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**“Internal Strategic Framework and Pathway for Developing and Emerging Countries in Sport:
The Creation of a Localize Elite Sportsperson in Barbados”.**

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Introduction

Barbados is the most easterly island of the Caribbean situated just outside of the archipelago of the Lesser Antilles. The country gained its independence in 1966 from the British Empire and is currently the world's youngest republic, having held that status from November 30th, 2021. From an Olympic point of view, two Barbadians have medaled (bronze) at the Olympic Summer Games in athletics. In 1960, Rome, James "Jim" Wedderburn, a member of the British West Indies Team, was part of the quartet in the 4x400 meter relay and in 2000 Sydney, Obadele Thompson in the men's 100 meters. The Barbados Olympic Association (BOA) is the recognized National Olympic Committee (NOC) of Barbados and was formed after the dissolution of the West Indies Federation in 1962. The Barbados Olympic Association, referred to as BOA from now on, competed at the Olympic level since the 1968 Summer Games and has continued to compete at every Summer Olympics since, excluding the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow (Association, About the BOA, 2023). The BOA has a mission as an NOC, to develop, promote and protect the Olympic Movement in Barbados and its vision is to be a leader in transforming lives through sport. The BOA headquarters is located within the Sir Garfield Sobers Sports Complex at the Barbados Olympic Center, Wildey, St. Michael. It has a small staff with nine (9) full time members headed by a General Manager and a Board of Directors which includes thirteen (13) members chaired by a President.

The purpose of this project is to be a catalyst for the introduction and the implementation of a strategic plan in which athletes from the country of Barbados can be locally developed into elite/ world class athletes. Over the years, there has been a decline in the quality of performances from the country at the international level in sports. The majority of elite athletes that represent the country are based in other countries. With this in mind, the local organizations have little to no input in the overall management of the elite athletes who represent the country at the highest level outside of general funding through the BOA. This situation gives the connotation that elite athletes cannot be developed and trained domestically. Therefore, there is a view that sports within the country can be seen to be only recreational. Several countries around the globe have developed their own strategic plan for sport, either through government sporting agencies or national federations, and in many cases, have shared components of them with other territories around the world. However, they are developed in such a way that they are unique to the country

of origin and several aspects associated with the strategic plan may be difficult to implement in another country. It is against this context, that this project will look to address some of the areas of concern for sports' governing bodies in Barbados and how to address them going forward. Subsequently, this project will look to address some of the areas of concern for sports' governing bodies in Barbados and how to address them going forward. Additionally, it will seek to investigate to what extent a strategic framework for sport in the developing and emerging countries would reduce its reliance on developed nations across the world with the enhancement of their elite athletes.

Review of Existing Knowledge

The purpose of this research project is to be a catalyst for the introduction and the implementation of a strategic plan in which athletes from the country of Barbados can be locally developed into elite/ world class athletes. In recent years there has been little success at the Olympic level with the last time an athlete from Barbados medaled being over twenty years ago in Sydney, Australia. Several countries around the globe have developed their own strategic plan for sport, either through government sporting agencies or national federations, and in many cases, have shared components of them with other territories around the world. However, they are developed in such a way that they are unique to the country of origin and several aspects associated with the strategic plan may be difficult to implement in another country. Subsequently, this project will look to address some of the areas of concern for sports' governing bodies in Barbados and how to address them going forward. Additionally, it will seek to investigate to what extent a strategic framework for sport in the developing and emerging countries would reduce its reliance on developed nations across the world with the enhancement of their athletes.

They are several components that are important to the implementation of such a project in Barbados. Numerous countries from around the world have employed sports policies to aid in guiding their sporting development such as New Zealand, Canada, Botswana, and Trinidad and Tobago. The Successful elite sport polices: an international comparison in fifteen nations known as "SPLISS 2.0", has adapted a theoretical model (De Bosscher, 2015) of nine pillars of sports policy factors influencing international success. This model identifies areas such as talent development, athletic career support, coaching provision and development, facilities and

competitions just to name a few. Similarly, the author of this review has highlighted areas that currently appear to be of importance to the development and implementation of this study. Due to the duration of the study not all areas will be explored, therefore allowing for future research and development in the project. This will allow for the project to be used as the foundation for the internal strategic framework in totality and be further advanced and adjusted to meet the contemporary needs of the country in later years.

The culture and the social norms of the environment must be considered while investigating that is required to enhance the quality of local athletes. Parent education, lifestyle awareness and flexible school programmes need to be addressed in order accommodate the increasing demands required of training (Smith, 2012). For an athlete to thrive at the highest level, they needed quality relationships and the support of their family and a coach (Brown, 2017). Sports are generally seen only for recreational purposes and doing the peak of an Olympic cycle, it is used as a tool for the political group in power. In addition, at a government level, it is normal throughout the region for sports to be placed in a department within Education, Youth or Cultural Affairs, while others may have it under Tourism and funded through a governmental structure (Brovo, 2016). It is important for it to be seen as a viable sector that may open other avenues for employment in the region and assist in economic growth.

The management of sport at the national level within the Pan- American region level, indicates different structures. In Haiti, sport is under the Minister of Youth, Sports and Civic Action, which develops Sport in Schools, Sport for All and Sport Games. Jamaica has a Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport. Argentina has a National Sport Secretary at the Ministry of Tourism and Sport. Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay have a National Secretary of Sport at the same level of other ministries. Colombia in 2019, sport has upgraded its status with the creation of the Ministry of Sport. Bolivia, Venezuela and Chile have the same status, with a Ministry of Sports and a National Institute of Sports (Zhang, 2021). As indicated in the examples above, only countries which generate a significant amount of finance through football have standalone Ministry of Sport. In the case of Barbados, sport is under the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Community Empowerment. The National Sports Council (NSC) has been charged with the important task of developing sports in Barbados from the primary level to supporting national athletes (Murrell, 2023).

One of the several reasons potential elite athletes leave the country, is for the ability to participate in the sport they love in conjunction to receiving a university education. One of the major social norms within the country is that participation in sports is linked to school-based competition and in order to do so at the tertiary level the athlete must leave the island or give up on their sporting dreams. Participation in elite-sport and education is stressful and can result in sacrificed educational attainment (Cosh, 2015). Unfortunately, there are no avenues locally to participate in college sports over the age of twenty. For this reason, consultations with the leaders and heads of departments with lead responsibility at three of the island's main tertiary institutions; The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus (UWI), The Barbados Community College (BCC) and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI) to have flexible schedules for those who are committed to representing the country at the highest level in sport. The UWI and BCC both have a faculty or a department of sport, but it is heavily linked to the teaching of sport, physical education and related fields but not athletic departments. In many cases, those athletes who go to these institutions find it difficult to meet the training requirements to compete at the national or regional level along with the heavy schedules associated with completing their studies. Students have indicated that lack of time, overload of study work and sports being a lower priority as reasons for not participating at the higher education level (Abou Elmagd, 2018).

The vision of the Barbados Olympic Association (BOA), transforming lives through sport (Association, 2023), holds significant importance in the country. Currently, Barbados has a high rate of noncommunicable diseases, and it is estimated that in 2030, this group of diseases will be responsible for 86.3% of deaths on the island (PAHO, 2012). One quarter of all adults in Barbados have a non-communicable disease (e.g., cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancers), with rates projected to be one in three by 2025, another one quarter are at risk of developing a non-communicable disease (Springer, 2020). With this in mind, healthy lifestyles are important and in order to change this path within the country, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education must work in collaboration with all sporting agencies in order to play a significant role in allowing sports to aid in reducing the above rates and projections. As it relates to sporting performances at the elite level, it is essential that athletes' nutrition from a young age must be one that can give

the body the resources required to perform at a high level. This issue can also be linked to the aforementioned heading of culture and its impact on global sporting performances.

Project

Why is there is need for the project?

- 1) It will allow for ownership and direction of an elite athlete program which will foster the establishment of a full sporting sector in the country.
- 2) It minimizes the reliance on the global north and their sporting associations linked to tertiary education.
- 3) Changes the focus from collegiate representation to national representation.
- 4) Long term athlete development may not be fully implemented overseas.
- 5) It may have a negative impact on national development and sports.
- 6) It may not align with the norms and standards associated with the country and may affect national pride.

The objective of the project

This project will seek to investigate to what extent a strategic framework for sport in developing and emerging countries, such as Barbados, would reduce its reliance on developed nations across the world and to be a catalyst of the introduction of a national program for elite athletes. The research would be guided and extended by the following five (5) questions.

- 1) What can the NOC and its federations do to accommodate a smooth transition from amateur to elite athletes?
- 2) What role can be played, and changes implemented to the local educational system to accommodate student-athletes?
- 3) What impact will an established and successful local sports sector have on the community?
- 4) What are the components required for the development of a localized elite athlete?
- 5) What are the strategies involved in maintaining the performance of the elite athlete and the management at the world class level?

Participants

The study utilized a combination of individuals associated with the sports industry in Barbados along with stakeholders of several organizations internationally. These participants included athletes, parents, coaches, managers, board members, current and former (NOC) members, heads of sporting organizations, heads of educational organizations and departments. In order to have a wholistic view of what is required in developing a localized elite sportsperson, it was necessary to include these stakeholders in the construction of a Barbados modal in developing a strategic plan. These individuals had a wealth of knowledge, ideas and experiences which would add in the structure and the components essential to the strategic framework.

There were no participants under the age of eighteen (18).

For the semi- structured interviews, nine interviewees were selected and placed in three areas.

- 1) Administrators (Policy)
- 2) Educators
- 3) Administrators (Operations)

Out of the initial group, five interviewees were selected and confirmed for the interview process with the duration of the interview between thirty (30) to forty- five (45) minutes.

The second tool of the methodology was that of focus groups. This tool was used to garner information from the athletes, their parents and coaches in an environment where they can share their ideas on what was required to build a programme for the local elite athlete in Barbados. In addition, the tool was used to allow them to expand on questions and ideas from not only the moderator but from the group itself. During the research, three focus groups meet separately with the moderator. In group one, ten (10) athletes were selected from those who are based in Barbados and that have represented the country regionally or internationally in 2023-2024. These included athletes from track and field, aquatics and netball.

Group two, comprised of the parents of the aforementioned athletes, while group three contained within it seven (7) coaches from five (5) sports.

- 1) Weightlifting

- 2) Athletics (Track and Field)
- 3) Cricket
- 4) Netball
- 5) Football (Soccer)

Focus group one (Athletes) and two (Parents) sessions were based on four open-ended questions. This was designed in such a way that allowed the athletes to share and not limit their responses. All questions ask for both positive and negative responses to receive the views of the athletes.

- 1) Do you think the administration of sport in Barbados is doing a good job addressing the needs of the athletes?
- 2) Do you believe the sporting facilities are adequate in order for you and your coaches?
- 3) What do you need to do differently as administration in the future to take us to the Olympics and World Championships?
- 4) What are some of the components required in order to continue in your sport after your collegiate years?

The duration of each focus group session was ninety minutes.

Results/ evidence obtained.

Administrators

Administrators interviewed during this process are as follows:

- 1) General Manager- Barbados Olympic Association
- 2) Senior Operations Officer- Barbados Olympic Association
- 3) Director of Sport- National Sports Council
- 4) Senior Accountant- National Sports Council
- 5) President- Barbados Amateur Weightlifting Association

As it relates to the creation of a localized elite athlete, it was evident that all the administrators had agreed that it was a necessity. As the researcher spoke to the Senior Operations Officer. It was clear that there was a need for just a framework for the country. The major themes that stood out doing the interview are as follows.

- 1) Scheduling and timing of major events

- 2) Pilot project
- 3) Psychological preparation
- 4) Gender equality in sport

Justification and Explanation of data collection techniques

Methodology and Data Analysis

The research method adopted a qualitative approach to the collection of data. Qualitative research seeks to provide insight and a great level of understanding into the experiences of individuals. This type of research utilizes individuals' outlook as a way to uncover truths through the various approaches utilized (Denny and Weckesser 2019).

Newby (2014) notes that qualitative research lends itself to the task of understanding the deeper meaning of actions and events of life. In this way a deeper level of the phenomena is reached as the very nature of the inquiry and data collected is one which encourages such.

Moreover, the research instruments used for the study included semi- structured interviews and focus groups. The reason for using these types of interviews is to minimize any gaps that may occur associated with the formal interviews and to gain on the benefits of informal environment. This has allowed the interviewer to probe in areas to have a better understanding of an issue especially where the interviewee may have a strong knowledge base or experience. The interviews that are being conducted are generally in the range between thirty to forty-five minutes in duration. The questions are based on the potential interview questions that were shared in the data collection plan and are in the appendix. Base on the area of expertise of the individual interviewed, the order of questions was rearranged and those questions more pertinent to the individual were ask first to gain the most relevant information given the time associated with the interview.

As it relates to the focus groups, these were done in a face-to-face setting. It was important to the researcher, in this case, the focus group moderator, to also observe and note the non-verbal cues associated with the discussion. As many are aware, with the advancement in technology, and the impact of the COVID- 19 pandemic, the use of an online forum has shown to minimise the impact of non-verbal cues and tone may also be lost in text in the chat box. Since

only two focus groups were being used for the collection of data, more time was allotted for the focus groups sessions and therefore they were given ninety minutes.

Thematic analyses were used which highlighted what appears to be key factors in core categories emerging from the interviews and focus groups. During the initial interviews, before any formal analysis was conducted, several themes seemed to be appearing from the conversations that occurred.

It appears most of the participants had questions in their mind on suggestions as to how the potential of the creation of a framework such as this can be funded. In addition, suggestions related to human resources came to the fore and the creation of an educational structure that one, can be sustainable and two, improved upon as required by the changes within the local environment and to meet the domains of international requirements and performance. Several of the interviewees, although being associated with sport at a high level within the country, responded to some questions with hesitation and looked at the limitations more than that of the possibilities that they suggested. It appeared that although they were hopeful for such a framework, they spoke about other scenarios in the past that limit the possibilities connected to the development of sport locally.

One of the major concerns of the administration of NOC was the preparation of athletes for the major events in which the NOC will be responsible for assembling teams to represent the country regionally or internationally. In several cases in the past, it was alluded that sportspersons came to competitions at a stage where they have previously peaked, and not in the stage of their training cycle that would be adequate to bring out the best performances. It was mentioned that athletes came to competitions at the end of long collegiate seasons where the emphasis by their coaches abroad is for high level of performance during the season while representing their university. It was suggested during the interview that a local framework where sportsperson may have an option to prepare for athletic endeavor in Barbados as another option. The NOC has indicated and agreed upon the introduction of athletes training locally in a structured environment. It was implied that having a group of sportspersons training in Barbados would allow them to have their training blocks and cycles design in such a way that they are able to peak and have their best performances during the time of national representation.

Additionally, it was indicated by the Senior Operations Officer (SOO) of the Barbados Olympic Association, that the NOC is in its final process of implementing a pilot project which has been fully funded to address talent identification and to place potential student athletes in programs. The pilot project is geared towards students in the age range of twelve (12) to fifteen (15). The main components of the pilot project would address psychological preparation, strength and conditioning and nutrition while allowing the coach to continue with their programme and providing the assistance where necessary.

The aim of the programme is to provide the foundation required for student-athletes to compete and the Youth Olympic Games, Commonwealth Youth Games and World U-20 Championships within their respective sports. It was also suggested that they have seen progress of athletes who recently came through some of these age group competitions and have progressed to the open category in other competitions such as the Central American and the Caribbean (CAC) Games and the Pan-American Games. It was recommended in the interview that having these sportspersons coming through the age group programme and performing successfully in age group games while training locally solidifies the establishment of a framework for the creation of an elite athlete.

It was mentioned in the interview that there would be an improvement on the psychological preparation of athletes before major events such as the Commonwealth Games and the mega event the Summer Olympiad. This reinforces the point the interviewee made about participating that the lower level. Furthermore, an example was given of two individual sportspersons who would have benefited and medal at the age group championship and part of the emerging athlete pool that the NOC has assemble. It is the hope of the NOC by the 2028 Olympiad these two sportspersons should be on the team and adequately prepared mentally for the quality performances during that time. The interviewee also suggested that a template should be designed to take the athletes forward locally using the NOC's pilot project as a base for greater results to come.

The interviewee has stated that the NOC is committed to gender equality in sport, and it should be reflected in the athletes who represent the country at the international level. It was emphasis that the Barbados team comprises of four (4) athletes two males and two females. The

interviewee alluded that they must be a commitment by all NFs to continue to maintain female in sports programmes in order to successful at the grassroots level.

The second interview was done with the Director of Sports- National Sports Council. The director was pleased to be part of this research and while conducting the interview they were major themes that stood out. These are as follows:

- 1) Funding
- 2) Schools as sporting facilities
- 3) After school sporting programmes
- 4) Maintenance
- 5) Competitions

The director agreed that the strategic plan was necessary for the development of an elite athlete in Barbados. He highlighted that funding such a programme would be one of the major contributing factors to its success. He suggested that the country has several secondary schools across the island and therefore a repurposing of two of the schools may be ideal to position the programme in the educational setting. He went on to indicate that what would be required at the foundation level would be a committed face to the programme within each school. He further explained that this would be required to get the trust and support of corporate Barbados and the parents who children would attend such a school. Moreover, the director indicated that the teachers/ coaches at each school must be selected from the national pool and placed in this type of environment that would allow them to be further successful now that they will have the prerequisite tools located in one area. He further emphasized that this option would save the country financially instead of building a new school(s) to be used as sports academies.

Currently, the NSC has been given responsibility for all of the public sporting pavilions on the island. This addition to their mandate was recently done in 2023. It means therefore that the NSC is in a greater position to run after school programmes either at some of their community pavilions or in some schools where they now have the responsibility of maintaining the physical structures associated with sports and their playing surfaces. According to the director this allows for greater collaboration with the Ministry of Education to run after-school programmes for school-age children. It is suggested by the director, that the programme can be done two evening a week in conjunction with the current programmes associated at the schools. This would allow

for trained coaches to come to the school and train student athletes in areas that are required where the teacher assigned to the school may not either have the require training or need the additional human resources to fulfil the student to coach quota that may be required to fully benefit from the programme.

The director continued by implying that funds will be essential for equipment and the maintainability of these facilities. In addition, the schools' sporting facilities should be in line with the sporting programme that it is known for and the success that it has had over the years unless it is a case where the physical space and current infrastructure is inadequate for improvements. The opportunity should be taken of making these schools boarding schools. The director gave instances where schools globally have taken this opportunity and have seen the success of it. These are some of the components necessary according to the director that are required to create a pathway of development in sport and in turn lead to the creation of elite athletes locally.

The director went on to suggest that the programme must be sustainable in order to have long-term benefits for sport and performances locally and to fully develop a long-term athlete development programme. This would require training of new coaches and support staff required in the sporting sector. He suggested partnerships with the tertiary institutions locally to have them associated with the sports academies where tertiary students can be mentored by trained teachers and coaches in the environment and gaining practical experience during their early years of studies.

Within the other interviews there were several themes that were highlighted such set a common thread throughout them. These are as follows:

- 1) National academy or National program
- 2) The use of the school system
- 3) Increasing spectatorship
- 4) Marketing sports

It is evident that in all cases the interviewees place high importance and value to education and educational based activities, and this is no different in sport. This was addressed with the view at the national level, there should be a national academy for sport and from an educational point of view, seeking programmes for tertiary education that would be both interesting and add value to

the athletes while studying as they compete. The view was brought forward from the President of the Barbados Amateur Weightlifting Association that not only the should athletes focus on their performance in sport but use studying as an avenue to aid in psychological and mental preparation. He is of the strong belief that all athletes in an elite program should be in some educational institution whether it is pure and applied or vocational studies. The president further alluded that this approach would have a positive impact on the others within the sport where there is a local elite athlete. He also indicated that it would give those who may not succeed in the mainstream educational system an avenue to express themselves and not be limited to the traditional forms of education. Furthermore, the president indicated that that an educational component will include sports who traditionally do not have a large north American collegiate programme. In Barbados, sports-based scholarships are obtained through sports such as athletics, football and volleyball. As it relates to Europe, few scholarships may be obtained for sports such as cricket and netball but funding in that regards appears to be limited compared to the American avenue. This proposed plan for elite athletes in sports having in educational component may allow for athletes to stay in their preferred sport longer.

As before mention by the Director of Sport, there was a gravitation to the use of schools and the use of the educational system to aid in the development of the elite athlete. It was implied that running the school's sports programme with a club would aid in the development of coaches and allow for those who have student sports management at the tertiary level to bring a structure approach to the club's programme which may aid and have a positive impact on clubs, their coaches and athletes outside of the school environment.

The Senior Accountant at the NSC had similar views with increase participation and its impact on spectatorship. Increase spectatorship, whether at the event or viewing through the media may have a positive financial impact for sports in general. The accountant further indicated that it justifies the funding that the sport may receive and makes it easier to propose ideas to the boards for approval as there is perceived value in funding these events and programmes. In addition, they continued to make marketing the sports easier, and companies want to be allied with a product that gives a positive image of them and for the community. On the other hand, the major concern of a project of this magnitude is how it would be originally funded. The accountant as well as the director suggested that it may be difficult to run a full programme currently, but it may be best to

begin with a pilot programme and build upon it as more funds become available. Suggestions were made for that a major corporate sponsor would be required to aid in funding the project.

Merchandising

Athletes

During the focus group with the athletes (group one) there were several themes that came to the forefront within the session. The main themes were follows:

- 1) Education
- 2) Facilities,
- 3) Medical treatment,
- 4) Interaction with the media
- 5) Travel and Accommodation.

Athletes have indicated that in order to remain in the country for educational purposes while competing in the chosen sports. The three major educational institutions on the island will have to place accommodations and schedule modifications for student- athletes. Currently, they are no established protocols nationally for athletes at the tertiary level. The sportspersons in the focus group also indicated that, one of the major objectives of sport in Barbados is to achieve an athletic scholarship to study in either North America or Europe. This major objective contradicts the establishment of a framework that would create a local elite athlete. However, the athletes have indicated benefits of staying within the country. These include the quality of education, the familiarity of the surroundings and established relationship with their family, friends and coaches. Moreover, several of them indicated that they would be willing to stay if modifications were made in areas of concern.

The standout for areas of concern were that of facilities. Currently, the National Stadium located in Waterford St. Michael. The stadium is a multi- sporting venue that has catered to several sports for fifty (50) years and was once a premier sporting venue within the region. Unfortunately, the derelict condition means that the country does not have an appropriate national training venue of its own. Currently, the sportspersons rely on the use of the Usain Bolt Sports Complex (UBSC) at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus for some of their training sessions. Due to the nature of the facility, it was not purpose built for national use but that to accommodate the University and the needs of its students which makes it difficult to have

access to the facilities at the University at any given time. However, the university has made accommodations to its schedule to facilitate national sporting events in the absence of the National Stadium. It is expected that the redevelopment of the stadium at Waterford will be completed by 2028. The lack of facilities has affected track and field the most and athletes who participate in that sport has implied that it has not only impacted their training but also the way they have to compete locally. One instance highlighted by them was the lack of physical space in comparison to the National Stadium at Waterford, especially during the restriction period of the COVI-19 pandemic. The further indicated since the relaxation in protocols the only competition they would receive locally with the atmosphere of a regional or international meet is the local high school championships. The last regional competition hosted at the National Stadium in Waterford was in 2003. Therefore, none of the national representatives in that sport have ever had the opportunity to compete locally at a regional level.

Medical treatment for young sportspersons in the country is generally an expense to that of the parent. However, in recent years, there has been an attempt nationally through the BOA the establishment of a health policy to assist in the sporting medical needs of athletes. It may be indicated, that nationally there has been a decline in the number of sportspersons who use the policy. As it relates to those who represent the country nationally, they most have this health policy while on tour. Athletes during the focus group meeting have stated that having the type of access to sports medicine practitioners outside of national representation of rehabilitation and recovery purposes would have a positive physical and mental impact on them. Furthermore, some of them suggested that the risk of injury and not being able to address their needs if it occurs is one of their greatest fears participating in sports. It was also stated in the session that at a national level if they were to be injured severely, they may seriously contemplate no longer participating in the sport.

During the session, interaction with the media was highlighted on numerous occasions. Athletes indicated that although they understand the role of the media in disseminating information, there are uncomfortable with some of the comments that are made, and opinions shared by writers in the print media about them without having any conversation with them. It was addressed that there is a need for better communication with the athletes and workshops with them to improve communication and trust.

Finally, due to the lack of facilities, the sportspersons within the focus group indicated that there is a need for the decentralization of facilities in the future. Currently, many of them state that the travel between their residences, training and school is one of the major challenges. They agreed, although the country is small, it is difficult to get in their sessions before or after school with the current situation. They further indicated that it has a negative impact on their recovery as well as they have to spend extra time travelling locally. Although several schools have training programmes due to the influence of physical education teachers, currently there are no schools on the island that have a fully funded and structured sports programme. It was also suggested by the athletes that they would be interested in a boarding situation where they would be allowed to have their educational and training needs met in one general location. Furthermore, it would allow them to focus better on their studies and recovery would improve significantly.

Parents

Throughout the focus group with the parents (group two) there were several themes that came to the forefront within the session. The main themes were follows:

- 1) Education
- 2) Training/ Facilities
- 3) Nutrition
- 4) Athletes safety
- 5) Coaches Education and collaboration

As indicated earlier in this paper, education is highly valued within the country of Barbados. The social norm on the island for many is to stop participating in any extracurricular activities during the examination's period. For many years, Barbadians were privileged having free education through the government public schools system under the portfolio of the Ministry of Education this began in September 1962. This free education allowed citizens of the country to have access to education from nursery to the first degree at the tertiary level. However, in 2013 a decision was made that the government could no longer provide free tertiary education which led students and parents seeking alternatives to further their education and some having to put their studies on hold during the process. Although the decision was reserved in 2018, during the five-year period it allowed for many to see the importance of other avenues to seek the educational needs required. Since then, parents have been using the pathway in which sports

have allowed to seek athletic scholarships abroad in other territories across the globe. Due to this past situation, there has been a major shift in the thinking of parents who children participate in sports nationally. Coming out of the focus group confirmed that parents are more likely to have schedules that allow their children to have a more structured student- athlete lifestyle. Many within the Barbadian society were heavily impacted by the financial burden associated with education during the five-year period.

Therefore, it was not a surprise to the researcher that access to sponsored education was a major contributing factor in which they allowed their children to participate in organized sports. The parents shared similar thoughts as the students as it related to studying locally. Their major concern highlighted was the scheduling of classes in relation to their athletic requirements. Currently, there are little to no provisions made for student- athletes on island and majority of the responsibility falls on the student and the parents. The focus group was lucky to have parents participating in the session who work in the local educational sector, and they stress the necessity to meet with the Ministry of Education and the sporting sector be part of the current educational reform policy that is currently in developmental stages. It was strongly implied by those parents that were that there is a need for Sports Academies at the secondary school level along with the possibility or option for boarding where necessary. In addition, parents also indicated that they would like the possibility of coaches being hired and assigned to secondary schools in the system. Within the current system, physical education teachers are responsible for the major development of sports within the schools they have been assigned to. For instance, parents have indicated that they are a few schools where the physical education teacher spends all of their day light hours at the school to administer a sporting program before and after the hours of formal school and also required to teach their subjects, in many cases not being financially compensated. This has led to some cases some secondary schools having little sporting programs outside of school hours and a decline in schools participation in secondary athletic championships.

Another theme highlighted by the parents was the lack of contemporary sporting facilities. Many of them suggested that their children look forward to competition overseas to have access to modern facilities within their particular sport. In addition, it was suggested that it could be a mental challenge to go to a facility that does not meet the requirements in order for

their charges to meet their full potential. Similar to that of the athletes they too also indicated that they would like the possibility of a decentralization of sports within the country. It was also indicated that they must commend the coaches for their creativity in order to prepare the student-athletes for competition. It was further suggested that continued training for the coaches was required to have them constantly up to date with the different methodologies within their particular sport.

Nutrition remains a major issue within the sporting landscape of the country. The fiscal impact that participating in sports has on their household as it relates to dietary needs continues to rise in the country. Although many of the sportspersons are meeting the minimum requirements, there is a need for improvement in this area. The parents were able to give situations where athletes in many households not being able to have the adequate required to fuel the physical needs to the body in order to receive the benefits of the training. In many cases they alluded to athletes having to rely on whatever meal was prepared that day within the household which may not meet the nutritional needs of the sportspersons at this level. It was introduced at the focus group, that National Federations (NFs) should have workshops with nutritionists and chefs as it relates to what is required in their athletes' diets and simple meal preparations that would be beneficial to the sportsperson and have little fiscal impact to the parents and their budgets.

Recently, athlete safety and safeguarding has been an issue in sports. It must be stated that in recent years, there has been an introduction of several courses and seminars being spearheaded from several international federations and coaches education. However, the parents implied that there is a need for this continuation as they suggested several circumstances where sportspersons are being placed under extreme pressure to perform at the national level. They have implied that some individuals may not even be aware of in most cases the mental pressure that some of the athletes are going through in order to accomplish their goals. The mentioned, although an athlete may have success currently, this may have a significantly negative impact on them in the future. Going the particular time of the focus group session it was evident that this topic was a sensitive one for the parents and the researcher could see the concern of many parents at the particular time.

Finally, the theme of coaches education and collaboration was highlighted several times in the session with the parents. They commended the NFs for having management teams throughout the years that have represented the country with excellence while placing the sportspersons in an environment which led to improved performances while the athlete represented the country regionally or internationally. However, they suggested that coaches should collaborate more and not only leave it for the national level. They continued by saying that they would appreciate a more structured coaches organization, where they are allowed to formally work together and not just when they are called upon by the NFs for national duty. Parents indicated that from their observations, it is clear that some coaches have their niche areas and strengths in specific areas. Therefore, if allowed to work with other coaches and athletes more frequently a small country like Barbados can fully use its human resources in the sector and not have them limited to a club, school or a single NF.

Coaches

During the focus group with the coaches (group three) there were several themes that came to the forefront within the session. The main themes were follows:

- 1) Coaches Education
- 2) Facilities and Equipment
- 3) Participation
- 4) Skeleton Structure and Athlete Development.

Coaches education was one of the main themes that continued to occur during the focus groups sessions and that was no different within group three with the coaches. The coaches indicated that they would like greater access to formal training so that they can continue to be up-to-date as to what is occurring within their particular sports. Although many of the NFs have several certifications under their coaches education programme. In addition, they agreed that they would like to have greater transparency between the coaches and the administrators of the NFs. Many of them alluded to having to wait long periods for advancement courses to be available. Several of these courses are available in other countries, and at times, it is difficult for them to leave Barbados due to other commitments. In addition, the coaches stated that it is difficult to do the job solely as volunteers. Coaches sportspersons that would obtain favorable results at the higher level would continue to be challenging with the inability of not coaching

professionally. They suggested that the National Sport Council (NSC) is the only entity within the country that has full time coaches. However, their current mandate includes providing coaches for mainly primary schools who may not have a teacher full time assigned to physical education. That coach is then given the responsibility of preparing a school team to represent the school in a major sport's championship that they may choose to compete within. Therefore, there continues to be a void for professional coaches on the island to coach those sportspeople for national representation. Some of the coaches implied that they would be willing to move from physical education teachers to full time coaches if it was possible to do so.

During the coaches' focus group, one of the major themes emphasized was that of that lack of adequate facilities and equipment. Coaches referred to a five-thousand-dollar (\$5,000 BDS) grant made possible through the NSC within the calendar year, but it was not enough to have a significant impact on the final cost of equipment to the island. It was suggested that a greater impact financially, would be assistance in shipping cost and providing services such as duties being waived on sporting equipment and apparel. These proposed benefits would be for those who are associated and manage programmes under the umbrella of the BOA and NFs inside of the country.

The coaches seemed to be very concerned about the numbers of school age students not participating the sports generally, whether it was recreational or in an organized programme. At this time, the population of the country is under three hundred thousand (300,000) people, therefore having limited numbers to choose from. It was recommended that there should be a widening of the talent pool and have school meets for primary schools in a zonal structure at secondary schools in their area. Additionally, it was proposed that these meetings should take the suggested methodology and format of the Run, Jump and Throw programme under World Athletics coaches educational programme. It was advised that this process is best suited for our environment and requires little equipment to set up. It would allow the coaches to identify the talent within schools in a more controlled way while allowing the children to be comfortable amongst their peers as they will be familiar and, in some instances, acquainted with the possible student- athletes from their communities. It was also implied that this particular programme is the base for all sports, therefore allowing coaches in niche areas to use it for talent identification. Furthermore, coaches can suggest programmes (Structured or recreational) which may suite the

needs for the possible student- athlete and their parents. It was strongly suggested that this programme will allow for greater participation and can be included in the school calendar of events semi-annually.

With the lack of modern facilities, coaches are proposing that they should be an introduction of a sporting outreach programme. They indicated that several NFs were forced to return to the communities to host some of their competitions. The coaches have suggested that it although it was done out of necessity, an outreach programme inviting those from the communities in which their facility is being use, to activity participate in whatever sporting activity is being held. They recommended that having more grass roots programmes within communities would increase participation numbers and aid in the improvement of physical literacy. One area of concern for coaches currently, is the lack of basic skills to participate or even play and they believe that these types of programmes would be able to assist in this area meaningfully.

Finally, the coaches were asked to work together to design a skeletal structure that would both address education and requirements to succeed at the international level. The coaches proposed that it should be linked to the principles of the Long-Term Athlete Development Modal.

The transition from amateur to the elite level in sport is a difficult and intimidating task. When athletes are not managed correctly, the attempt to reach the ultimate goal may be futile. Long-term training spans a period between 10-15 years of an athlete's competitive life, and it is divided into the phases not by age but by the degree of their advancing ability (Smith, 2012) . The coaches agreed upon a 12-year plan as an introductory model which would work in conjunction with the LTAD model. Below is the templated the coaches proposed.

Ultimately, the plan will have two stages which were labeled as stage one (emerging stage) and stage two (world class stage) and will develop in such a way that athletes can be at different stages and therefore do not have to wait until the next cycle. This model would move the sportsperson from the amateur to the elite level.

Stage one (Emerging stage)

Eight-year programme/ cycle targeting ages 16-24

High School/ Secondary School to the end of first degree
(Educational component)

This stage can be divided into two phases based on educational needs

Phase one- Secondary school education

Phase two- Tertiary (Post- Secondary) school education.

Three major age group and/or continental championships before the “Mega Event”

e.g. Youth Olympics, U-20 championship in sport, Continental Games, Commonwealth Games, World University Games.

Ultimately meeting standards to compete in the Olympic Games and World Championships in selected sport.

Stage two (World class stage)

Four- year programme/ cycle targeting ages 25-28.

The sportsperson has completed their academic studies, and the focus is completely on sports performance.

Obtaining finals position in the Olympic Games and World Championships in selected event in their sport.

Discussion

Based on the information obtained within the research, it seems that the National Olympic Committee (NOC) is working on addressing several key issues related to preparing athletes for major events. There's a focus on ensuring that athletes are in the right stage of their training cycle to deliver peak performances, and there are plans to introduce local training frameworks to better support athletes. Additionally, the Barbados Olympic Association is implementing a pilot project focused on talent identification and development for student-athletes, with the aim of preparing them for international competitions. There's also a strong emphasis on gender equality in sports, with plans to have a balanced representation of male and female athletes in the Barbados team. The SOO mentioned the importance of maintaining female sports programs to ensure success at the grassroots level. In addition to the NOC's efforts, the Director of Sports from the National

Sports Council highlighted the need for strategic planning and funding to develop elite athletes in Barbados. Repurposing schools for sports programs and involving corporate Barbados and parents in supporting these initiatives are considered essential for success. The comprehensive approach to nurturing athletes and providing them with the right support systems seems promising for the future of sports in Barbados. Common themes across the initiatives mentioned include the focus on strategic planning and funding for athlete development, the importance of creating supportive environments for athletes, and the need for a balanced representation of male and female athletes in sports programs. Additionally, the role of schools and educational settings in fostering athletic talent and the emphasis on psychological preparation for major events emerged as recurring themes. It's evident that there are several critical issues that need to be addressed in the local sports community. The lack of proper facilities, limited access to sports medicine, and challenges with media interaction are all hindering the development and success of our athletes. Moreover, the need for accommodation and schedule modifications for student-athletes pursuing educational opportunities while competing is a pressing concern. A collaborative effort involving athletes, sports organizations, educational institutions, and the media could lead to meaningful solutions. It's essential to work on establishing national protocols for tertiary level athletes and advocating for better access to sports medicine for all athletes. Additionally, facilitating better communication between athletes and the media through workshops and building trust would be beneficial for everyone involved. In addition, the decentralization of facilities also seems like a viable long-term solution to the challenges athletes are facing with travel between their residences, training, and school. This could greatly improve the accessibility of facilities and training sessions for athletes.

The insights obtained from the coaches' focus group, reveal critical challenges and potential solutions within the sports development landscape. The recurring theme of inadequate facilities and equipment represents a significant hurdle to the advancement of sports on the island. The proposal for support in shipping costs and waived duties on sporting goods emerges as a viable solution to address this issue and enhance the sports infrastructure.

Moreover, the concern surrounding the low participation of school-age students in sports activities underscores the need for proactive measures. The recommendation to organize more school competitions for primary and secondary schools, along with the adoption of the "Run, Jump, and Throw" program, presents a promising approach to identifying and nurturing talent

while creating a comfortable and familiar environment for young athletes. In addition, the coaches' emphasis on the necessity of a sporting outreach program resonates as a crucial strategy to engage communities and boost participation numbers. By leveraging grassroots programs and community involvement, the coaches believe that tangible improvements in physical literacy and basic skill development can be achieved. Additionally, the proposed 12-year plan to guide athletes from the emerging stage to the world-class stage underscores the demand for a cohesive and structured approach to talent development. Aligning with the Long-Term Athlete Development Model, the plan aims to ensure that athletes receive comprehensive support and education, facilitating their progression from amateurs to elite competitors.

These insights call for a comprehensive dialogue within the sports community, governmental bodies, and educational institutions to explore the implementation and funding of these proposed initiatives. Establishing a collaborative framework to address these challenges and capitalize on the suggested solutions will be pivotal in enhancing sports development, nurturing talent, and fostering a thriving sports culture on the island.

SWOT Analysis



Recommendations for management and policy

Priority	Recommendation	Action	Lead	Resources	Timescales	Critical success factors
1	Implement budget and secure funding for project	Funding should be a public and private sector partnership. Identify corporate entities that will benefit from such an alliance.	NOC	Time Meeting and presentation spaces	December 2024	Commitment from the NOC and Government portfolios responsible for sport and private sector partners.
2	The formalization of an MOU with tertiary educational institutions	Create a national program with the inclusion of scholarships and grants for sportsmen and women for tertiary education	Ministry of Education and Ministry of Sports	Academy or department of sports at the three major educational institutions	May 2025	Commitment from the three major tertiary educational institutions in Barbados
3	LTAD	LTAD programs developed with KPIs towards quality performances at the international level.	NSC Coaches' commission and committees	National Olympic Academy Coaches' mentorship programs Coaches' education	July of every year	Development of a mandatory coaches round table and presentation/ lecture program
4	Grass Roots Programs	Implementation of Run, Jump and Throws programs within the communities	NOC NSC NFs	World athletics Kits "A Ganar" program Kits	December 2024	Program being implemented in four zones across Barbados in areas that may have a low socio-

						economic background
5	Nutrition	The inclusion of nutrition workshops for those within the athletes' macro level.	Dietitians Barbados Just Nutrition.bb	NOC Ministries of Health and Sports	December 2024	Personalized nutritional plans for all sportsmen and women within the program
6	Capital works/ Improvement of facilities	The establishment of zonal facilities outside of the National stadium	Ministry of Sport Public and private sector partnership	Corporate Barbados and global funding agencies	August 2026	The opening of the first zonal facility in August 2025, with other zonal facilities opened in 6 month stages afterwards.

Based on the research and data collected and analyzed, the following are the components can be necessary for the implementation of the project:

- Budgets, Financial Management and Governance

Many participants expressed concerns about the funding of the proposed framework and raised questions about how such a project could be financed. Barbados Lotteries and Olympic Solidarity are the major contributors to the funding of the BOA and its programmes. The Barbados Lotteries has a mandate to support sports, youth and culture on the island. The funds are allocated to the NFs to assist them in running their programmes in their respective sports. In addition, funds are received from the Government of Barbados and private cooperate entities. Barbados has a stable economy the Barbados Dollar (BDS), is pinned to the United States Dollar (USD) two to one (2BDS=1USD). An NOC will always suggest that funding, sponsorship and partnerships should always be increased with the private sector as there are several projects that the NOC and its NFs would like to embark on. Several companies over the years have committed to their cooperate social responsibility. Thankfully, sports on the island have benefited from major sponsorship. Barbados is known for its high cost of living within the Caribbean region. In 2023, the island was fifth globally in most ranking index as it relates to the cost of living. Therefore, making it extremely difficult for locals in lower

income earning households to fully participate and meet the requirements to in terms of nutrition, strength and conditioning and equipment needs to be successful in sport. Funding for such a programme should be a public and private sector partnership. Several corporate entities were identified in the past that have long standing relationships with the NOC and NFs. It is therefore possible that other companies can benefit from such an alliance. One that will include being attached to a project and a brand that can create generational connections to the public and the many households that would be directly impacted by their commitment to their corporate social responsibility.

- Education (Coach and Athlete)

Participants discussed the need for a sustainable educational structure that could be adapted to meet both local and international requirements. They also emphasized the importance of human resources in supporting the framework. Based on the research done by the author, it is evident that education is a pillar in the Barbados modal as it relates to the development of a localized elite athlete. It is clear, based on the themes that came to the fore during the research, that all parties included it in their recommendations and in many cases, it was suggested that it would be the only way in which you may gather the possibilities of sportsperson staying home. It must be indicated that at no time the framework is suggesting that all of the sportspersons remain in Barbados, but its development of its programmes be equally viewed for success. The skeleton framework created by the coaches fits well with the pilot project of the local NOC and clearly it can be used as the second stage of the project going forward in the future. It could be suggested that the use of two current secondary institutions be retrofitted to be sports academies allowing for a curriculum catered to the needs of young sportspersons and developing time into elite athletes that would later represent Barbados at future major sporting events with success.

Coaching education is a requirement in order for the maintain the high standard required with in the classroom and on “the field of play”. It could be recommended that tutors be brought to the island in the initial stages within the new sporting academies to assist in the assembly of them and the advancement of coaching theory. Later, a Barbadian Modal may be further developed to meet the needs of our athletes within our society. This could be titled “Coaching the Barbadian Way” As it relates to tertiary education. They must be a MOU between the ministry of education and the ministry of sport to allow within the educational systems, for those who are part of this

strategic pathway to continue with their education under a separate scheme of work and different timelines and timetables from non-sportspersons within the tertiary education system.

- Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

transition from amateur to elite athlete

Athlete Preparation and Training Cycles: The discussions highlighted the need for a structured approach to athlete preparation, particularly in ensuring that athletes peak at the right time for national and international competitions. There was a focus on creating training environments in Barbados to facilitate optimal performance. Furthermore, it could be recommended that coaches aid each other with this process. Established coaches' round tables can be developed with the aid of the NOA and the NFs and presentations or lecture series by national coaches identified to take the lead in this area. The opportunity to enhance the skills and the knowledge base of the coaches should be encouraged from within their own group and not only from outside mentorship.

- Participation in amateur sports at all levels (grassroots)

The Senior Operations Officer of the Barbados Olympic Association mentioned a pilot project aimed at identifying and nurturing potential student athletes in areas such as psychological preparation, strength and conditioning, and nutrition. These themes provide valuable insights into the perspectives and concerns of the participants regarding the proposed framework and the development of sports in Barbados. In addition, there has been a call for the decentralization of some of the sports within the country. This was evident in the focus groups with the parents and the athletes. Furthermore, some coaches indicated that, the having the sports regionalized in especially within lower income areas would allow for greater participation in sports at the grassroots level and allow for introductions to the basic skills that are required to participate in sports. This in turn will add a national talent identification pool where these further athletes can be guided in the direction of the national programme and the project highlighted by the SOO.

- Nutrition

It has been indicated in the research that nutrition is a concern for both parents and coaches. Nutrition has a great impact on performance and the ability of the body to meet the demands of the strenuous activities required from training. Therefore, the nutritional demand for the elite athlete is greater than that of the norm. It could be recommended that all sportspersons within the project should be on a personal nutritional plan. In addition, it would require those within the Marco level of the athlete should be involved in workshops and seminars to assist in this process. It is the norm in Barbados that meals are created at home for those who participate in sports. There is no established sports cafeteria that may be found in other countries. Consequently, sportspersons rely on receiving their nutrients from whatever meal was created at home.

It could be therefore proposed that this aspect of the sportspersons development may include those outside of the traditional support staff directly associated with sport. In turn, this may add a social benefit to the program through the possible positive trickle-down effects.

- Capital works / Improvement of facilities.

Capital works and improvements/ redevelopment of facilities are within the care of the government of the country. Majority of the infrastructure is under the care of the NSC. The National Stadium and the Garfield Sobers Sports complex are the main sporting hubs in the country. In addition, there are a number of sporting pavilions across the island that were constructed in a general manner to be able to house numerous activities and teams for cricket. With the need for decentralizing sports from the main locations within the country. I may be recommended that pavilions and playing areas can be highlighted and fitted to house a few sports and be remodel for purpose. Especially for the sport that may be highlighted for the programme. It would bring high level sporting activity in the community that they are located and be constructively used for a main purpose of sport. The improvement of these facilities will have a great impact on the development of the elite athlete and the younger generation that may be able to see their sporting heroes locally and not only while they participate at international competitions via the media.

Possible Funding Opportunities

There are several opportunities for funding in the sports landscape of Barbados. Over the years, the country has held hallmark events such as, Run Barbados, Barbados Surf Pro and the Barbados Hockey Festival just to name a few. However, most of the events hosted are privately ran events mainly used for their niche market in sports tourism. Funds generated in these events are mainly used to fund the event itself or to assist the local NFs associated with the sport.

Unfortunately, there is no national development program for international athletes in the country and selected few athletes are funded through the grants through different organizations and therefore the opportunities currently are limited. It can be suggested that once a national programme is established. The private sector would be more inclined to assist with athletes who show great potential. In recent years, regional companies have been making athletes ambassadors for their products and using their image on branding across the country. It could be suggested that once an establish program is implemented there would be greater participation from corporate entities.

Warm Weather Athletic Camps

Building on the global presence created in the previous point, Barbados could start offering warm-weather training camps for foreign athletes, much like those done in warmer European countries like Portugal and Spain in sports that we have the natural environment to do so. This calls for little infrastructure to deliver the product required. For instance, water sports such as surfing, sailing and triathlon just to name a few. In addition to the redevelopment and enhancement of Kensington oval, most turf sports can be facilitated at the location. These may include cricket, all forms of football, rugby, lacrosse and baseball as examples. This would encourage longer spending and stays by athletes from around the work and the hosting of events to attract spectators. Additionally, Barbados could partner with other Caribbean islands to offer multi destination training camps. Currently, the sporting facilities at the Garfield Sobers Sports Complex have accommodation on site that can be used to house athletes while there are training within the facilities and the surrounding areas. Additionally, this can be use as a way to have an effect on other sectors like tourism to bring foreign exchange to the island. The foreign exchange generated in possibilities like these can be used to go back into the programme in which the local elite athlete is a member.

Hosting of regional and international tournaments

Barbados has a history of hosting regional and international tournaments over the years. Most recently, it has held group stage games and the final of the Men's ICC Cricket T 20 World Cup at Kensington Oval. Unfortunately currently, this is the only outdoor sporting facility which meets contemporary standards associated with sports. Therefore, it is one of the few sports that can host international sporting events and accommodate large spectatorship. It could be suggested that one of the reasons sportspersons in the past had greater participation numbers than currently was the ability to see regional competitions locally. This allowed them to see the standard that was required to gain success within the different sports. Although it is important to host global events and regional competitions, one must not lose sight of obtaining athletes for national representation at the elite level and be detracted by just hosting events and undermined the initial purpose of creating these avenues for you emerging elite athletes.

Summary

Abstract in English

Sports development is touted by many as one of the antidotes to the underdevelopment challenges of developing countries (Acquah- Sam, 2021). The Internal Strategic Framework and Pathway will allow for ownership and direction of an elite athlete program which will foster the establishment of a full sporting sector in the country. It would move the athlete through several phases, taking the sportsperson from the amateur to the elite world class level in international sports. Additionally, it changes the focus from collegiate representation in sporting organizations to national representation with the ability to obtain tertiary education locally under similar circumstances. While engaging in research, it was evident that many authors build their cases by using the SPLISS 2.0 model. The model offers a template for the successful implementation of a strategic framework while using its nine pillars and allowing for the individual countries to mold their own base on what is required individually. Moreover, it can be suggested that there is a strong link between coaches' education, international competitions, financial and family support in the success of an elite athlete. The majority of elite athletes that represent the country are based in other countries. With this in mind, the local organizations have little to no input in the overall management of the elite athletes who represent the country at the highest level. This situation gives the connotation that elite athletes cannot be developed and trained domestically. Therefore, there is a view that sports within the country can be seen to be only recreational. Consequently, it is necessary to evaluate the possibilities of educating the athletes micro level and those within their macro level to ensure a positive impact socially for the athlete. The project has investigated to what extent a strategic framework for sport in developing and emerging countries, such as Barbados, would reduce its reliance on developed nations across the world with the development of their athletes to the world class or elite level. Finally, it would include the impact of cooperate companies as it relates to investing in athletes and initiatives such as this project. Consequently, it can be suggested that the importance of the private sector to elite athlete success and the development of elite athletes is a necessity (Brouwers, 2015).

Résumé en français

Le développement du sport est présenté par beaucoup comme l'un des antidotes aux défis du sous-développement des pays en développement (Acquah-Sam, 2021). Le cadre stratégique interne et le parcours permettront l'appropriation et la direction d'un programme pour les athlètes d'élite qui favorisera l'établissement d'un secteur sportif à part entière dans le pays. Cela permettrait à l'athlète de franchir ces plusieurs phases, faisant passer le sportif du niveau amateur au niveau élite de classe mondiale dans les sports internationaux. De plus, cela modifie l'orientation de la représentation collégiale dans les organisations sportives vers une représentation nationale avec la possibilité d'obtenir un enseignement supérieur localement dans des circonstances similaires. Au cours de leurs recherches, il est devenu évident que de nombreux auteurs construisaient leurs cas en utilisant le modèle SPLISS 2.0. Le modèle offre un modèle pour la mise en œuvre réussie d'un cadre stratégique tout en utilisant ses neuf piliers et en permettant à chaque pays de façonner sa propre base en fonction de ses besoins individuels. De plus, on peut suggérer qu'il existe un lien fort entre la formation des entraîneurs, les compétitions internationales, le soutien financier et familial dans la réussite d'un athlète d'élite. La majorité des athlètes d'élite qui représentent le pays sont basés dans d'autres pays. Dans cette optique, les organisations locales n'ont que peu ou pas d'influence dans la gestion globale des athlètes d'élite qui représentent le pays au plus haut niveau. Cette situation donne à penser que les athlètes d'élite ne peuvent pas être développés et entraînés au niveau national. Par conséquent, certains pensent que les sports dans le pays peuvent être considérés comme étant uniquement récréatifs. Par conséquent, il est nécessaire d'évaluer les possibilités d'éduquer les athlètes au niveau micro et ceux au niveau macro pour assurer un impact social positif pour l'athlète. Le projet a étudié dans quelle mesure un cadre stratégique pour le sport dans les pays en développement et émergents, comme la Barbade, réduirait sa dépendance à l'égard des pays développés du monde entier pour le développement de leurs athlètes au niveau de classe mondiale ou d'élite. Enfin, cela inclurait l'impact des entreprises coopérantes en ce qui concerne l'investissement dans les athlètes et les initiatives telles que ce projet. Par conséquent, on peut suggérer que l'importance du secteur privé dans la réussite et le développement des athlètes d'élite est une nécessité (Brouwers, 2015)

Appendices

Interview Questions (Administrators)

These questions should aid in investigating to what extent a strategic framework for sport in developing and emerging countries would reduce its reliance on developed nations across the world with the enhancement of their athletes. The research would be guided and extended by the following eighteen (18) questions.

- 1) What is your opinion on national representation over the past decade?
- 2) How do you view the current state of sports within the country?
- 3) What can the NOC and its member federations do to accommodate a smooth transition from amateur to elite athletes?
- 4) What can the Ministry of Sport and the National Sports Council do to accommodate the development of an elite athlete?
- 5) What role can be played by the local educational system to develop athletes?
- 6) What changes could be implemented to the local educational system to accommodate student-athletes?
- 7) What impact would the education system have for a successful sports sector?
- 8) What are the qualities, requirements and components required in a strategic framework for the development of a localized elite athlete?
- 9) What are the strategies involved in maintaining the performance of the elite athlete?
- 10) Do you believe it is necessary for a local national development plan / strategic framework to develop national athletes?
- 11) Should the country continue to send its best athletes to develop nations in sports globally to develop our national representatives?
- 12) In your opinion, does the country have the human resources required to manage an elite athlete at the world class level?
- 13) If yes, explain.
- 14) If not, what are some of the key components required to do so?
- 15) What are some of the benefits of to all stakeholders in having a localize internal strategic framework operating within the country?

Potential focus group questions if required (Coaches)

These questions should aid in investigating to what is required in a strategic framework for sport in developing and emerging countries with the enhancement of their athletes. The research would be guided and extended by the following nine (9) questions.

- 1) What are some of your views on developing elite athletes locally?
- 2) Do you believe that it is essential for local coaches to be involved in the preparation of athletes representing the country at international events?
- 3) What are the top five agreed components that will be required in order to develop a successful functioning strategic framework for sports in the country?

- 4) What are some of the perceived differences between local preparation and that done in developed countries?
- 5) Can these perceived differences be addressed locally?
- 6) Apart from the enhancement of facilities what else is required to establish Barbados as an international training hub?
- 7) What are some of the benefits of to all stakeholders in having a localize internal strategic framework operating within the country?
- 8) In terms of long-term athlete development (LTAD) give four agreed stages and timelines that are necessary for the creation of an elite athlete locally.

The researcher will conduct the interviews and lead the focus groups for the data collection.

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