

# ORGANISATIONAL PATTERN AMONG SPORTS MANAGERS IN EBONYI STATE

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## **Abstract**

The study focused on organisational pattern adopted by sports managers in Ebonyi State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study was anchored on system theory. The population and sample size of the study was 141 sports managers from Ebonyi State ministry of youths and sports. Instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The result from the study revealed there is systematic pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State. It was also indicated that all the constituent part of the organisation are functional. The result from the study also revealed that there is Geographical pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State. Based on this, the study recommended there is need for sports managers to improve on their skills for sports management in the state, cooperate bodies should join the Government of Ebonyi State in enhancing sports development in Nigeria and there is need for sports improvement through the employment of sports professionals in Ebonyi State

**Keywords:** *sports, sports managers, organization pattern*

## **Introduction**

Sport is a human activity involving physical exertion and skill as the primary focus of the activity, with elements of competition or social participation. According to Azubuike (2018), sports refers to activities involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others. Australian Sports Commission (ASC, 2019) opined that sports is a human activity capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and/or physical skill, which, by its nature and organization, is competitive and is generally accepted as being a sport. Sports involves physical exertion and skill that is governed by a set of rules or customs and often undertaken competitively. Sports is a mirror of the society; games provide a

touch stone for understanding how people live, work, think and play as well as serving as barometer of a nation's progress and civilization. It is understood that sports is one of the social services that nations of the world provide for their citizens.

The importance of sports can never be overstressed. Sports promote peace and understanding of unity and integrity among different nations. Sports break all the barriers of discrimination based on colour, caste, creed, and religion (Ogbonnaya, 2015). Sports provide better social interaction among people and fills them with a feeling of brotherhood. It builds love, friendship, and trust among people from different origins but playing the same sports. Sports bring together people from various walks of life and create a mutual understanding and relationship among them. It provides a platform for fostering a spirit of national amalgamation, surpassing the barriers of colour, language, origin, and tradition. In line with this, Afebeh (2020) reported that sport unites people from different parts of the world together, irrespective of their racial, cultural, religious or social economic backgrounds; putting away all other differences and collectively works towards a common goal. During any major sports championship, such as the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, All African Games or Nigerian National Sports Festivals, athletes come from different backgrounds to participate; they are brought to live together in one games village and compete as human on a level playing ground. This is usually the same in competitions relating to national competitions as Nigerians always act in unison in support of the national team or the country's representatives. At this point, it does not matter if the representative is a Christian, Muslim or from any region or state of the country. The common interest is for Nigeria to be victorious.

Sport possesses unique attributes, which has the capacity to bring about the development and the sustainability of peace. As UNOSDP (2019) notes, people all over the world, are naturally attracted to sports than any other activity. This is due to the fact that when sport takes place on a correct note, it is assumed to be a fun and entertaining experience for everyone. Moreover, sport is naturally intended to showcase as well as develop an individual's strengths. Thus, sports empower the individual person, as well as promote a positive outlook for the future, which is an essential component to achieving development (United Nations, 2013). Mandela (2006) alluded to this view when he noted that, "sports have the capacity to change the world." It is a very powerful weapon for positive change; it has the capacity to heal generational acrimony or bitterness among a people. For sports to achieve the above, there is need for effective organisation for organising it.

Organization is a group of people who work together, like a neighborhood association, a charity, a union, or a corporation working to actualise a common goal. Ogbu (2016) An organisation is an entity such as a company, an institution, or an association, comprising of one or more people and having a particular purpose. Every organisation has a pattern. Pattern refer those arrangements or systems of internal relationship which give any culture its coherence or plan, and keep it from being a mere accumulation of random bits. In sporting organisations, patterns are usually inspired by analysing multiple professionals and finding common structures in their social networks.

Organisational pattern refers to structures of relationship, usually in a professional organization, that help the organization achieve its goals (Ezeocha, 2011). Organisational patterns include; hierarchical pattern, matrix, functional, product, geographical, and customer patterns. A hierarchical organizational structure contains a direct chain of command from the top of the organization to the bottom. Senior management makes all critical decisions, which are then

passed down through subsidiary levels of management. According to Elebe (2009) a hierarchical is an organizational structure where every entity in the organization, except one, is subordinate to a single other entity. This arrangement is a form of a hierarchy. In an organization, the hierarchy usually consists of a singular/group of power at the top with subsequent levels of power beneath them. This is the dominant mode of organization among large organizations; most corporations, governments, and organized religions are hierarchical organizations with different levels of management, power or authority.

Matrix pattern refers is a company structure in which the reporting relationships are set up as a grid, or matrix, rather than in the traditional hierarchy. According to Ogbonnaya (2014) Matrix management is an organizational structure in which some individuals report to more than one supervisor or leader, relationships described as solid line or dotted line reporting. More broadly, it may also describe the management of cross-functional, cross-business groups and other work models that do not maintain strict vertical business units or silos grouped by function and geography. In other words, employees have dual reporting relationships - generally to both a functional manager and a product manager.

Functional pattern is a structure used to organize workers. They are grouped based on their specific skills and knowledge. According to Julie and Thomson (2018) a functional structure is one of the most common organizational structure in which the organization groups employees according to a specialized or similar set of roles or tasks. While functional structures operate well in stable environments where business strategies are less inclined to changes or dynamism, the level of bureaucracy makes it difficult for organizations to respond to changes in the market quickly. It vertically structures each department with roles from president to finance and sales departments, to customer service, to employees assigned to one product or service.

Product organisational pattern is a framework in which an organisation outlines the different responsibilities to individuals in their organisation. Collins (2015), defined **product** organisational pattern as a framework in which a business is organised in separate divisions or departments, each focusing on a different sports or service and functioning as an individual unit within the organisation. A product-based organizational structure separates the company by-products, activities, projects or geography. This allows a company to have a particular focus on specific items in its business operations.

Furthermore, geographical pattern is an organisational structure where a given organisation's hierarchy is divided on the basis of geographic location in which it operates, which is headed by a centralised head office. Ebonyi State is organised based on geopolitical zones and headed by the state commissioner of sports. In this type of pattern, all kinds of department serve distinct needs of various different groups within and outside the state. Geographic organisation helps to understand local sports needs which change according to geographic locations. Also, following geographical organisation structure can solve the logistic issues faced by the organisation as dedicated teams are allotted as per geographical divisions within the organisation.

There is a relationship between organisational pattern adopted by the organisational managers and organisational performance. For sports organisations to effectively actualise its goal, there is need for effective organisational pattern for effective sports management. Sport management involves any combination of skills related to planning, organizing, directing, controlling, budgeting, leading, and evaluating within the context of an organization or department whose primary product or service is related to sport or physical activity (DeSensi, Kelley, Blanton and Beitel, 2013). All these are dependent on the organisational pattern.

Despite the need for adoption of effective organisational pattern for sports management and sports development in Ebonyi state, it has been observed that there is a slow pace of sports development in the state which might be attributed to poor organisational pattern. According to Edeh and Eze (2019) when an organisation adopts a democratic pattern or systemic pattern, it will engender growth. This is because it will encourage team spirit. In Ebonyi state ministry of youths and sports, the pattern adopted by sports manager is yet unknown. It is based on this that the study examines organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State

### **Statement of the Problem**

Creating teamwork among athletes, coaches, managers and organizations, are various areas leaders should be able to do well. This is because effective leadership is very crucial to sports development. Sports managers must be leaders, motivators, and organizers. They should be able to inspire people to work together to reach shared goals and experience success as a team. The pattern to be adopted for this should include systematic pattern, hierarchical pattern, functional matrix, geographical and relational pattern. This should be the bane for effective sports development.

Despite all these, in Ebonyi State Ministry of Youths and Sports, it appears that managers and coaches do not adopt these patterns for sports development. Failure in adoption of effective these patterns for sports development in the state may lead to brain drain of athletes, talent migration, underutilisation of the few sports equipment and facilities in the state and increment in unemployment in the state. Thus, this study examine organisational pattern in sports management in Ebonyi State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to find out organisational pattern adopted by sports managers in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study seeks to find out;

1. Systematic pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State
2. Functional pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State
3. Geographical pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of any human endeavour is measured by its relevance in solving human problems. It is expected that the findings would be of great benefit to the ministry of Youths and Sports, sports organisations, sports personnel, athletes and to the world of academics in Ebonyi State and in Nigeria at large

The result of the study would help the ministry of Youths and Sport to understand the importance of effective leadership in sports development in the State. It may enable them to know the implications of poor sports development in the youths and how it could lead to brain drain in sports. The results of the study may also help the sports administrators strategize means of improving their managerial skills for sports development in the state

Sports organisations would benefit from the result of the study especially in the areas of leadership skills. Findings in the organisational pattern would enable sports organisation to determine the skills required by sports managers to be employed. Sports organisations may make use of the findings to improve their sports in the state. The result from this study would also

enable sports organisations to strategize ways of attracting both local and international investors to enhance sports and economic development in the state.

The findings of this research would be of great benefit to the world of academics. It would help future researchers to know the influence of socio-demographic variables on the possession of organisational pattern among sports managers. The result of the study would add to the stock of literatures on organisational pattern and organisational pattern. The result may also act as a guide for future researchers who may wish to carry out further research in this area of sport management.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study focused on the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State. The study will centres on organisational pattern of sports managers in Ebonyi State based on gender, educational qualification and years of experience. The study covered all the 13 sports units in the 13 local government areas of Ebonyi State as well as the ministry of youths and sports in Abakaliki. The respondents of the study were sports managers and coaches in the Ebonyi State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research question will guide the study

1. What is the systematic pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State
2. What is the functional pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State
3. What is the Geographical pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were specifically tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean response of the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on gender
2. There is no significant difference in the organisational pattern and organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on marital status
3. There is no significant difference in organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on educational qualification
4. There is no significant difference in organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on years of experience

### **Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was employed in this study. The population for this study was 141 comprised of all the sports administrators in the thirteen Local Government Areas and the Ministry of Sports in in Ebonyi. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering the instrument on twenty (20) sports administrators in Delta State who were not part of the real respondents for the study. The Cronbach Alpha co-efficient was employed in estimating the internal consistency of the instrument. The overall reliability coefficient was  $r = 0.96$ . This was because according to Ogbazi and Okpala (2015), if the correlation coefficient obtained an instrument is up to 0.60 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for the study. Data collected were analysed using using the SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Science) model version **20**.

A criterion mean of **2.50** was set for decision making. A mean from **2.50** and above was adjudged as agree on the question while a mean below **2.50** was adjudged disagree as the decision rule. T- test was used to test the hypotheses for the study. Hypotheses test below **0.05** was adjudged significant while any result above **0.05** was adjudged not significance

**Research Question** What is the systematic pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State?

**Table 1: Mean rating of the systematic pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State**

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
1	Junior workers are subordinate to the senior workers	3.1	0.6	Agreed
		6	4	
2	Permanent secretaries attend to letters brought to the Ministry of Youths and Sports	3.4	0.6	Agreed
		7	1	
3	There is a cordial relationship among all the departments in the ministry of sports	3.3	0.8	Agreed
		0	0	
4	Each sports manager has a role to play in the sport councils	3.4	0.4	Agreed
		3	9	
5	Sports managers of different department often sit together to plan on how to organise training of athletes	3.1	0.6	Agreed
		7	5	
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.4</b>	
		<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	

Table 1 showed the mean rating of systematic pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State. The result from the table showed that items 1-5 were with the mean rating above 2.50 the criterion for acceptance. The table also had the grand mean of 3.30 to indicate that sports management work systematically.

Research question 2: What is the functional pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State

**Table of 2: mean rating functional pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State**

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
6	Coaches train players for improved sports performance	3.0	0.7	Agreed
		5	2	
7	Sports managers motivate coaches and athletes for improved sports performance	3.0	0.7	Agreed
		7	2	
8	Sports administrators make plans for provision fund for sports programmes	3.1	0.6	
		2	7	Agreed
9	Sports administrators often design ways of pairing athletes	2.7	0.57	Agreed
		6		
10	Fitness trainers assess athletes often improvise sports equipment	2.8	0.7	Agreed
		5	4	
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>0.6</b>	

Table 2 showed the mean rating functional pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State. Result from the table showed that items 6-10 were with the mean rating of 3.05, 3.07, 3.12, 2.76 and 2.85 respectively which were above 2.50 the criterion for acceptance. The table also had the grand mean of 2.97 which is an indication that each individuals in the Ebonyi State sports council has a function to do.

Research question 3: What is the Geographical pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State?

**Table 3: mean rating Geographical pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State**

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
11	Some sports managers in Ebonyi south senatorial zone are always punctual to their duties	3.6 4	0.48	Agreed
12	Most of sports managers in Ebonyi North senatorial zone do not spend much time in training athletes	3.0 7	0.49	Agreed
13	HODs of sports councils are equitably distributed based on senatorial zone for sports development	2.6 7	0.96	Agreed
14	Sports fitness trainers are selected from different geopolitical zones of the state for athletes' development	3.5 3	0.50	Agreed
15	Sports events are usually organised based on the weather condition in all the three geopolitical zones	3.4 6	0.65	Agreed
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.2</b> <b>7</b>	<b>0.60</b>	

Table 3 showed the mean scores of Geographical pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State. The result from the table revealed that items 11-15 were with the mean score scores above 2.50 the criterion for acceptance. This means that the respondents agreed that geographical areas influence sports managers pattern of administration.

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean response of the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on gender

**Table 4: Summary of t-test in the Gender organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State**

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Decision
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Organisational pattern	Female	55	3.0218	.29420	3.449	0.001	S
	Male	85	3.2682	.47364			

S = Significant, NS = Not significant

Data in Table 4 show that there is significant difference in the perception of male and female respondents on organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State ( $t = 3.449$ ,  $p > 0.001$ ). The table showed no significant result, therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between male and female responses on organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State was not rejected

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on marital status

**Table 5: Summary of ANOVA in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on marital status.**

Variables	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Decision
Organisational pattern	Between Groups	4.711	2	2.356	15.491	.000	S
	Within Groups	20.834	137	.152			
	Total	25.546	139				

Data in Table 5 show that there is significant difference in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on marital status based on marital status in relation to organisational pattern ( $F = 15.491$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The table showed a significant result. Therefore, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference in organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on marital status was not accepted.

### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on educational qualification

**Table 6: Summary of ANOVA in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on educational qualification**

Variables	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Decision
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Organisational pattern	Between Groups	9.458	3	3.153	26.652	.000	S
	Within Groups	16.088	136	.118			
	Total	25.546	139				

S = Significant, NS = Not significant

Table 6 showed the differences in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on Educational qualification ( $f = 26.652, p > 0.05$ ). The table showed that there is a significant difference in organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on educational qualification. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is significant difference in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on Educational qualification was not accepted.

### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on years of experience

**Table 7: Summary of ANOVA in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on years of experience**

Variables	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Decision
Organisational pattern	Between Groups	16.764	3	5.588	14.528	.000	S
	Within Groups	52.312	136	.385			
	Total	69.076	139				

S = Significant, NS = Not significant

Table 7 showed the differences in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on Educational qualification ( $f = 14.528, p > 0.05$ ). The table showed that there is a significant difference in organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on years of experience. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is significant difference in the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State based on years of experience was not accepted.

### Summary of Major Findings

The findings of the study on the organisational pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State are summarized below:

1. There is systematic pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State
2. There is functional pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State
3. There is Geographical pattern among sports managers in Ebonyi State

## **Conclusions**

Organisation pattern entails the coordination of activities and actions that enables an organisation to work effectively it can also be seen as those arrangements or systems of internal relationship which give to any organisational culture its coherence or plan, and keep it from being a mere accumulation of random bits. They are therefore of primary importance in ensuring the smooth running of the sports organisations especially in Ebonyi State. Sports managers and administrators who are able to adopt effective organisational pattern would manage, promote and motivate athletes to optimal performance. Most sports managers failed to consider the needs of their players for sports development.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

1. There is need for sports managers to improve on their skills for sports management in the state
2. Cooperate bodies should join the Government of Ebonyi State in enhancing sports development in Nigeria.
3. There is need for sports improvement through the employment of sports professionals in Ebonyi State
4. Government of Ebonyi State should make adequate plans for adequate training and retraining of sports managers in the state for sports development

## **5.6 Suggestions for further studies**

The following studies are suggested:

1. Importance of functional pattern in improving sports management for sports development in Ebonyi State
2. Impact of conceptual skills among sports managers for sports development in Ebonyi State

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