





Organizational predators of disability sports participation of secondary school students with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

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Active participation of students with disability in adapted sport is dependent on several organizational predators. The purpose of this study is to examine how organizational predators independently and jointly contribute to disability sport participation among secondary school students with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria. The methodology featured Chain-Referral (snowball) to identify stakeholders, coaches, organizers and teachers involved in organizing disability sport for students with disability and probability sampling technique to choose the schools to be visited. The findings revealed that Strategic planning ($\beta=0.289$, $t=2.816$, $p=0.008$), logistics ($\beta=0.612$, $t=7.103$, $p=0.000$), interest of coaches ($\beta=0.536$, $t=7.795$, $p=0.000$) and knowledge of organizing personnel ($\beta=0.500$, $t=7.836$, $p=0.000$) were independently tested significant on disability sport participation while network capacity ($\beta=0.171$, $t=1.772$, $p=0.085$), funding sources ($\beta=0.082$, $t=1.360$, $p=0.182$) and sport infrastructure ($\beta=0.111$, $t=1.948$, $p=0.059$) were not independently tested significant on disability sport participation. Also, there is a composite joint contribution of strategic planning, network capacity, infrastructure, funding, logistics, interest of coaches, and knowledge of organizing personnel on disability sports participation among secondary school students with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria ($F(7,39)=100.210$, $p=0.00$). The result also generated a coefficient multiple regression of $R=0.977$ and $R^2=0.955$; implying that about 95.5% of variance was accounted for by the independent variable. Strategic planning, logistics, interest of coaches, and knowledge of organizing personnel individually and collectively showed a positive contribution to disability sport participation, hence, there is a need to consider them on the subject of disability sport participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Contribution/Originality: This study focused on grassroot disability sport participation and its organizational predators. Previous studies on disability sport participation have focused on disability sport elites. In contrast, this study specifically focused on secondary school students examining how their participation in disability sport has been independently and jointly influenced by organizational predators.

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of labels by most organizations including sport influences their actions and inactions in addressing, placement, remuneration, promotion, rewarding, presentation and designation of assignments. One of the

commonly used terms to describe individuals whose physical or mental incapacity significantly restricts them from engaging in more activities in life or performing essential bodily processes is "disability" (CDC, 2020). The Center for disease control identified varying challenges ranging from attitudinal, communication, physical, policy, programmatic, social and transportation (CDC, 2020) which unveils via stigmatization, discrimination, and other cultural attitudes. Sport being a microcosm has proven to be a powerful tool in dissolving the varying participatory challenges facing individuals. Active participation in sport irrespective of abilities helps to learn new abilities and improve interpersonal skills. It bridges social barrier, improve time management, develop essential life skills, and impart healthy competitiveness (Sutter, 2023) even to individuals with disabilities.

Participation of individuals with disability in sports has experienced a paradigm shift of being formalized since the 2006 United Nations convention which clearly defines the rights of individuals with special needs in sport, physical activity, and recreation (Le Clair, 2011). Despite this regulation, sport participation rate of individuals with disability is still observed lower compared to their able-bodied counterparts (Finch, 2001). According to Andrew (2014) Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be at the margins of disability sport participation, in spite of rapid assimilation of athletes with disabilities into mainstream sport worldwide. The author added that handicap sport, like the majority of contemporary regulated sports, has spread from the Global North to the Global South and is still doing so. As the practice of disability sport in Sub-Saharan Africa exhibits a unidirectional trend in its integration between impaired and non-disabled athletes, athletes with disabilities are competing more and more against athletes without impairments to gain prominence.

As with other forms of modern sport, Nigeria has remained on the side-line of several obstacles to participation and progression in disability sports, connected to persistent disparities in strategic planning, network capacity, inferior infrastructure, limited funding, logistics, cultural barriers, wealth, accessibility, lack of training and interest of personnel (Babafemi, 2022). In order to make Africa a sustainable continent through sports, member nations like Nigeria must capitalize on the strategies in the revised African Union (AU) agenda 2063 sports policy to drive sustainability, which will then translate to positively affecting the continent (Babafemi, 2022).

Building sports in a way to support the rights of every individual who participate is central to getting people involved without the fear of prejudice and discrimination. There are people with disabilities in every AU member nation and they also deserve to fully participate in sports, with guarantees on the protection of their rights. The United Nations has a legal instrument to support the protection of the rights of persons living with disabilities and the AU's revised sports policy (2022) makes a case for member states to "use sport to promote human rights, safety and inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups".

In Nigeria, discrimination against people with disabilities is institutional, attitudinal, and environmental, as Osuoji (2019) noted. For example, the inaccessibility of transport facilities for the disabled shows that they are excluded in Nigerian society (Bombom, Breuer, & Wicker, 2016). Denying people with disability a chance to be involved in sports because of the non-inclusive nature of sports grounds and structure is a violation of international standards. Many challenges on how people with disability should be involved in sports includes barriers to accessing facilities, training, competitive opportunities, inadequacy in accessing resources and information. According to Spaaij, Magee, and Jeanes (2014) major concerns about inclusion in sports are the experiences people with disabilities have when they gain access and inclusion processes. People living with disabilities' independence of choice of what sports to participate in, and how and whom to participate with is the goal of inclusion in sports (Misener, Bodin, & Quinn, 2018).

Furthermore, there is a notable absence of recognition by governing bodies to incorporate individuals with disabilities into sports initiatives. This is compounded by the scarcity of chances and programs for involvement, training, and competition. Psychological and sociological factors, such as the attitudes of parents, coaches, teachers, and even individuals with disabilities themselves towards disability, further exacerbate the problem. Moreover, the lack of sponsorship and the insufficient knowledge and interest of coaches in developing individuals with special

needs are significant barriers to their involvement in sports (Fuchs & Horak, 2008). This highlights deficiencies in the organizational aptitude and challenges encountered by the disabled sport sector in Nigeria.

Participation cannot be done outside of the organization capacity for the sports and it is imperative to have resources that would not limit these individuals from getting involved in sports (Eime, Harvey, & Charity, 2020). In a study by Johnnie, Emoh, and Oladejo (2021) the authors posit that the stadiums under their review were accessible to the physically challenged, had clear circulation paths, and the physically challenged can navigate with little to no help at all. However, this does not imply that all stadiums and sports grounds are accessible to people living with disabilities. Many stadiums, especially at the community level need massive renovation to make them accessible. As noted by Grandisson, Marcotte, Niquette, and Milot (2019) fostering inclusion through sports can be possible through strategies like ensuring well-structured and functional organization's capacity to influence participation in mainstream sports activities, the establishment of programmes that run on peer support, facilitating programmes that raise awareness of the need for inclusion and developing unified sports.

It is evident that clearly stated policies catering for sports of individuals with special needs is not the only great way in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of reduced inequalities. Sections for the marginalized well spelt out in policies of various forms will not independently achieve desired goals if individuals who will implement the policies do not understand or are limited in knowledge and numbers. Organizational sector of any field is very important in realizing the desired goals of such field; sport inclusive. Inclusion movements and actions have birth development of policies to cater for this group which would be perfect if the organizational predators are catered for especially at the grassroots level. Hence, the study examined the organizational capacities and organizational problems of disability sports participation by secondary school students with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria.

2. MATERIAL & METHODS

Chain-Referral (snowball) was used to identify stakeholders, coaches, organizers and teachers involved in organizing disability sport in schools for individuals with special needs. Probability sampling employed to choose the schools to be visited.

According to data provided by Oyo State Ministry of Education (2023). A self-developed questionnaire was used as the instrument to gather information from the participants. The instrument was divided into sections; It comprises of section A and B. Section A comprises of the demographic data of the participant including age, gender, name of school, years of experience and their positions. Section B focuses on statements regarding their opinion on Organizational capacity and disability sports participation scale (OCDSPS), Organizational Problems and disability sport participation scale (OPDSPS) and their funding source(s). Each item under each scale (DSPS, OCDSPS & OPDSPS) responses were scored on a 4-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Completed copies of the questionnaire were collected, collated, coded, and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics was done using pie charts and bar charts while Inferential statistics of multiple regression was used to test the relative and joint contribution of all the variables.

3. RESULTS

The years of experience, positions, schools and sponsors of the individuals in charge of disability sport are presented in graphical representation of pie charts and bar charts:

Years of experience

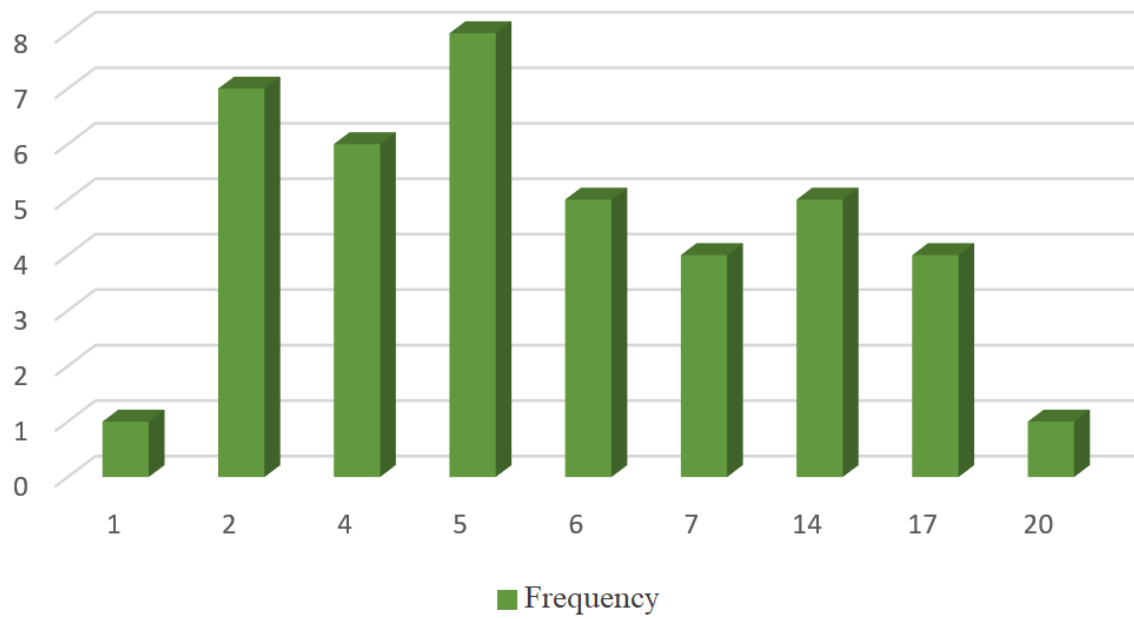


Figure 1. Bar chart showing the years of experience of disability sport organizers in Ibadan special schools.

Figure 1 shows that 8 of the participants has 5 years working experience, 7 has 18 years working experience, 5 has 14 years working experience, 4 has 17 years of work experience, another 4 has 7 years work experience and also other 4 with 4 years working experience. A few (3) of the participants has 23 years of working experience, while 1 has 20 years of working experience, another 1 has been working for 6 years, another 1 with 2 years working experience and the last 1 had close to 1 year work experience as a special educator and member of special sport organizing body in their respective schools.

Positions

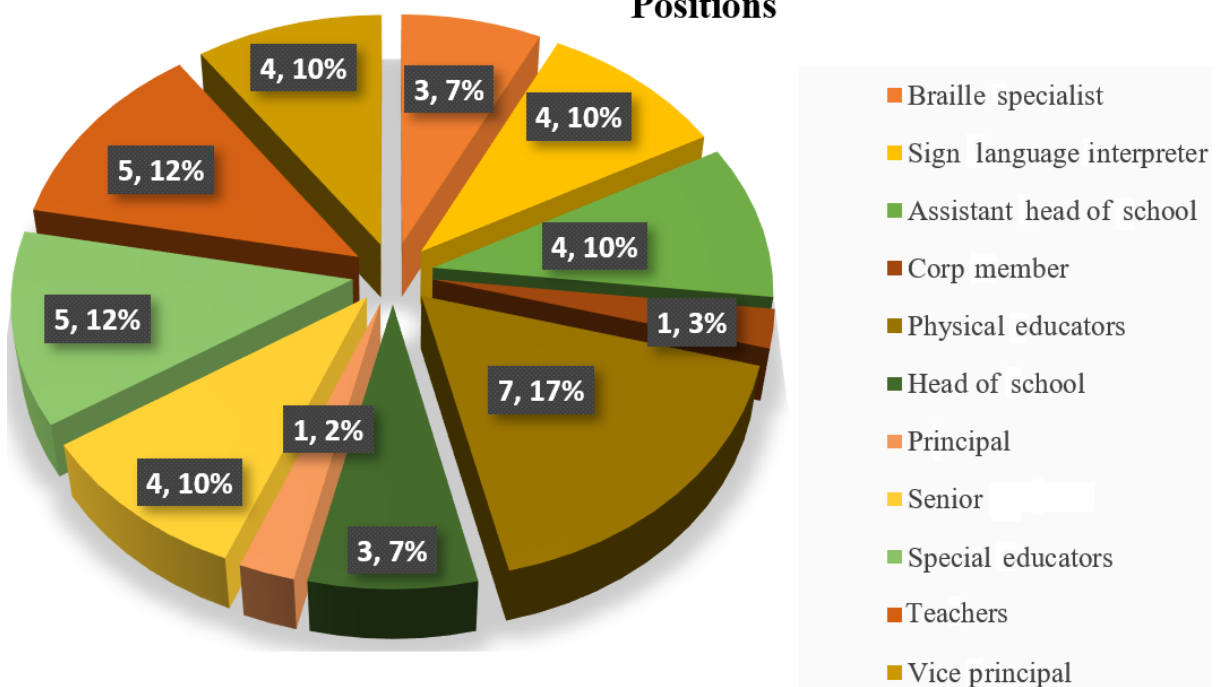


Figure 2. Bar chart showing the various positions occupied by members of the organizing sport committee in Ibadan special schools.

Figure 2 reveals that 7 (16%) of the organizing participants are physical educators, 5 (12%) are teachers and special educators, 4 (10%) are senior teachers, sign language interpreters and assistant head of schools, 3 (7%) are head of schools and braille specialists, 1 (3%) is a principal and the other a Corp member.

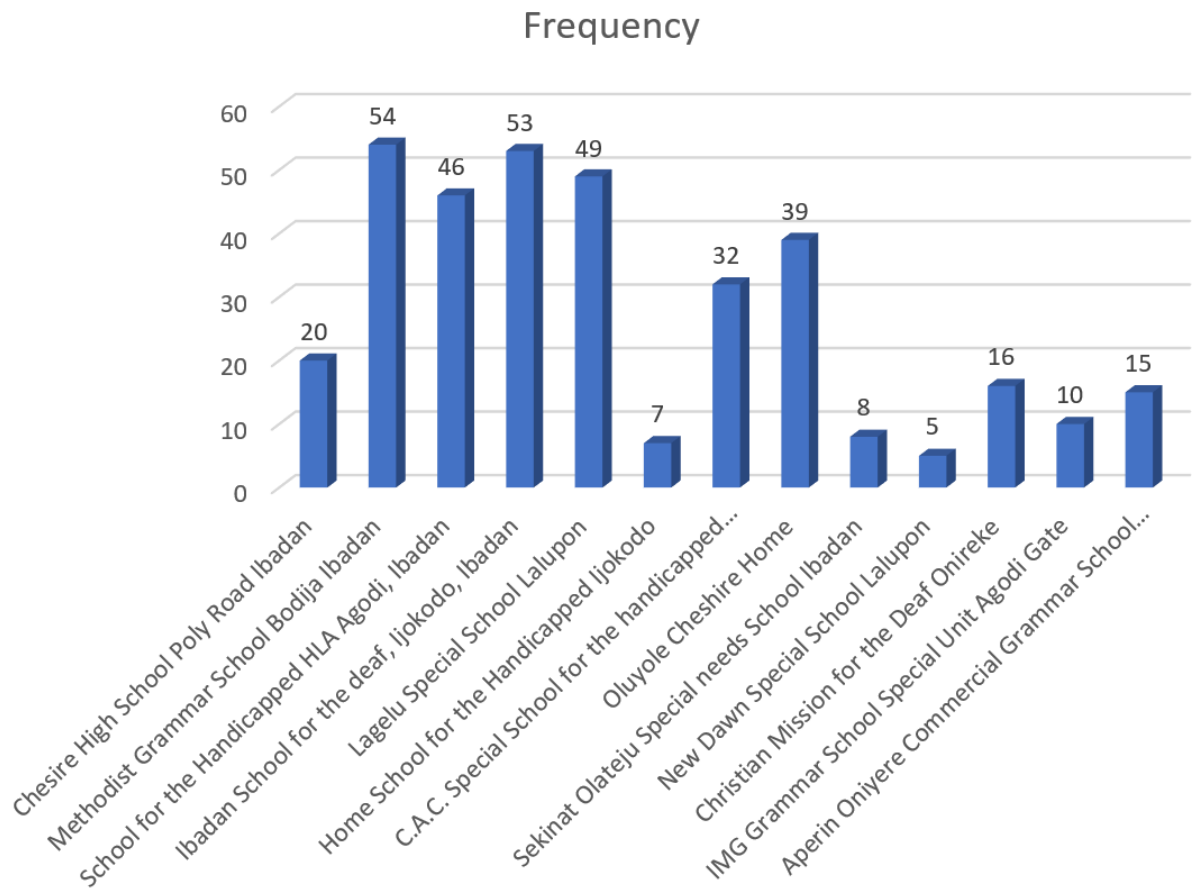


Figure 3. Bar chart showing the school of the participants.

Figure 3 illustrates that 54 (15.25%) of the participants are students of Methodist Grammar School Bodija, Ibadan, 53(14.97%) are students of Ibadan School for the deaf Ijokodo, Ibadan, 49 (13.84%) are students of Lagelu Special School, Lalupon, 46 (12.99%) are students of school for the handicapped Ibadan (HIZBU-LAHI-ALIGALIB) HLA Agodi, 39 (11.02%) attends Oluoyole Chesire Home, 32 (9.04%) are students of Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C) Special school for the handicapped Oniyanrin, 20 (5.65%) are students of Cheshire High School Poly Road Ibadan, 16 (4.52%) students of Christian Mission for the Deaf Onireke, 15 (4.24%) students of Aperin Onitere commercial Grammar School Adesola, 10 (2.82%) students of Ibadan Municipal Government (IMG) Grammar School Special Unit Agodi, Gate, 8 (2.26%) students of Sekinat Olateju Special needs School, 7(1.98%) are students of Home school for the handicapped Ijokodo while the remaining 5 (1.41%) are students of New Dawn Special School, Lalupon.

Sponsors

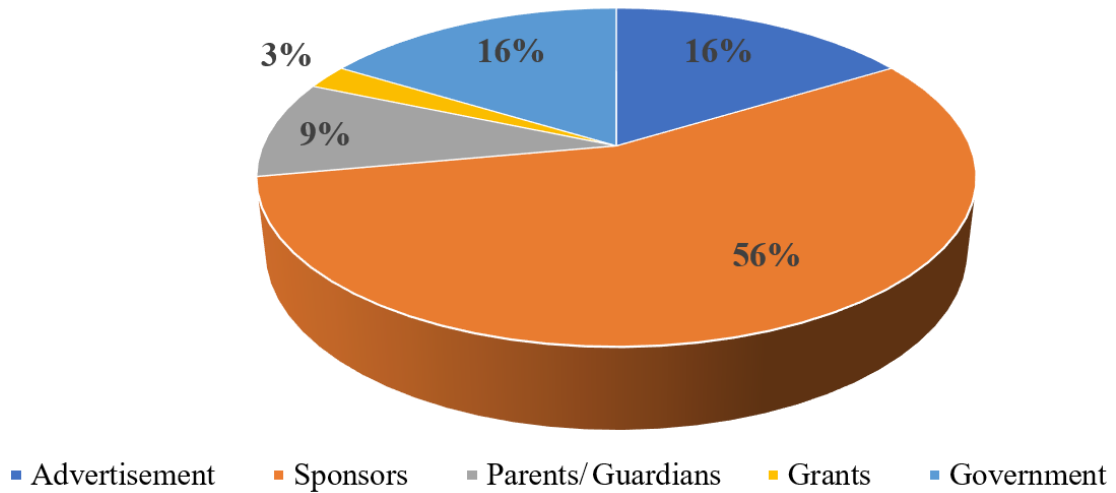


Figure 4. Sports funding sources of special schools in Ibadan.

Figure 4 illustrates that among the indicated funding sources by the participants, majority of the sporting activities is funded by sponsors as it accounted for 56% followed by funds received and expected from the government and advertisement made from several marketing strategies accounting for 16%, then 9% of those received from parents and guardians while Grants accounts for 3% as it is an uncommon source of funds explored by the sport organizers.

The relative contribution of strategic planning, network capacity, interest of coaches, funding sources, logistics sport infrastructure and knowledge of organizing personnel were tested using regression analysis.

Table 1. Regression analysis of relative contribution of organizational capacity on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.	Remark
	B	Std. error	Beta			
(Constant)	2.544	1.456		1.748	0.089	
Strategic planning	0.202	0.072	0.289	2.816	0.008	Sig.
Network capacity	0.212	0.120	0.171	1.772	0.085	Not sig.
Logistics	0.572	0.081	0.612	7.103	0.000	Sig.
Funding sources	0.095	0.070	0.082	1.360	0.182	Not sig.
Sport infrastructure	0.162	0.083	0.111	1.948	0.059	Not sig.
Interest of coaches	0.498	0.064	0.536	7.795	0.000	Sig.
Knowledge of organizing personnel	0.624	0.080	0.500	7.836	0.000	Sig.

Source: Fieldwork 2023.

Table 1 showed strategic planning, network capacity, logistics, funding sources, sport infrastructure, interest of coaches, knowledge of organizing personnel, the unstandardized regression weight (B), the standardized error of estimate (SEB), the standardized coefficient, the t-ratio and the level at which the t-ratio was significant. As indicated in Table 1, Strategic planning ($\beta=0.289$, $t=2.816$, $p=0.008$), logistics ($\beta=0.612$, $t=7.103$, $p=0.000$), interest of coaches ($\beta=0.536$, $t=7.795$, $p=0.000$) and knowledge of organizing personnel ($\beta=0.500$, $t=7.836$, $p=0.000$) are independently tested significant on disability sport participation while network capacity ($\beta=0.171$, $t=1.772$, $p=0.085$), funding sources ($\beta=0.082$, $t=1.360$, $p=0.182$) and sport infrastructure ($\beta=0.111$, $t=1.948$, $p=0.059$) are not independently tested significant on disability sport participation.

Table 2. Regression analysis showing the composite joint contribution of strategic planning, network capacity, infrastructure, funding, logistics, interest of coaches, and knowledge of personnel on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria.

R=0.977						
R²=0.955						
Adj. R²=0.946						
Std. error=0.54924						
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig. (p value)	Remark
Regression	211.606	7	30.229	100.210	0.000	Significant
Residual	9.955	33	0.302			
Total	221.561	40				

Table 2 shows that the composite joint contribution of strategic planning, network capacity, infrastructure, funding, logistics, interest of coaches and knowledge of organizing personnel is tested significant on disability sport participation ($F_{(7,39)}=100.210$, $p=0.00$). The result also generated a coefficient multiple regression of $R=0.977$ and $R^2=0.955$; implying that about 95.5% of variance was accounted for by the independent variable. The joint contribution of strategic planning, network capacity, infrastructure, funding, logistics, interest of coaches, and knowledge of organizing personnel showed significant on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria.

4. DISCUSSION

Funding sources explored by the organizing personnel of disability sport in Ibadan special schools are found to include sponsorships, government funds, advertisement parents & guardians, and occasionally Grants. According to the student participants' opinion, support from schools, parents and sport organizers was viewed to be the most paramount factor that can influence their participation in sport as individuals with special needs. This implies that the all-round motivation from these groups will leave them with no other option than to engage and participate actively in sporting activities. Other factors including ease of access to sport facilities; knowledge of the organizing personnel and the interest of the coaches were also major concern that if well taken care of can spur the interest of students with disability to actively participate in sport.

Organizational problems and organizational capacities variables were also seen to jointly have a significant contribution on disability sport participation. This is in concordance with the view of [Smith, Johnson, Williams, and Davis \(2021\)](#) who purport that the inability of organization to procure all needed equipment for the easy participation of athletes mount a major stumbling block in organization & hosting disability sports. Equipment such as ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms may limits the participation of athletes with disabilities especially when it poses a barrier.

The result showed that there was a significant contribution of strategic planning on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria. This implies that strategic planning has independent relative contribution immensely to disability sport participation. An improved strategic planning by the organizers will in-turn promote disability sport participation. This is in line with the expressed thought of [McHatton, Bradshaw, Gallagher, and Reeves \(2011\)](#) who affirmed that Strategic planning and management are essential for a nonprofit organization to effectively achieve its objective and foster ongoing organizational growth. In other to experience the desired growth in disability sport participation even at the grassroots level including schools of individuals with disability, hence, strategic planning should not be overlooked. Strategic planning outlines how sport organizations including promising grassroots can carefully select and plan what to do and how best to do it. It as well provides the rudimental guidance and justification for deciding on an organization's emphasis, aim and objectives.

Network capacity was found not be significantly contribute relatively to disability sport participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan. This implies that Network capacity alone would not independently

contribute to disability sport participation in schools of individuals with special needs. The ability of the organizing personnel to link up with other stakeholders does is not sufficient as an independent factor to promote disability sport participation. However, it's joint contribution with other variables was found to be significant. Implying that though, independently, it is not sufficient to influence disability sport participation in itself, its somehow contribute jointly with other variables to promote disability sport participation. This justifies why [Wicker, Hallmann, and Breuer \(2013\)](#) believes that nonprofit sport organizations often consider relationship and network capacity to be among their most valuable assets.

There was a significant contribution of logistics on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria. Implying that logistics well put in place will significantly contribute to disability sport participation in schools of individuals with special needs. The implication of the result infers that the more transportation, sport goods, supplies and equipment, welfare, facility maintenance are put into consideration, the more the level of disability sport participation. Little wonder [Christopher \(2016\)](#) emphasized that since logistics provides vital advantages for businesses (sport organization), logistics management should be grown in significance. [Herold, Breitbarth, Schulenkorf, and Kummer \(2019\)](#) divided the subject of sport logistics into four main pillars: venue logistics management, fan/spectator logistics management, equipment logistics management, and athlete logistics management. This division represents a first attempt at systematizing the discipline. Hence, to derive the desired system of disability sport participation, equipment logistic and athletic logistics needs to be highly catered for to motivate the subject.

Sport infrastructure has no significant relative contribution on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan Nigeria. Sport infrastructure and its features though were seen as major factors highlighted by the students as a contributory participatory factor in disability sport participation, it was found statistically not relatively a strong factor that independently contribute to disability sport participation in schools of individuals with special needs. By providing sufficient sport infrastructure, the community can help to promote involvement in sports, claimed ([Wicker et al., 2013](#)). Given that a key barrier to sport participation in their study was found to be a lack of sport facilities, it is imperative that the sport facilities be located close by. As a result, it is critical to understand the quantity and variety of sporting facilities that are proximate to the individuals with disability. It is crucial to measure the real availability of sports facilities objectively because individuals with disability subjective perceptions of their availability frequently diverge from their actual availability (they may believe that there are no facilities accessible while in fact there are) ([Wicker et al., 2013](#)).

Also, from the result there was clearly evident that funding sources and its availability does not sufficiently & independently contribute to disability sport participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan Nigeria. This could be due to the fact that available funds could be diverted to other projects as considered "priority" by the organizing body or superior authority. Other reasons include many of the sponsors eventually redeem their pledge as promise at a later time-line from the schedule of the school competition. In addition, the present unstable economy may be a factor where the initial value solicited for could not cover a meaningful portion of the budget resulting from surge in prices. This is justified by the findings of [Coates, Wicker, Feiler, and Breuer \(2014\)](#) who discovered that German sport clubs that depended on external sponsorship financing, specifically corporate support, were far more prone to experiencing recurrent financial and volunteer issues. Conversely, they discovered that organizations depending on external income from public subsidies experienced an uptick in volunteer issues, but did not indicate any rise in financial difficulties. Relying heavily on donations from individuals might make an organization more financially vulnerable. However, some researchers have discovered notable connections between enhanced financial capability and the concentration of revenue ([Chikoto & Neely, 2014](#)).

There was a significant contribution of interest of coaches on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria. Coaches with interest in disability sport are very rare compared to those with the able bodied. Every coach is likely to have the tendency of investing in what the trend is and are very

unlikely to explore the new, inconsistent peculiar athlete. This may be tasking and demands dedication, however, at the slightest interest shown in training individuals with special needs, they reciprocate with keen interest to participate in disability sport as evident in the result. In an effort to become better coaches, many take inspiration from their own athletic experiences as well as past coaching errors. A coach's prior experiences, preparation and historical achievement might lead to a coach's sense of self efficacy. In some circumstances, coaches' decisions are influenced by their past experiences.

A significant contribution of knowledge of organizing personnel exist on disability sports participation in schools of individuals with special needs in Ibadan, Nigeria. Knowledge of the organizing personnel regarding the type of sport to expose individuals with disability to, how to modify the rules and existing facility, what logistics to cater for, what category of student athletes to combine etc. This knowledge will affect any planning and execution of designated sport activities for individuals with special needs. This correlates with the study of Misener et al. (2018) who emphasize the need for social relational model of disability in organizing disability sport to give room to comprehend the impacts of impairment in a personal setting while still acknowledging the strengths of medical and social models.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that strategic planning, logistics, interest of coaches and knowledge of organizing personnel are independent and relative contributory variables to disability sport participation. Network capacity, funding sources and sport infrastructure are not independently sufficient variables that contributes to disability sport participation. In as much some variables are not independently contributory variables to disability sport participation, there is a composite joint contribution of all the independent variables to disability sport participation.

Lists of Abbreviations:

AU- African Union.

CAC- Christ Apostolic Church.

IMG- Ibadan Municipal Government.

HLA- HIZBU-LAHI-ALIGALIB.

SDG- Sustainable Development Goals.

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