policy statements as guidelines for regulating violence in sport.*

**Keywords: Sport, Media coverage, Officiating, Security arrangement and Side attraction**

### Introduction

The issue of violence in sport is increasingly becoming a global problem, every day in day out the report of one form of violence or the other keep circulating the podium of sport. Among the so called violence is the one emanating from the spectator. Fuller (2014) even believed that many of these ugly incidents have affected developed and developing nations. It has even extended to our local and reputable schools. Many of the good names and reputation of sports has been soiled. Anyawu (2011) held the notion that if this dreaded and ugly situation is not checked or put under control there may be worst things that could happen as sport techniques and knowledge of rules and desire to participate grows

Wenn (2013) described violence as the state of physical injury to persons and damage to properties. Vamplew (2017) described violence as the presence of threat to lives and properties, as well as risk factor affecting the socio-economic wellbeing and co-existence of others. Ukwayi (2014) see violence as an overt manifestation of action by a competitor or spectators which threaten or causes physical harm on others either before, during or after a game or sport

encounter. Agbanusi (2010) asserted that violence is a risk factor, a danger or harm that confronts people in the world. These scholars also described it as physical injury to persons and destruction of properties. They further stressed that violence is any physical aggressive action directed towards an individuals or group of persons or property such as destroying vehicles, setting equipment ablaze during and after competitions. It also includes maiming people or killing somebody in an act of violence. Mohammed (2013) averred that violence is a state of disorder causing disturbance on a sport ground, school environment or gymnasium. Violence could emanate from a hostile crowd, who are fanatical supporters who during sport events paste posters, as well as expresses covetous attitude towards trophies. At times like this most of the crowds have always been responsible for act of violence especially where a favoured team has failed to live up to spectator's expectation (Solaja, 2017).

Hornby (2019) defined crowd as a group of individuals or large number of people sharing a common trait and interest together. They could be group of people attending a public function or people brought together by a ceremony. According to Mohammed (2013) violence control is explained as an exercise of authority or an influence over an object or another individual, or act of restraining, or having dominion. Violence control therefore could be said to be the process whereby group of people are subjected to submission of another person. According to Odeyemi (2011) violence control can be perceived as the capacity to manage a crisis and apply major processes of management, preventive measures and adopt proactive approach to solve a conflict or crisis matters.

According to Oberine and Ries (2000), it is the act of being in control of one's environment, or crisis and to act on an event accordingly. They stressed further that the objectives of ensuring control is to demystify and reduce the incidence of violence and its impact on individuals and organization. Sport crisis is described as behaviour exhibited by athletes, officials, spectators and fans which causes harm outside the rules of sport and unrelated to competitive objectives of sport. It is also seen as a negative aggressive behaviour that can result to harm, injury or death of a victim as well as damage to properties (Layman, 2010). According to Mohammed (2013) violence control refers to emotional control and physical control of life's given event whereby another person in position of authority alters the thoughts, feelings and actions of the people who want to produce a given negative result. Ali and Hamid (2014) perceived violence control as the action of an individual restraining group of people with hostile behaviour from executing negative aggression against an individual or object. Violence control in this sense is seen as a process of predicting and preventing people from the prevalence of crisis and purifying occurrence of problems.

Layman (2010) argued that the major factors influencing reactions of people in sports are temperaments, sports climate, nature and intensity of games, and audience effect. He added that others manifest in form of anti-social behaviour of spectators for example, sport fans that turn out to be aggressive and eventually displayed unruly behaviour and generally attack the visiting team. The scholar pointed out that in Frustration-aggression hypothesis; crisis is bound to exist in sport especially when one of the teams lost a game to another team. The form of retaliation of attack from the opponent could result to violent behaviour: In simple terms the aggression from the first attacker in form of overt verbal or physical action can psychologically or physically injure the receiving victim. Aggression today is part of our contemporary sport. Frustration-

aggression hypothesis states that aggression is as a result of frustration and Catharsis theory of effect stated that as the release of pent-up frustration increases one feels better to release aggression on any object that triggered the anger. Napravnik (2013) argued that the release of aggression in a situation that triggered anger is a behaviour that is likely to attract response of aggression. This situation will invariably result to violence. The catharsis theory stated that as the temper of a competitor become flare it leads to an increase in aggression. Venting frustration upon another competitor only increases intense hostility among the athletes and if this is not quickly checked it may escalate into an uncontrollable situation (Oyewusi, 2011).

According to Ogujiofor (2010) there are so many factors responsible for violence in sport and these include minor issues that certain organization overlook to resolve on time. Crisis can arise as a result of failure to offer good welfare packages to workers or athletes, however when this issue is not adequately handled during sport meets it eventually result to violence. Fink (2016) enumerated various other issues as poor officiating by officiating officials and untimely response from governing body of sport association to intervene at appropriate time. Violence can also erupt when fundamental human right of athlete is abused. Such situation may brew conflict if not well addressed, the result can trigger violence. The causes of violence are numerous but precisely among them is badly organized security arrangement, ethnocentric and sensational news, Frivolous and furious side-attractions (Nwosu, 2011). It is based on this fact that the study examines security arrangement, media coverage and officiating as major tools of crowd control in prevention of violence in school sports.

### **Literature Review**

While Akin-Taylor (2002) stated that a badly organized sports program security arrangement will end in chaos, Lawal (2014) was also of the opinion that a poorly security arrangement would create an openings for hardcore miscreants who see fighting as an internal part of match. These extreme local gangs and fanatics' connection with violence are based on social division and religion outside the sport context. Lawal (2014) explained that because of partisanship and their vested interest throw the rules of the game to the wind and openly display their partial interest to the disregard of the opponent team, fans, and spectators thereby exposing the game to crisis. Vamplew (2017) reported that most of these people with the carry-over effect of grudge and enmity they have for some local, national or international team, these grudges are transferred into sport. In Nigeria, teams like Kwara United, IICC Shooting Stars of Ibadan and many others enjoyed fanatical support from their home base fans and supporters. He expressed that this development not only leads to crisis but also hold back development of sport. This result of outburst and hostility was as a result of the impression that the success and failure of their team was their personal success or failure too.

White (2012) asserted that officiating is one of the most difficult jobs in sports. This is unconnected with several commitments and decision of officials during sporting events. Certain decision of the umpire and referee during the critical period of those with winning at all cost syndrome. The inflammatory statements of those in high esteem may spark problems and rowdiness. Studies have shown that many spectators lack adequate knowledge of rules and regulations of games. Ali and Hamid (2014) were of the views that the failure of these people who are directly or indirectly concerned with sports to appropriately interpret and apply the rules and regulations has been one of the major causes of violence in sports. Anyawun (2011) asserted

that today, winning at all cost is the yardstick people are using for measuring performance as against real hard work, she added that the zeal to attain success at all cost has precipitate the use of undesirable practices which negates the value and attributes of sport. Lawal (2014) also opined that the failure of these people to appropriately interpret and apply the rules and regulations of sport is another major cause of violence in sports. Odeyemi (2011) and Taylor (2002) respectively held the belief that some of the technical factors that is responsible for violence is officiating. Odeyemi (2011) maintained that sport is strewn into good officiating; the higher percentages of it are sustained by athletes and spectators.

In a similar view, he added that if the cognate experience of sport referee or judges is in doubt as a result of technical fault. People tend to assign blame on technical disaster because it is subject to human manipulation. Leonard (2013) revealed that most occurrence of sport crisis emanate from the incompetent and biased officiating, Oyewusi (2011) and Agbanusi (2010) identified bribery and corruption of officials as one of the factor leading to violence. Ukwaiyi (2014) reported that the inducement offered to the officials to buy them over for favour may result to violence more especially where the officiating officials (referees or umpire) has failed to live up to spectators' expectation. Besides this, the apparent detection of black fetish, (charms) in the field of play may spark off violence during sporting context (Wann, Grieve, End, Zapalac, Lanter, Pease, and Wallace, 2010). Odeyemi (2011) noted that in a situation where the performance of the referee or umpire is inadequate to officiate fairly, there is bound to be a problem. He observed that the duty of the match officials should start from the day of arrival at the venue of the match to the day when the sport ends. He also added that any breach to this arrangement may be viewed with seriousness of purpose of the spectators that a deliberate attempt was made by officials to mortgage the purpose and object of their loved team. Saka (2014) claimed that the purpose of any game is to provide enjoyment, satisfaction and fun as a result of good officiating.

Odeyemi (2011) observed that the personality and judgment of officiating official should not be at variance with the high expectation of the spectators. The focus of applying good strategy of control in any sport meet is to douse or prevent unhealthy rivalry environment and discord in emergency situation. In a broad sense attitude and practices of officiating officials must be powerful determinant of good spirit of the game. All these reflect largely in good officiating and other strategies taken to forestall violence in sport.

Akin-Taylor (2002) and Agbanusi (2010) held that media men and women through their loaded ethnocentric and sensational make unrealistic predictions and employed sensational language to describe sports events. Most of the media means of communication are often applied to awaken unrealistic expectations among the sports public. Newspapers, radio and television are inclined to carrying sensational news and over-advertising players, For example captions like "Enyimba of Aba lock horns with Tunisia today, "Leopard of Ankpa crush Lobi bank". Taylor reported that many of the problems in sports are caused by writers who are either irrational or ignorant in their write up to the public. Ukwaiyi (2014) also revealed that Godwin Odiye lost his football career through mass media battering when he mistakenly score a goal against his country. If the reputation of the player has not been destroyed by the mass media men, the magnitude of his mistake would have been minimal. Side attractions are the major happening around the vicinity of sport such activities include musical procession, dancing, beating of drums and entertainment

from band-boys like Boys Brigade who are used to entertain spectators and fans. Lawal (2014) maintained that this will help in reducing tension and prevention of violence when major competitions are held. A little disturbance or protest could interfere with normal form of play of this group. The side attractions could be an acrobatic display of masquerades, dance or musical entertainment. This could help in reducing tension and prevention of violence (Obiene and Riies, 2010).

### **Research Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** Officiating will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State..

**Hypothesis 2:** Security arrangement will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State.

**Hypothesis 3:** Media coverage will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State..

**Hypothesis 4:** Side attractions will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State..

### **Methodology**

The design used for this study was a descriptive survey research design. The population for this study consists of all male and female primary schools pupils, head teachers, sports masters and mistresses of selected schools in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State. Two hundred and four (204) respondents were selected using stratified random sampling technique. One hundred and ten (110) were athletes while ninety four (94) were athletic officials who were sports masters and mistresses. Seven sports were purposively selected on the basis of accessibility. They include Athletics, Table Tennis, Handball, Hockey, Soccer, Volleyball and Cricket. The choice was based on the location and involvement in sports. The instrument for this study was a self developed structured questionnaire. Section A considered the demographic data of the respondents and section B contains the items to test in the hypotheses. Four-point Likert scale format of summated rating with weight allotment of Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), disagree (2 Points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point) was used by researchers and four trained research assistants. Face and content validity of research instrument was done by two experts in Human Kinetic and Health Education Department before it was finally administered on respondents. A pilot study was conducted with one of the primary schools in Ewekoro Local Government Area of Ogun State, which was not part of the sample used in the study and correlation coefficient of ( $r = .80$ ) was obtained from a trial test. Frequency count and percentages was used for demographic data of the respondents while inferential statistics of chi-square was used to test the hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

**Ho1: Officiating will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State.**

**Table 1: Chi-Square contingency table on Officiating will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State**

<b>Calculated value (<math>X^2</math>)</b>	476.349
<b>Degree of freedom</b>	6
<b>Table Value at <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>	12.6

It could be deduced from the chi-square contingency table above that the calculated value ( $X^2 = 476.349$ ) with a degree of freedom of 6 is greater than the table value of 12.6 at 0.05 level of significance. This therefore shows that officiating will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. As a result of this, the null hypothesis which states that officiating will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports is hereby rejected.

**Ho2: Security arrangement will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State**

**Table 2: Chi-Square contingency table on security arrangement will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State**

<b>Calculated value (<math>X^2</math>)</b>	416.154
<b>Degree of freedom</b>	6
<b>Table Value at <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>	12.6

It could be deduced from the chi-square contingency table above that the calculated value ( $X^2 = 416.154$ ) with a degree of freedom of 6 is greater than the table value of 12.6 at 0.05 level of significance. This therefore shows that security arrangement will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. As a result of this, the null hypothesis which states that security arrangement will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports is hereby rejected.



**Ho3: Media coverage will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State**

**Table 3: Chi-Square contingency table on Media coverage will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State**

<b>Calculated value (<math>X^2</math>)</b>	416.154
<b>Degree of freedom</b>	6
<b>Table Value at <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>	12.6

It could be deduced from the chi-square contingency table above that the calculated value ( $X^2 = 54.741$ ) with a degree of freedom of 6 is greater than the table value of 12.6 at 0.05 level of significance. This therefore shows that media coverage will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. As a result of this, the null hypothesis which states that media coverage will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports is hereby rejected.

**Ho4: Side attractions will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State.**

**Table 4: Chi-Square contingency table on side attractions will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports in Ado-Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State**

<b>Calculated value (<math>X^2</math>)</b>	54.741
<b>Degree of freedom</b>	6
<b>Table Value at <math>p &lt; 0.05</math></b>	12.6

It could be deduced from the chi-square contingency table above that the calculated value ( $X^2 = 54.741$ ) with a degree of freedom of 6 is greater than the table value of 12.6 at 0.05 level of significance. This therefore shows that side attractions will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. As a result of this, the null hypothesis which states that side attractions will not be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports is hereby rejected.

**Discussion**

The findings from hypothesis one shows that officiating will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. This finding correlate with White (2012) statement who says officiating is one of the acts of enforcing the rules of the game so that athletes would comply and play in conformity with the rules in order to avoid fracas and stem down the aggressive tendencies inherent in sport participation. Because of the importance of the importance of this role, responsible, matured and honest individuals who are sound in the knowledge of the rules

and regulation of the various games with a level of professional touch are entrusted with the responsibility of officiating to ensure hitch free sport. Jamie (2003) stressed further that officiating is the most difficult jobs in sports, where a referee or an umpire has failed to live up to expectation, or commit slight mistake or error during officiating. The occurrence could aggravate rowdiness and cause violence. However, in most competitive sports, a slight mistake or error from the referee would be misinterpreted as unfair treatment to a team hence in reaction the spectators emotion could spark off violence. The hostility of the spectator due to poor officiating could spark off negative reactions from the spectators and may become a major problem that could surpass control or management. Ali and Hamid, (2014) in their own findings pointed out that for the purposes of security and enjoyment of any game, there should be a well designed safety programme and good officiating.

The findings from hypothesis two showed that security arrangement will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. This finding is in line with the assertion of Akin-Taylor (2002) who opined that a badly organized sports programme is not expected to bring out good result. She noted that before any sport programme can be considered properly organized, it must have direction or a set up plan of arrangement that will take care of grievous activities that are inimical to good values and safety. Jamie (2003) pointed out that movement of different types of people into the venue of sport programmes must be adequately monitored, situations and events of the programme must also be in an agreeable pattern of sport. Aside from this there must be strict compliance with rules and regulations of sport in terms of playing and sitting arrangement. Olajide (2003) also stated that it is important that sport arena should be properly fenced and entry or exit points be properly manned by law enforcement agents.

The result of hypothesis three revealed that effective media coverage will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. This finding is in line with Oberine and Ries (2000) who reported that responsible media reporting and marketing strategies would meet the needs of the target population of spectators. Aside from this it will help in eliminating obstacles to a successful hosting of competition. Comer (2012) also noted that adequate knowledge of a subject determines the accompanying behaviour or attitude of individuals. He affirmed that efficient knowledge and training of the media personnel in managing crises will help a person to transmit required skills and attitude that will eliminate logistic problems that could obstruct smooth conduct of any competition. The findings from hypothesis four showed that side attractions will be a significant weapon in the prevention of violence in sports. This Hypothesis corroborate Fink (2011) who stated that music are form of side attractions that are capable of providing instant treatment where tension and upset are eliminated from the mind of spectators to douse stressful condition that normally ignite worse condition in sport.

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of the findings, it was concluded that sound safety control should always precede athletic functions whenever sport meet is organized. Greater concentration should be accorded all pre-competition events to ensure maximum control of crowd. Measure like campaign against violence should be put in place and appointment of competent officials is quite essential to the success of any sport competitions.



## Recommendations

In view of the findings, the following recommendations are hereby suggested:

1. Sport administrators and other sport organizers should consistently enforce rules and regulations as criteria for crowd control.
2. Managers of competitions should adhere strictly to established seating arrangement and capacity of stadium and gymnasium.
3. The law enforcement agents should be assigned with the responsibilities of handling all security matters and enforcing regulations and discipline of erring spectators.
4. The newsmen should be warned against carrying sensational news and advised on releasing constructive information and positive statements to the public.
5. Sport education should be given prominence in the elementary and secondary schools, good sportsmanship should also be encouraged throughout the school life.

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