



The Current Practices and Challenges of Ethiopian National Team Sprinters

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the current practices and challenges of the Ethiopian National team of Sprinters. The study was employed in descriptive survey research method. The subjects of this study were 4 coaches, 31 sprinters, and 6 Ethiopian Athletics Federation Officers. The non probability sampling method was employed to select the type of event. The data was collected through questionnaire and interviews methods. The data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods by describing statements and frequency counts and percentages. For the interview questions, it was described in qualitative explanation. The findings indicated that, there were lack of facilities and equipment available and used in the National team and it was also a limited number of coaches in the National squad. The relationships of athletes and coaches were good. Finally, the researcher recommended and appealed that the Ethiopian Athletics Federation should increase the number of coaches and the concerned body should fulfill the facilities and equipment for further development of coaching in the National team.

Keywords: Athletes, Coach, National Team, Interview, Questionnaire.

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Introduction

Athletics is a sport comprising Various Competitive athletic contests on the activities. Athletics broadly classifies into two categories track and field events. (Johnken Doheraty 4th ed.(1985). Athletics became more diverse during the middle Ages when the son of Noblemen were trained in running, jumping and there were often athletics contest among rival nobility. In the 19th century the modern events that were familiar in athletics , today began to emerge, initially as part of official physical education program in schools. The first modern Olympic Games took place in 1896 and athletics were part of the games with the competition being divided in to track and field event.

In 1928 further progressions were made when women were allowed to take part in athletics competitions for the first time. International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) was established in 1912 which develop a number of International standards and rules. Ethiopia participated in modern Olympic game at Melbourne during in 1956 in athletics and cycling. It was the first time to Ethiopia to join the Olympics

history and was a spring board for next Olympics for the country.

Methods

Questionnaire and Interview methods were used to collect data based on their appropriateness. The following subjects were selected using non probable technique. The study was conducted on the Ethiopian National sprint team which contains (Male 17, female 14, 6 officials, and 4 sprint coaches (3 male,1 female). Descriptive research method was used in the study since the aim of the research was up to describing fact and telling on existing condition of the issue under discussion in practices and challenges of sprinters Ethiopian National team.

Analysis and Interpretation of the data

The information obtained or collected from primary, secondary sources, interviews were coded and responses from the questionnaires were tabulated and analyzed using percentage. The questionnaires were distributed to 33 sprinters, 4 coaches of the Ethiopian National team and 6 for the Ethiopian Athletics Federation Officers.

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Table 1. Response of Athletes' Motivation

No	Item	Respondent Athletes	
		No	%
1	How did you decide to join the short distance event?		
	a. by school teachers influence	16	51.61
	b. with my own interest	11	35.48
	c. by my family influence	-	-
	d. by seeing famous athletes	4	12.90
	Total	31	100
2	Do you have got any benefit after you became the member of the national team?		
	Yes	30	96.77
	No	1	3.22
	Total	31	100
3	If you say "yes" in the above QNo"6" what are the advantages?		
	Shoes, spikes, shorts	24	80
	Gymnasium, track	6	20
	Total	30	100
4	How do you evaluate the follow up of the athletics federation to the athletes?		
	Very high	-	-
	High	5	16.12
	Low	22	70.96
	Noting	4	12.90
	Total	31	100
5	How do you rate the allowance you get during the training ?		
	Enough	1	3.22
	More than enough	-	-
	Not enough	30	96.77
	Total	31	100
6	To what extent the moral you get from your coach?		
	More than enough	2	6.45
	Enough	26	83.87
	Not enough	3	9.67
	Total	31	100

As Indicated in the above Table 1, beyond fifty percent that is 16[51.61%] athletes joined the sprinting by their school teachers influence, 11[35.48%] athletes joined with their own interest and the least percent which is 4[12.90%] athletes have got joined by seeing famous athletes. In item 2 almost all i.e 30[96.77%] athletes replied that they have got benefits after they became the member of the Ethiopian National sprinting squad. But 1[3.22%] respondent he/she didn't get any benefit. In item 3 in the above most of the athletes 24[80%] responded they got advantages of sports kit 6[20%] athletes replied that they got the advantage of gymnasium and track. The other item which is item 4 indicated 22[70.96%] responded the follow up of the athletics federation is low. 5[16.12%] athletes indicated high and 4[12.90%] athletes indicated there is nothing

follow up.30[96.77%] athletes in item 5 responded that the allowance was not sufficient during training but 1[3.22%] athlete replied he/she got enough allowances. In item 6 shown 26[83.87%] athletes responded that they got enough moral support from their coach, 2[6.45%] athletes indicated the moral supports were more than enough and 3[9.67%] respondents responded that they didn't get enough moral support. Generally from the above items most athletes joined the sprinting event by their school teachers according to the data. Even though there is good support for the athletes in the National team, still there are few problems. so, gradually the problems have to be minimized. According to the data which is gathered from the athletes indicated the follow up of Athletics Federation is low.

Table 2. Response on Athlete's Training

No	Item	Respondents	
		Athletes	
		No	%
1	How many days you involve in training per week?	-	-
	a. 3 days	-	-
	b . 4 days	-	-
	c.. 5 days	-	-
	d. 6 days	31	100
	Total	31	100
	How do you evaluate doing practice on the track?		
	High	26	83.87
	Very high	2	6.45
	low	3	9.67
	not good	-	-
	Total	31	100
2	How do you evaluate your relation with your friends and coaches?		
	High	3	9.67
	Moderate	26	83.87
	Low	2	6.45
	Total	31	100
3	How do you evaluate the material you get from the athletics federation?		
	Enough	1	3.22
	More than enough	-	-
	Not enough	30	96.77
	Total	31	100

As shown in the above table 2, all the athletes i.e 31[100%] involved in the training for 6 days in a week. And in item 1, the majority of 26[83.87%] athletes responded that they had an advantage while doing on a track 2 [6.45%] athletes indicated that it has very high advantage and 3[9.67%] athletes replied that it has low advantage. In item 2 26[83.87%] athletes have a moderate relationship with their friends and coaches.

3[9.67%] athletes indicated their relation to their friends and coaches is high and 2[6.45%] athletes have low relation to their friends and coaches. Item 3 indicated 30[96.77%] that the material which they have got from the Athletics Federation were not sufficient. Hence [3.22%] of athlete replied and favored to the federation.

Table 3. Response of Coaches Related to Competence

No	Item	Respondents	
		Coaches	
		No	%
1	Courses that you have in coaching athletics		
	a. first level	-	-
	b .second level	4	100
	c. no course taken	-	-
	d. other	-	-
	Total	4	100
2	Your coaching carrier in the site is		
	Part timer	2	50
	Full timer	2	50
	If any specify	-	-

	Total	4	100
3	Have you taken additional courses (training) in the area of athletics coaching?		
	Yes	4	
	No	-	
	Total	4	
4	If “yes” the training program is / was		
	Work shop	1	25
	Pre-serve	1	25
	In- serve	2	50
	Other	-	-
	Total	4	100
5	How many days do you prepare training program within a week?		
	a.3 days	-	-
	b.4 days	-	-
	c.5 days	-	-
	d.6 days	4	100
	Total	4	100
6	Do you have an assistant coach ?		
	a. Yes	4	
	b. No	-	-
	Total	4	100
7	How do you rate your competence or knowledge of coaching short distance athletes of the team?		
	High	3	75
	Moderate	1	25
	Low	-	-
	Total	4	100

As shown in the table 3, 4[100%] coaches were the holder of second level certificate and 2nd item 2[50%] coaches were working as part time, 2[50%] coaches also worked as full time. In the 3rd item 4[100%] coaches responded that they have taken additional courses .In the 4th item according to the data 1[25%] coach has taken workshop, 1[25%] coach took the additional course during the pre-serve and 2[50%] coaches took the course in the time of in- serve. In the 5th item one can understand easily 4[100%] coaches

responded that they all have the 6 days training program. In the 6th item 4[100%] replied that they have assistant coach and the last item 7th the majority coaches 3[75%] indicated they had high knowledge of coaching and 1[25%] coach responded that he/she had moderate knowledge of coaching. Understanding of above data half of the coaches are working as a part time in the National Team and this creates importance least in giving the right training system.

Table 4. Response of Coaches Related to Athletes' Motivation

No	Item	Respondents	
		Coach	
		No	%
1	In your opinion are short distance athletes interested in their event?		
	a. yes	4	100
	b. no	-	-
	c. I don't know	-	-
	Total	4	100
2	How do you rate the motivation of short distance athletes?		
	Moderate	2	50
	High	2	50
	Low	-	-
	Total	4	100

As shown in the above table 4[100%] coaches responded that their athletes were interested in sprinting event. And in the 2nd item 2[50%] coaches indicated the

motivation of the athletes during the training was moderate and other 2[50%] coaches have shown high motivation of their athletes.

Table 5. Response Related to Facilities and Equipment

No	Item	Respondents	
		Coaches	
		No	%
1	Are there appropriate facilities and equipment for the national team of short distance athletes?		
	a. yes	-	-
	b. no	4	100
	c. I don't know	-	-
	Total	4	100
2	Is there standardized training area or track in your site?		
	Yes	3	75
	no	1	25
	Total	4	100
	If "yes" how do you express its suitability for training and competition?		
3	moderate	3	75
	high	1	25
	not suitable	-	-
	Total	4	100
4	Do athletes get regular financial support or allowance during their stay in the site as trainee?		
	yes	4	100
	no	-	-
	Total	4	100
6	Are there necessary training inputs related with modern and scientific training methods such as manuals, video.... Supplied to your training site regularly?		
	yes	-	-
	no	4	100
	Total	4	100
	Do you have weekly, monthly and yearly training plan?		
	Yes	4	100
	No	-	-
	Total	4	100
7	Do you think that our country has special favorable weather to produce famous athletes?		
	Yes	4	100
	No	-	-
	Total	4	100
8	What are the most training problems and challenges in our national team of short distance?		
	All the coaches 4[100%] mentioned the problems of materials ,educated manpower		
	Do you continuously assess the performance of your short distance athletes?		
	a. yes	4	100
	b. no	-	-
9	Total	4	100
	In the above question No `14` if you say `yes` how do you assess? Write the method you used		
	The 4[100%] coaches responded that they provided event test , which is for 400m athlete 500m ,450m and training specific test within 3-6 weeks		

As Shown in the above table 5 in the 1st item 4[100%] coaches indicated that there was no appropriate facilities and equipment for the sprinters 3[75%] coaches were say standardized training in their site, 1[25%] coaches replying that there was no standardized training in their site ,1[25%] coach replied there was no standardized training tack, 3[75%]coaches indicated that the suitability of the training track was moderate and 1[25%] coach shown the suitability of the track was high. In the 4th item all the 4[100%] coaches indicated that the athletes got the financial support. In the 5th item above 4[100%] coaches indicated that there were not proper training inputs such as manuals, videos and e.t.c. All 4[100%] coaches in the 6th item indicated they have

weekly, monthly, and yearly plan. In the 7th item 4[100%] coaches responded that the country has special favorable weather. In 8th item 4[100%]coaches indicated there was problem of educated manpower and materials. And the last item 9th all 4[100%] coaches responded that provided event test specific were conducted every 3-6 weeks.

From the above table, the scholar reviewed that there were not appropriate facilities and equipment at the National camps. So, the concerned body must provide the materials in order to increase the competency of athletes and of necessary training inputs such as manuals, videos to follow scientific way of training.

Table 6. Response of Ethiopian Athletics Federation Officers

No	Item	Respondents	
		Coaches	
1	Do you believe your short distance coaches have all the required knowledge and experience knowledge and experience to coach your short distance athletes effectively?	No	%
	Yes	4	66.66
	No	2	33.33
	Total	6	100
	What sort of mechanisms have you been implementing to update and enhance your coach's knowledge while they are on their job?		
2	All the respondents 6 (100%) officers replied similar answers which are in-serve, national and international chooses	6	100
	Do you think all the required conducive coaching facilities and equipment are fulfilled for short distance training?		
	Yes	1	16.33
	No	5	83.33
	Total	6	100
3	How do you see the relationship between athlete and coaches?		
	Excellent	-	
	Good	4	66.66
	poor	2	33.33
	Total	6	100
4	How do you see the relationship between coach and coach?		
	Excellent	-	
	Good	5	83.33
	Poor	1	16.33
	Total	6	100
5	Do you believe you have enough numbers of short distance coaches for the number of short distance athlete you have?		
	Yes	2	33.33
	No	4	66.66
	Total	6	

From the above the above Table 6 most of the officers 4 (66.66%) replied that the coaches had the required knowledge and experiences. While 2(33.33%) officers indicated that, the coaches couldn't have the required knowledge and experience. In the 2nd item all 6(100%) officers responded similar answer i.e. in-serve, National and International courses that the mechanism coaches update themselves. In the 3rd item the majority 4

(66.66%) officers indicated "Good" for the relationship between athlete and coach, 2[33.33%] officers shown "poor" to the athlete and coach relationship. The last item in the above table which is item 5th 4(66.66%) officer responded that the number of coaches were not enough for sprinting and 2[33.33%] offices indicated that the number of coaches were enough for the sprinting event.

From the above data the scholar recommended coaching environment ,facilities and the equipment must be provided by the Ethiopian Athletics Federation and the other key issue is relationship between athletes and

coaches, athletes among themselves and coaches too must be strong enough hence it, it has negative impact all over the training system of the events.

Table 7. Response of Ethiopian Athletics Officers

No	Item	Respondents	
		Coaches	
		No	%
1	Did you facilitate the coach to go abroad to get extra knowledge of their profession?		
	A yes	6	100
	B no	-	-
	Total	6	100
2	If `yes` how?		
	The Ethiopian athletics federation has the agreement with IAAF all the officer replied.	6	100
	Do you have a coach from abroad?		
	A yes		
	B no	6	100
	Total	6	100
3	Do you have criteria in nominating coaches?		
	A yes	6	100
	B no	-	-
	Total		
4	Do you have female coaches?		
	A `yes`	6	100
	B no	-	-
	Total	6	100
5	Do athletes have enough competition at home and abroad?		
	A yes	6	100
	B no	-	-
	Total	6	100
6	How is the performance of athletes relating to other Africa countries?		
	A high	6	100
	B average	-	-
	C low	-	-6
	Total	6	100

From the above Table 7 in item 1st 6[100%] of the officers replied they facilitated the coaches to go abroad. In the 2nd item 6[100%] officer indicated “No”. This means they don’t have a coach from abroad. In nominating the coaches the officers 6[100%] responded yes we have criteria. In the 4th item all 6[100%] officers indicated “yes” we have female coach. In the 5th item the respondents replied 6[100%] the athletes have enough competition at home and abroad. The last item 6th all the 6[100%] officers indicated “high” for the performance of athletes relating to other African countries.

Response of the Ethiopian Athletics Federation officers in the interview part.

All the officers gave similar answers it was according to the plan that they had periodic and fixed day supervised and followed the training process. They had criteria such as license of coaching level, educational level and experience of coaching. The main challenges

failed by the officers were: lack of facility, educational background of the athletes, the age of the athletes and the economy status of the athletes.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn

1. The number of coaches in Ethiopian National team of sprinting was not enough. There was shortage of faculties and equipment in the national team of short distance.
2. There was a good relationship among sprinters. There was a good relationship among coaches themselves. The allowance for the athletes which was provided by the Ethiopian athletics federation was not enough. Half [50%] of the coaches were working as part timer.

3. Ethiopian has special favorable weather to produce famous athletes. The coaches of short distance had the required knowledge and experience. Even though the number of female coach was low, there was one female coach in the Ethiopian National team of sprinting.

Recommendations

Depending upon the findings of the study, the following recommendations were drawn.

For effective work, the Ethiopian Athletics Federation should increase the number of coaches. Ethiopian Athletics Federation and other concerned bodies should fulfill facilities and equipment in order to bring good result in short distance competition. Even if the relation between athletes and coaches, among athletes and coaches are good, this is not enough still. So, the concerned body must give workshop by inviting educators for both athletes and coaches. Most of coaches have 2nd level and below. So, Ethiopian Athletics Federation must facilitate for the coaches to the next level to increase their knowledge. The allowance of the short distance athletes is very less. So, the concerned body should make attractive for the athletes and this motivate them to do more.

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