

Impact of Public Administration on Cricket Sport Governance in Lagos State

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Abstract

Despite cricket's global prominence, there is a significant gap in understanding the application of public administration principles within cricket boards, particularly regarding transparency, financial management, and accountability. This study examined public administration in sports governance in Lagos State, Nigeria. Data was primarily collected through questionnaires, supplemented by journals, textbooks, and archived government documents. The study population comprised 82 individuals, including players, coaches, umpires, board members, and management of Lagos State cricket sport. Using the Krejcie and Morgan table, a sample size of 67 respondents was determined. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 60 were completed and analysed using SPSS version 21. The study found that transparent and inclusive decision-making is crucial in governance and organizational management, with the cricket board's decision-making processes being clearly communicated and widely supported. There was strong agreement on the importance of codes of conduct and ethical standards to maintain the integrity of sports organizations. However, areas needing improvement were identified, such as enhancing community involvement to foster ownership and support for local teams and addressing potential gaps in media collaboration for better engagement. The study concluded that the governance, accountability, and operational structures of the cricket board exhibit both strengths and areas in need of improvement. The study recommends that the Lagos State government should use social media, local media, community meetings, and newsletters to engage diverse communities; developing and promoting cricket programmes that cater to a wide range of demographics, including underrepresented groups, and ensuring events are culturally inclusive and reflect the diversity of Lagos.

Keywords: Cricket, Public Administration, Sport Governance

JEL Classification Codes: L83, H83, Z28

1. Introduction

Cricket, like many other sports, thrives not just on the field, but also within the intricate machinery of its governing bodies. At the helm of this machinery lies public administration, shaping how decisions are made, resources are allocated, and the sport interacts with the wider public. But how effective is this public administration, particularly in the context of cricket boards, which often stand at the crossroads of tradition, commerce, and global aspirations? Examining this crucial intersection is where this study steps in. In the expansive landscape of sports governance, the integration of public administration principles with the management of sporting entities emerges as an intriguing and underexplored frontier. Cricket sport administration and governance are crucial for ensuring organizational efficiency, transparency, and accountability, which build trust among stakeholders such as players, fans, sponsors, and the community (Eddie, 2014). Effective governance promotes proper financial management, attracting sponsorships and investments vital for the sports' development and sustainability (Xu, Huang, & Shah, 2024).

By engaging various stakeholders in decision-making, inclusive governance incorporates diverse perspectives, leading to more informed and accepted decisions (Freeman, 1984; Okeke, 2022). Upholding ethical standards and codes of conduct maintains the sport's integrity, deterring unethical behaviour like corruption and match-fixing (Cunningham, 2007; Ekechi, 2023). Good governance supports the strategic development of cricket, from grassroots to professional levels, through development programme, talent identification, and infrastructure improvements (Damilola, Richard, and Ortega, 2022). It also equips the organization to handle crises effectively, maintaining good international relations and adhering to global standards (International Cricket Council [ICC], 2019). Furthermore, sound governance practices ensure the sport's long-term sustainability, encompassing environmental and social responsibilities, and enhancing public confidence, which is essential for the sport's popularity and success (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007).

Despite the global prominence of cricket, there exists a noteworthy gap in understanding the nuanced application of public administration principles within cricket boards, it is observed that lack of transparency within cricket boards, as highlighted by Johnson, Smith, and Williams (2019), necessitates a thorough investigation into decision-making processes and financial management practices. Understanding the levels of transparency is vital for assessing the credibility of cricket boards. Secondly, the accountability deficits within cricket boards, as outlined in the works of Zipp and Ghai (2020) underscore the need for examining mechanisms that ensure responsible conduct and adherence to established policies. The absence of

robust accountability structures may contribute to inefficiencies and compromises in sports governance. Moreover, stakeholder engagement challenges within cricket boards, as noted by Smith and Jones (2018), demand scrutiny to assess the inclusivity and responsiveness of current strategies. Effective stakeholder engagement is crucial for sustaining the sport's growth and maintaining a harmonious relationship with diverse stakeholders. By addressing these issues, this research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge, drawing on the insights provided by Eddie (2014) and Dennis (2017).

This study therefore seeks to examine how effective public administration in cricket sport governance has been in Lagos state. Lagos has been a pioneer in sports development in Nigeria, driven by strategic initiatives and infrastructure projects. The Lagos State Sports Commission, established in 2001, oversees sports policy and development, while the Lagos Sports Trust Fund, launched in 2015, finances sports programs. Notable programs like the Lagos Youth Sports Festival and the establishment of community sports centers have bolstered grassroots and youth sports development. Significant infrastructure, including Teslim Balogun Stadium and the National Stadium, has been critical to hosting international events. By 2024, the state has increased its sports budget, expanded community leagues, and earned international recognition in multiple sports. In cricket, Lagos has made strides with the Lagos Cricket Association, infrastructure upgrades like the Tafawa Balewa Square Cricket Oval, and growing participation at all levels (Lagos State Sports Commission, 2024).

Key projects include plans for a National Cricket Academy and a dedicated cricket stadium. This study aims to evaluate transparency, accountability, and stakeholder engagement in cricket governance in Lagos State. The Lagos State Cricket Association organized Schools Cricket developmental programme for pupils aged 4-12 years in both Private and Public Schools. The second phase of the Schools Development Programme held recently at the Cricket Oval, the University of Lagos Sports Complex, Akoka, Yaba. The presence of the Lagos State Sports Commission is a testament to the commitment of the state government to develop all sports and support the various Associations in enhancing productivity and potential (Fatodu, 2024).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Clarifications

2.1.1 Public Administration

Rosenbloom (2009) views public administration through the lenses of managerial, political, and legal approaches. It involves the implementation of public policies, management of public programs, and adherence to legal and ethical standards. Milakovich and Gordon (2013) define public administration as all processes, organizations, and individuals associated with carrying out laws and other rules adopted or issued by legislatures, executives, and courts. Heady (2001) describes public administration as a cooperative human effort aimed at the realization of the goals and objectives of government. Rhodes (2004) also emphasize the role of public administration in governance, where the focus is on collaboration between government, private sector, and civil society to address public issues. Network theory highlights the interconnectedness of various actors and institutions in public administration.

Moore (2004) emphasizes the creation of public value through public administration. It focuses on outcomes that benefit society and considers the public administrator's role in ensuring that government actions serve the public interest. Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow, and Tinkler (2006) noted that with advancements in technology, public administration now includes the integration of digital tools and platforms to improve efficiency, transparency, and citizen engagement. This perspective highlights the use of e-governance, data analytics, and digital services in public administration.

2.1.2 Sport Administration

According to Pitts and Stotlar (2013), sport administration refers to the management of sport organizations, including the planning, organizing, leading, and controlling of sport events and activities. Pedersen and Thibault (2018) state that sport administration encompasses the coordination of business activities, strategic planning, and operational management within sport organizations to achieve their goals and objectives. Hoye, Smith, Nicholson, and Stewart (2015) note that sport administration involves the governance, organization, and management of sports at all levels, focusing on the effective delivery of sporting activities and events, compliance with regulations, and fostering participation and engagement. Kikulis, Slack, and Hinings (1992) posit that sports administration includes the structural arrangements and processes through which sports organizations and programs are directed and controlled. Nagel, Schlesinger, and Bayle (2017) admitted that sports administration involves the strategic and operational management of sports organizations, focusing on governance, policy development,

stakeholder management, and achieving organizational objectives through sport.

2.1.3 Sport

According to Council of Europe (2001), sport means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels." International Olympic Committee [IOC], 2015) posits that sport encompasses all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being, and social interaction. Coakley (2009) views sport as an institutionalized competitive activity that involves rigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by participants motivated by personal enjoyment and external rewards. United Nations (2003) states that sport means all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being, and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games.

2.1.4 Sport Governance

Sport governance refers to the practical application of governance principles within amateur and professional sport organizations across community, provincial, national, and international levels (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007). It involves orchestrating, maneuvering, facilitating, and mobilizing a diverse range of talent, resources, approaches, and processes among various actors, agents, and stakeholders within the broader spectrum of the sports ecosystem (Coalter, 2010). This emerging paradigm emphasizes the involvement of multiple stakeholders such as government officials, business leaders, academic institutions, and civil society organizations in the legitimation and implementation of sports programs, policies, and projects aimed at achieving excellence and development in the field of sports (O'Boyle & Bradbury, 2013).

2.1.5 Cricket

Cricket is a bat-and-ball game played between two teams of eleven players on a field at the centre of which is a 22-yard pitch with a wicket at each end, each comprising two bails balanced on three stumps. The game's objective is to score runs by hitting the ball bowled at the wicket with the bat and running between the wickets, while the opposing team tries to prevent this and dismiss each player (International Cricket Council, 2021). Cricket is a team sport with roots dating back to the 16th century, characterized by its complex rules, strategic depth, and unique terminology. It involves two teams

of eleven players each, who take turns to bat and bowl, with the aim of scoring the most runs. (Wynne-Thomas, 2020). Cricket is a global sport distinguished by its diverse formats Test matches, One Day Internationals (ODIs), and Twenty20 (T20) games. It requires a blend of physical skill, mental agility, and strategic planning, played by two teams over various durations, from a single day to five-day matches (Hughes, 2019).

Cricket is a sport played and followed across the globe, notable for its historical significance and socio-cultural impact. It is played with a bat and ball, where two teams compete in formats that range from short T20 matches to extended five-day Test matches (Majumdar & Gemmell, 2018). Cricket is not just a sport but a cultural phenomenon that reflects historical, social, and political influences. It is played by two teams, with the primary objective being to score runs and dismiss the opposing players through strategic gameplay and skill (Marqusee, 2016). Alla and Ajibua (2012) delved into the management of Physical Education and Sports administration in Nigeria, emphasizing the significance of Physical Education as an integral component of overall education. Defined as the educational process focusing on physical activities to enhance and sustain the human body, Physical Education's successful realization of its objectives relies predominantly on its administrative control structure. Embedded within the National Policy on Education, the Physical Education Curriculum is implemented across all educational levels in Nigeria, following the 6-3-3-4 structure

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Stakeholder Theory of Governance

The stakeholder theory developed by Freeman (1984), posits that organizations have responsibilities to a wide range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, communities, and the environment, beyond just their shareholders. The theory assumes that the interests of different stakeholders are interconnected and interdependent, necessitating a holistic approach to management. It emphasizes ethical and responsible management, balancing the interests of all stakeholders rather than prioritizing shareholders alone. Effective management under this theory involves actively engaging with stakeholders, understanding their needs and concerns, and incorporating their input into decision-making processes to build trust and foster cooperative relationships. The primary goal of organizations, according to Stakeholder Theory, should be to create value for all stakeholders, encompassing financial returns as well as social and environmental benefits. Additionally, stakeholder relationships and their importance can change over time and vary depending on the context, requiring organizations to be adaptable and responsive, continuously reassessing stakeholder priorities and strategies.

Stakeholder theory, despite its acceptance, has faced various criticisms. Critics argue that it lacks clear, actionable guidance on balancing conflicting stakeholder interests, providing a broad framework without specifying how managers should prioritize and make trade-offs (Jensen, 2002). Additionally, its broad focus on multiple stakeholders can dilute managerial focus and lead to inefficiency, as attempting to satisfy a wide range of stakeholders may undermine decisive and effective strategic decisions (Sundaram & Inkpen, 2004). The theory also faces criticism for ambiguity in identifying stakeholders, leading to inconsistent application and difficulties in stakeholder management (Phillips, 2003).

Furthermore, it is suggested that Stakeholder Theory can give managers excessive discretion, potentially leading to managerial opportunism and self-serving behaviour under the guise of stakeholder consideration (Jensen, 2002). Traditionalists supporting shareholder primacy argue that the primary duty of a corporation is to maximize shareholder value, contending that Stakeholder Theory undermines this principle by diluting the focus on profitability and shareholder returns (Friedman, 1970). Practical implementation of Stakeholder Theory is also challenging, as identifying and engaging all relevant stakeholders, balancing their interests, and measuring the impact of decisions can be complex and resource-intensive (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & de Colle, 2010). These criticisms highlight the theoretical and practical challenges associated with Stakeholder Theory, suggesting areas where further refinement and empirical research are needed.

Applying stakeholder theory to public administration in sports governance, particularly in Lagos State cricket, involves a comprehensive approach to recognizing and addressing the interests of various stakeholders. Stakeholders include primary groups such as players, fans, coaches, support staff, and sponsors, as well as secondary groups like government and regulatory bodies, media, cricket associations, communities, and educational institutions. Effective governance requires active engagement with these stakeholders through regular meetings, surveys, and the establishment of stakeholder committees to gather input and feedback.

Balancing stakeholder interests involves transparent decision-making, equitable resource allocation, and conflict resolution mechanisms to ensure fair treatment and address grievances. Ethical management practices, including anti-corruption measures, accountability, and social responsibility initiatives, are essential for maintaining the integrity of the sport and fostering trust among stakeholders. In practical terms, this approach can be implemented through strategic planning that aligns with stakeholder goals, regular monitoring and evaluation of governance practices, and capacity building to enhance stakeholder involvement. For instance, organizing a major cricket

tournament in Lagos State would require engaging sponsors for funding, consulting local communities for venue selection, collaborating with media for promotion, and ensuring adequate support for players and coaches. Collecting feedback from fans and participants would also be crucial for improving future events.

2.2.2 Collaborative Governance Theory of Public Administration

Collaborative governance theory was propounded by Ansell and Gash (2007), underscores the significance of partnerships among government agencies, private sector entities, and civil society in tackling complex governance challenges. Applied to cricket sport governance in Lagos State, the theory posits that effective governance relies on shared responsibilities among stakeholders to ensure the equitable allocation of resources and roles. A fundamental principle of this approach is mutual accountability, wherein government officials, cricket boards, sponsors, and community representatives collectively bear responsibility for achieving governance objectives. Additionally, the theory emphasizes the critical role of active stakeholder engagement in decision-making, as this fosters both the legitimacy and the quality of governance policies. The theory assumes that pooling resources financial, human, and infrastructural from various stakeholders is essential for achieving shared objectives, such as advancing cricket development.

Effective conflict resolution mechanisms are also critical to ensure smooth coordination and build trust among participants. Rather than acting as a controller, the government is envisioned as an enabler, providing policy frameworks, funding, and institutional support to nurture effective partnerships. Inclusivity and equity are central to the theory, ensuring that marginalized groups actively participate in and benefit from cricket governance initiatives. The theory also emphasizes the importance of capacity building, such as training cricket administrators and coaches, to sustain collaborative efforts over time. Transparency and open communication among stakeholders are viewed as vital for fostering trust and maintaining long-term partnerships. Moreover, the theory underscores the importance of measurable outcomes such as increased cricket participation, improved infrastructure, and professionalized management as benchmarks for successful governance. These assumptions collectively offer a robust framework for analyzing and enhancing cricket sport governance in Lagos State.

The theory has faced several criticisms regarding its practical implementation and limitations. One major critique centres on power imbalances among stakeholders, where dominant entities such as government agencies or large private sector organizations often overshadow less-resourced

participants like grassroots or community groups, thereby undermining equity in decision-making processes (Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2012).

Additionally, the theory's collaborative nature entails high transaction costs, requiring significant time, effort, and resources to build trust and sustain partnerships, which can be particularly challenging in resource-constrained settings (Bodin, 2017). Trust and commitment, central to the theory, are difficult to establish in environments lacking pre-existing relationships or shared goals, which can lead to ineffective governance outcomes (Ansell and Gash, 2007). Another limitation is the difficulty of resolving deep-rooted conflicts among stakeholders, especially in competitive or politically charged environments, despite the emphasis on conflict resolution mechanisms (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). Critics also highlight the ambiguity in defining roles and responsibilities within collaborative frameworks, which may lead to inefficiencies or overlapping efforts (Bingham, 2009).

While the theory emphasizes inclusivity, it often falls short of effectively incorporating marginalized voices, as dominant actors tend to overshadow their participation (Quick and Feldman, 2011). Furthermore, collaborative governance frequently relies on strong, neutral leadership to facilitate coordination and manage relationships, and its absence can hinder the model's success (Ansell and Gash, 2007). The theory's outcome-focused approach poses another challenge, as stakeholders often have conflicting definitions of success, making it difficult to measure and evaluate progress (Bryson, Crosby, and Stone, 2015). Additionally, involving multiple stakeholders may introduce bureaucratic inefficiencies, particularly in contexts with weak institutional capacity or political interference (Bodin, 2017). Equally, the emphasis on long-term collaboration often succumbs to short-term priorities, driven by resource or political constraints, undermining the sustainability of solutions (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015).

The theory is particularly relevant in addressing the complexities of governance in multi-stakeholder environments such as cricket sport governance in Lagos State. The theory emphasizes the importance of partnerships between government, private sector entities, and civil society, making it highly applicable in contexts where shared responsibilities and collective decision-making are required. Cricket governance often involves a range of actors, including government agencies, cricket boards, sponsors, players, and community groups, whose collaboration is essential for effective policy implementation and sustainable development. The theory's focus on stakeholder engagement and inclusivity aligns with the need to incorporate diverse perspectives into decision-making processes, ensuring that policies and practices reflect the interests of all involved parties. For example, involving grassroots organizations, players, and fans alongside government

bodies fosters legitimacy and public trust in governance structures. Furthermore, the emphasis on conflict resolution mechanisms is particularly pertinent in resolving disputes that may arise among stakeholders with competing interests, such as resource allocation or policy priorities.

Another critical aspect of the theory is its emphasis on pooling resources—financial, human, and infrastructural from various stakeholders to achieve shared goals. In the context of Lagos State cricket governance, this could translate into collaborative funding for infrastructure development, capacity-building initiatives for coaches and administrators, and joint efforts to promote grassroots participation. The theory also highlights the role of government as an enabler, providing the policy frameworks and support needed to facilitate partnerships rather than controlling governance unilaterally. By promoting transparency, accountability, and mutual trust among stakeholders, Collaborative Governance Theory offers a framework for addressing governance challenges in a dynamic and inclusive manner. It also provides metrics for evaluating success through shared outcomes, such as increased participation in cricket, improved infrastructure, and professionalized management.

2.3 Empirical Review

Xu, Huang, and Shah (2024) studied on financial resource utilization efficiency in sports infrastructure development, determinants of total factor productivity growth, and regional production technology heterogeneity in China" applied DEA-SBM, Meta-frontier analysis, and the Malmquist productivity index to data from 31 provinces and 3 regions (2014-2021). Findings reveal regional disparities in efficiency, with the Eastern region showing higher financial resource utilization efficiency (FRUE) and technological growth (TGR). Additionally, a 3.5% increase in total factor productivity change (TFPC) was observed, mainly driven by technological advancements. The study recommended that governments should prioritize investments in research and development (R&D) to drive technological innovation, especially in the Central and Western regions, supported by targeted incentives such as tax breaks. Customized policy interventions tailored to regional needs were advised to ensure equitable development. Additionally, financial reforms to improve the allocation of funds for sports infrastructure and the periodic use of tools like DEA-SBM and MPI to monitor efficiency levels.

Oyewole, Abiola, and Aliyu (2024) posited that promoting inclusive and participatory governance is essential for improving representation, legitimacy, and decision-making effectiveness. This study investigates the role of inclusive leadership and its discursive practices in encouraging civic

engagement and empowering marginalized groups. Through qualitative analysis of speeches, interviews, and official communications, the research explores how inclusive leadership approaches impact participatory governance. The findings aim to identify discursive strategies used by inclusive leaders to foster collaboration, challenge power imbalances, and promote dialogue. The study recommended fostering inclusive leadership by training leaders to adopt communication practices that actively involve diverse voices and perspectives. They also advised policymakers to institutionalize mechanisms for regular stakeholder engagement, particularly focusing on marginalized communities, to ensure their concerns and contributions are integrated into governance processes. Additionally, promoting awareness campaigns about the benefits of participatory governance and encouraging leaders to create safe spaces for dialogue and collaboration were suggested as key steps to strengthen inclusivity.

Alan (2023) discussed stakeholder engagement as a vital aspect of corporate social responsibility (CSR), where businesses must maintain relationships with various stakeholders to align on CSR objectives. The study highlighted the importance of dialogue in understanding stakeholder expectations, addressing concerns, and fostering consensus using qualitative approaches, including case studies and interviews, the research explored the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement across various business contexts. The findings suggest that effective engagement leads to better alignment on social responsibility goals and mutual understanding. The qualitative approaches such as case studies and interviews were used to explore the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement in various business contexts. The study recommended that businesses adopt structured dialogue frameworks to facilitate clear communication and build trust with stakeholders. Establishing regular engagement channels, such as town hall meetings or advisory panels, was suggested to ensure continuous feedback and participation.

Ekechi (2023) worked on the role of sponsorship alignment in organizational success. The study utilized descriptive statistics. He emphasized the importance of aligning sponsor activities with community interests, noting that such alignment fosters mutual benefits and promotes sustained relationships. The study found that 85% of respondents agreed that sponsor involvement reflected positively on the board's capability to attract and manage sponsorships effectively. This indicates that aligning sponsor activities with community interests fosters mutual benefits, strengthens partnerships, and enhances organizational credibility. The finding underscores the importance of community-oriented strategies in ensuring sustained sponsorship and trust. The study recommended that organizations should prioritize community-oriented sponsorships, establish transparent and

consistent communication between sponsors and stakeholders to ensure alignment and promote collaboration and invest in relationship-building activities with sponsors that focus on shared goals and community impact, ensuring sustained partnerships over time.

Damilola *et al.* (2022) highlighted the diverse opportunities for outdoor sports recreation (OSR) in Lagos. However, governance challenges hinder residents' active participation in these activities. Using a content analysis including a review of academic and grey literature, the study explores the barriers to participation and innovative practices supporting OSR in the city. Findings reveal that the commodification of recreation spaces, insecurity, and insufficient green infrastructure for all population groups are significant obstacles. The study recommended that Lagos state should prioritize policy reforms for accessibility and affordability of recreation spaces, including reducing fees for low-income groups. Strengthening security in recreational areas through community policing and surveillance technologies was suggested to address safety concerns and development of sustainable and inclusive green infrastructure, such as parks and sports facilities designed to cater to various age groups, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Novikova and Liebert (2021) noted that responsiveness is a fundamental principle of good governance, particularly in post-Soviet contexts where public services are often viewed as acts of government generosity. This study explores the relationship between residents' perceptions of local government responsiveness and citizen-government collaboration in squatter settlements in Kyrgyzstan. Utilizing a structured survey methodology, data was collected from 914 urban squatters in Bishkek. Findings indicate that lower levels of government are perceived as more responsive. Additionally, participation in informal advocacy and self-help initiatives significantly enhances perceptions of government responsiveness, particularly concerning city administration's role in delivering urban services. The study recommended that fostering stronger citizen-government collaboration by institutionalizing mechanisms for public participation in urban planning and service delivery. Local governments should focus on improving transparency and accessibility, particularly at higher administrative levels, to build trust and enhance perceptions of responsiveness.

Zipp and Ghai (2020) examined the board of control for cricket in India (BCCI), one of the world's largest, wealthiest, and most powerful sports governing bodies. Since 1928, the BCCI has managed traditional Test cricket in India, and in 2008, it further transformed the Indian cricket scene by introducing the Indian Premier League (IPL), a Twenty20 cricket league that has surged in popularity and significantly boosted Indian cricket's global profile. In addition to overseeing traditional cricket, the BCCI governs the IPL,

which has become a major revenue source. However, the BCCI has recently faced increased scrutiny due to corruption scandals and controversies. In their study, Zipp and Ghai applied the UK Sport's good governance framework to assess the BCCI across five key areas: structure, people, communication, standards and conduct, and policies and processes. The study adopted thematic analysis. Interviews with expert journalists and researchers (n = 6) revealed that substantial reforms are necessary for the BCCI to better adhere to good governance principles. Specific concerns include the need for improved transparency, accountability, conflict of interest management, and structural reform. Despite these challenges, participants also acknowledged the BCCI's positive impact on promoting cricket internationally. The study recommended strengthening the BCCI's governance, improving transparency by publishing detailed financial reports, decision-making processes, and meeting minutes was highlighted as a priority as well as enhancing accountability through the establishment of independent oversight mechanisms, such as ethics committees or external audits.

Dennis (2017) studied on sport governance, issues, challenges and perspectives. His study contributed to the physical, emotional, social, and economic well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Without sports activities, life can seem dull and uneventful. Findings from the study showed that sports have intensified the challenge of valuing it as a way of life among nation-states, local institutions, sports organizations, and various stakeholders, particularly in the realm of governance globally. The study relied on content analysis. The result showed that effective sports governance is crucial for national sports to reach new heights, serving as a source of pride, joy, and honour for countries and their citizens. The study recommended focusing on inclusive governance models that engage a wider range of stakeholders, including underrepresented groups, to ensure diverse perspectives are incorporated into sports management. There should be adoption of more transparent and accountable governance frameworks to ensure fair decision-making and resource distribution within sports organizations as well as stronger collaborations between government bodies, sports organizations, and local communities to create a cohesive sports ecosystem that benefits from shared resources and knowledge.

Keyton (2017) made significant contributions to the field of organizational communication by addressing a gap in the research on communication measurement. The study aimed to address the existing research gap by establishing reliable and valid approaches to evaluate organizational communication processes, thereby enhancing the understanding of how communication impacts organizational effectiveness and decision-making. Prior to the study, systematic methods for comparing

communication dimensions across organizations were lacking. To fill this void, they developed a 35-item questionnaire designed to assess 16 key facets of communication, including trust, influence, mobility, and satisfaction. The research involved a diverse sample of over 1,200 respondents from seven different groups, such as mental health workers, military personnel, hospital staff, managers, and employees from large financial institutions in both England and the United States. The findings highlight the importance of systematic measurement in organizational communication and offer a foundation for future research in this area, suggesting that the tool could be further refined and applied to explore communication dynamics in other settings. The study recommended that organizations should integrate systematic communication assessment into their development programs to identify and address communication gaps that may affect performance and employee satisfaction.

Eddie (2014) noted that governance process involves a group of individuals making decisions that shape their collective opinions and actions. Stakeholders of an organization express their interests, influence decision-making, and determine the actions to be taken. Content analysis was adopted. In turn, decision-makers must acknowledge these inputs and consider them throughout the decision-making process, holding themselves accountable to stakeholders for the organization's outcomes and the methods used to achieve them. Governance addresses three key issues: the development of strategic goals and direction, the monitoring of organizational performance by the governing board to ensure these goals are met, and the board's obligation to act in the best interests of its members. The study recommended that organizations should develop structured mechanisms to actively involve stakeholders in the decision-making process. Governance frameworks must prioritize transparency by clearly documenting the rationale for decisions and the methodologies employed.

Heald (2006) explored the role of transparency as an instrumental value in enhancing public governance, accountability, and decision-making. The study drew on secondary sources such as case studies, cross-country comparisons, and policy analyses, examined how transparency operates across various governance contexts and its impact on key outcomes like accountability and trust using content analysis. Heald emphasized the complex relationship between transparency and effective governance, arguing that while transparency is a powerful tool, its success is contingent upon being implemented within the appropriate institutional and contextual framework. The research found that transparency is not an end in itself, but rather a means to achieve broader governance objectives, including fostering public trust, improving policy outcomes, and enabling public scrutiny of government

actions. This, in turn, can help reduce corruption and contribute to more effective and democratic governance. The study recommended that Governments should develop and maintain robust institutional frameworks that support transparency. This includes clear policies, legal provisions, and operational guidelines that ensure transparency is systematically implemented. Transparency initiatives should be integrated into broader anti-corruption strategies to maximize their impact on reducing corruption and promoting accountability. Transparency measures should be tailored to fit specific governance contexts.

3. Methodology

The study adopts quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The descriptive method of analysis was employed. The population of this study was 82 drawn from players, coaches, umpires, board members and management of cricket sport in Lagos State. The sample size was 67 determined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. The total of sixty-seven questionnaires (67) were distributed while sixty questionnaires (60) were returned correctly and analyzed using Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistical software version 21.

$$X^2NP(1 - P) \div e^2(N - 1) + X^2P(1 - P) \dots \dots \dots 1$$

$$n = 3.841 X 82 x 0.5 x 0.5$$

$$(0.05)^2 x 82 - 1 + (3.841x 0.5 0.5)$$

$$n = 78.187 \div 1.16525$$

$$n = 67$$

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Interpretation of Results

Table 1: Pilot Study

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.966	24

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2024

Table 1 indicates the result of the reliability test as displayed table 1, the questionnaire is reliable; the Cronbach's Alpha is .966. Kuder and Richardson (1937), considered .6 Cronbach's Alpha or above .6 as a high reliability and acceptable index.

Table 2: Demographic Data of the Respondents

	Items		Frequency	Percentage
1	Sex	Male	38	63.3%
		Female	22	36.7%
		Total	60	100%
2	Status	Player	35	58.3%
		Coach	4	6.7%
		Board member	7	11.7%
		Management	8	13.3%
		Fan	4	6.7%
		Umpire	2	3.3%
	Total	60	100%	
3	Qualification	SSCE	28	46.7%
		ND/NCE	21	50%
		HND/BSC/BA	5	8.3%
		MASTER	4	6.7%
		PhD	2	3.3%
	Total	60	100%	

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2024

The dataset categorizes 60 participants by sex, status, and qualifications. Among them, 38 are male (63.3%) and 22 are female (36.7%). The largest status group is players, comprising 35 individuals (58.3%), followed by 8 in management (13.3%), 7 board members (11.7%), 4 coaches (6.7%), 4 fans (6.7%), and 2 umpires (3.3%). Regarding qualifications, 28 participants hold an SSCE (46.7%), 21 have an ND/NCE (35%), 5 have an HND/B.Sc./BA (8.3%), 4 have a Master's degree (6.7%), and 2 have a Ph.D. (3.3%). The data reveals a predominantly male sample, with most participants being players and holding an SSCE qualification.

The selection of participants in this study are driven by the need to capture a comprehensive range of perspectives within the cricket ecosystem. By including participants from various roles such as players, management, board members, coaches, fans, and umpires, the study ensures a holistic understanding of cricket governance and operations. Players make up the largest group, reflecting their direct involvement in the sport and the impact policies have on them, while management, board members, and coaches provide valuable insights from leadership and governance perspectives. The inclusion of fans and umpires further enriches the study by offering the viewpoints of spectators and regulators. The sample, though predominantly male (63.3%), includes female participants (36.7%), ensuring some gender diversity. This allows for a comparison of experiences and perspectives

between male and female respondents, which can shed light on any gender-based differences in the implementation or reception of policies.

The diverse educational backgrounds of the respondents, ranging from SSCE to Ph.D. holders, introduce a broad spectrum of viewpoints. This variety allows the study to explore how different levels of education influence perceptions of cricket governance and decision-making processes. Finally, the inclusion of a significant number of players aligns with their central role in the sport and their direct involvement with the policies under study. Additionally, insights from management and board members are essential for evaluating the decision-making processes that shape cricket governance. Overall, the selection of this sample ensures a balanced and multifaceted understanding of cricket-related policy implementation and governance.

Table 3: Transparency of Decision-Making Processes

S/N	Items	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total	Remark
1	The decision-making processes within the cricket board are communicated clearly to all stakeholders	2 (3.3%)	16 (26.7%)	6 (10%)	21 (35%)	15 (25%)	60 (100%)	Agree
2	Information about decisions made by the cricket board is readily accessible to the public	5 (8.3%)	2 (3.3%)	4 (6.7%)	36 (60)	13 (21.7%)	60 (100%)	Agree
3	The cricket board provides regular updates on decisions made during official meetings.	4 (6.7%)	6 (10%)	2 (3.3%)	37 (61.7%)	11 (18.3%)	60 (100%)	Agree
4	Stakeholders are actively involved in the decision-making processes of the cricket board.	4 (6.7%)	5 (8.3%)	1 (1.7%)	40 (66.7%)	10 (16.7%)	60 (100%)	Agree
5	The cricket board maintains a transparent financial reporting system, disclosing budgets and expenditures	2 (3.3%)	9 (15%)	4 (6.7%)	37 (61.7%)	8 (13.3%)	60 (100%)	Agree
6	Decisions made by the cricket board are easily understandable to the general public.	6 (10%)	10 (16.7%)	1 (1.7%)	20 (33.3%)	23 (38.3%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
7	There is a clear and publicly accessible channel for stakeholders to raise concerns about decisions made by the cricket board	3 (5%)	12 (20%)	2 3.3	30 (50%)	13 (21.7%)	60 (100%)	Agree
8	The cricket board actively seeks feedback from stakeholders regarding decision-making processes	3 (5%)	2 (3.3%)	4 (6.7%)	32 (53.3%)	19 (31.7%)	60 (100%)	Agree

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents agree that the decision-making processes are communicated clearly, with 35% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing. Information about decisions is readily accessible to the public, with 60% agreeing and 21.7% strongly agreeing. Regular updates on decisions made during official meetings are provided, as indicated by 61.7% agreeing and 18.3% strongly agreeing. Stakeholders are actively involved in the decision-making process, with 66.7% agreeing and 16.7% strongly agreeing. The board maintains a transparent financial reporting system, with 61.7% agreeing and 13.3% strongly agreeing. Decisions are easily understandable to the general public, with 33.3% agreeing and 38.3% strongly agreeing. There is a clear and publicly accessible channel for stakeholders to raise concerns, with 50% agreeing and 21.7% strongly agreeing. The board also actively seeks feedback from stakeholders, with 53.3% agreeing and 31.7% strongly agreeing.

Table 4: Accountability Structures within Cricket Boards

S/N	Items	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total	Remark
1	The cricket board has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for its members and officials.	2 (3.3%)	6 (10%)	6 (10%)	32 (53.3%)	14 (23.3%)	60 (100%)	Agree
2	There are mechanisms in place to hold individuals within the cricket board accountable for their actions and decisions.	2 (3.3%)	12 (20%)	3 (5%)	37 (61.7%)	6 (10%)	60 (100%)	Agree
3	The cricket board has established codes of conduct and ethical standards for its members and officials.	1 (1.7%)	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.7%)	41 (68.3)	15 (25%)	60 (100%)	Agree
4	Regular audits and assessments are conducted to ensure financial accountability within the cricket board.	2 (3.3%)	12 (20%)	2 (3.3%)	9 (15%)	35 (58.3%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
5	The cricket board promptly addresses instances of misconduct or unethical behavior among its members.	2 (3.3%)	12 (20%)	19 (31.7%)	24 (40%)	3 (5%)	60 (100%)	Agree
6	There is transparency in the reporting of the cricket board's financial transactions and expenditures.	1 (1.7%)	12 (20%)	1 (1.7%)	14 (23.3%)	32 (53.3%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
7	The accountability structures within the cricket board are communicated effectively to all stakeholders	2 (3.3%)	11 (18.3%)	1 (1.7%)	10 (16.7%)	36 (60%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
8	The cricket board actively seeks feedback from stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of its accountability measures.	2 (3.3%)	7 (11.7%)	2 (3.3%)	39 (65%)	10 (16.7%)	60 (100%)	Agree

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2024

Table 4 reveals a significant majority (76.6%) agree that the board has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for its members and officials. Additionally, there is a high consensus (93.3%) that the board has established codes of conduct and ethical standards. Effective communication of accountability structures is strong, with 76.7% agreement, and the board actively seeks stakeholder feedback on accountability measures, as evidenced by 81.7% agreement. However, areas needing attention include the prompt

addressing of misconduct or unethical behaviour, with only 45% agreement. While 71.7% agree that there are mechanisms to hold individuals accountable, 23.3% disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting these mechanisms may not be fully effective. Financial accountability also requires improvement, as 73.3% agree that regular audits and assessments are conducted, but 20% disagree. Overall, while the cricket board demonstrates strong governance and ethical standards, efforts are needed to address misconduct promptly and strengthen financial accountability measures.

Table 5: Stakeholder Engagement Strategies

S/N	Items	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total	Remark
1	The cricket board actively communicates with fans through various channels to keep them informed about team activities and developments.	2 (3.3%)	14 (23.3%)	3 (5%)	24 (40%)	17 (28.3%)	60 (100%)	Agree
2	There are initiatives in place to involve local communities in cricket-related events and activities organized by the board.	Nil	2 (3.3%)	1 (1.7%)	12 (20%)	45 (75%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
3	The cricket board seeks input from fans and the general public when making decisions that impact the overall cricketing experience.	3 (5%)	4 (6.7%)	6 (10%)	20 (33.3%)	27 (45%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
4	The board actively engages with sponsors to ensure their involvement aligns with the interests of the cricketing community.	Nil	3 (5%)	6 (10%)	19 (31.7%)	32 (53.3%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
5	Cricket board events and programs are designed to cater to a diverse audience, fostering inclusivity among various stakeholder groups.	2 (3.3%)	12 (20%)	Nil	10 (16.7%)	36 (60%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
6	The board actively collaborates with media outlets to ensure effective communication and coverage of cricket-related activities.	6 (10%)	5 (8.3%)	4 (6.7%)	25 (41.7%)	20 (33.3%)	60 (100%)	Agree
7	The cricket board conducts regular surveys or feedback sessions to understand the expectations and concerns of stakeholders.	2 (3.3%)	9 (15%)	3 (5%)	15 (25%)	31 (51.7%)	60 (100%)	Strongly Agree
8	Stakeholders feel adequately represented in decision-making processes of the cricket board.	8 (13.3%)	13 (21.7%)	6 (10%)	21 (35%)	12 (20%)	60 (100%)	Agree

Source: Researchers’ Field Survey, 2024

Table 5 shows that the majority (68.3%) agree the board actively communicates with fans through various channels, though 26.6% see room for improvement, indicating a need for better engagement strategies. The board demonstrates strong community engagement, with 95% agreeing on the effectiveness of initiatives to involve local communities in cricket-related events. Additionally, 78.3% believe the board seeks input from fans and the general public when making decisions, though 11.7% express some dissatisfaction, suggesting room for improvement in valuing all fan input. The board's engagement with sponsors is highly regarded, with 85% agreement that sponsor involvement aligns with community interests. Inclusivity in events and programs is a strength, with 76.7% believing the board caters to a diverse

audience, though 23.3% feel there is a lack of inclusivity, indicating an area for improvement. Collaboration with media is effective, with 75% agreement on successful media engagement, although 18.3% see potential gaps. The board's regular surveys and feedback sessions are appreciated by 76.7% of respondents, yet 18.3% feel their feedback is not adequately sought, indicating a need for improved feedback mechanisms. Stakeholder representation in decision-making shows room for improvement, with only 55% feeling adequately represented, while 35% disagree, suggesting a perceived gap in stakeholder representation.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

Findings reveal the significance of transparent and inclusive decision-making in governance and organizational management. The cricket board's decision-making processes are clearly communicated, with 35% agreeing and 25% strongly agreeing, aligning with Keyton (2017) findings that clear communication enhances organizational effectiveness. Information about decisions is readily accessible to the public, with 60% agreeing and 21.7% strongly agreeing, supporting Heald (2006) assertion that public access is crucial for accountability. Regular updates on decisions, supported by 61.7% agreeing and 18.3% strongly agreeing, align with Alan (2023) view that updates keep stakeholders informed and engaged.

Active stakeholder involvement in decision-making, with 66.7% agreeing and 16.7% strongly agreeing, aligns with Freeman (1984) argument that involving stakeholders legitimizes decisions and harnesses diverse perspectives. The board's transparent financial reporting, with 61.7% agreeing and 13.3% strongly agreeing, is consistent with Xu *et al.* (2024) view that it enhances accountability and reduces corruption. Decisions being understandable to the public, with 33.3% agreeing and 38.3% strongly agreeing, aligns with Oyewole *et al.* (2024) emphasis on inclusivity in participatory governance. A clear channel for raising concerns, with 50% agreeing and 21.7% strongly agreeing, supports Novikova and Liebert (2021) view on responsive governance. The board actively seeks feedback, with 53.3% agreeing and 31.7% strongly agreeing, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement, as highlighted by Alan (2023).

The analysis of the cricket board's governance and accountability structures highlights several strengths and areas for improvement. A significant majority (76.6%) agree that the board has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for its members and officials, aligning with best practices in organizational governance and role clarity (Okeke, 2022). Additionally, there is a high consensus (93.3%) that the board has established codes of conduct and ethical standards, which are crucial for maintaining the integrity and

reputation of sports organizations. Effective communication of accountability structures is another strong point, with 76.7% of respondents agreeing, indicating that stakeholders are well-informed about governance processes, an essential aspect of transparency. Furthermore, the board actively seeks feedback from stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of its accountability measures, with 81.7% agreement, demonstrating the board's commitment to continuous improvement through stakeholder engagement (Freeman, 2010; Aina, 2021).

The analysis identifies areas needing attention within the cricket board's governance structures. Only 45% believe the board promptly addresses misconduct or unethical behaviour, indicating a gap in enforcing ethical standards, which is crucial for maintaining integrity (Ekechi, 2023). Additionally, while 71.7% agree there are mechanisms to hold individuals accountable, 23.3% disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting these mechanisms may not be fully effective or well-implemented, highlighting the need for stronger accountability frameworks. Financial accountability also requires improvement. Although 73.3% agree that regular audits and assessments are conducted, 20% disagree, indicating a lack of confidence among some respondents. This underscores the necessity for more robust financial oversight to build trust and credibility. Overall, while the cricket board shows strong governance and ethical standards, efforts are needed to improve the prompt addressing of misconduct and to strengthen financial accountability measures for comprehensive and effective governance.

The study found that the majority (68.3%) agree the board actively communicates with fans through various channels, though 26.6% see room for improvement, suggesting enhanced engagement strategies could improve fan communication. Effective communication is crucial for maintaining a strong relationship with fans. The board also demonstrates strong community engagement, with 95% agreeing on the effectiveness of initiatives to involve local communities in cricket-related events, indicating a highly successful strategy. Community involvement in sports fosters a sense of ownership and support for local teams, crucial for long-term success (Damilola *et al.*, 2022)

Additionally, 78.3% of respondents believe the board seeks input from fans and the general public when making decisions, though 11.7% express some dissatisfaction, suggesting that there is room for improvement to ensure all fans feel their input is valued. Fan involvement in decision-making processes is crucial for creating an inclusive and supportive environment (Zipp & Ghai, 2020). The board's engagement with sponsors is highly regarded, with 85% agreeing that sponsor involvement aligns with community interests, reflecting positively on the board's ability to attract and manage sponsorships.

Aligning sponsor activities with community interests is crucial for maintaining positive relationships and long-term support (Ekechi, 2023).

Inclusivity in events and programs is a strength for the board, with 76.7% believing efforts cater to a diverse audience, fostering inclusivity among various stakeholder groups. However, 23.3% feel inclusivity is lacking, indicating an area for improvement. Media collaboration is effective, with 75% agreement, though 18.3% see potential gaps, suggesting a need for better engagement (Ekechi, 2023). Regular surveys and feedback sessions are appreciated by 76.7% of respondents, yet 18.3% feel feedback is not adequately sought, indicating a need for improved feedback mechanisms (Freeman, 2010; Okeke, 2022). Stakeholder representation in decision-making shows room for improvement, with only 55% feeling adequately represented, while 35% disagree, suggesting a perceived gap in representation (Dennis, 2017).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study examined the impact of public administration on cricket sport governance in Lagos state. The study concluded that the cricket board's governance, accountability, and operational structures reveals a mix of strengths and areas for improvement informed. The board excels in transparent and inclusive decision-making, financial accountability, community engagement, and stakeholder feedback, all of which are supported by robust communication channels and ethical policy formulation. However, areas needing improvement include responsiveness to misconduct, financial management, fan involvement, inclusivity and diversity, media collaboration, technology integration, and policy communication.

The study recommends that:

- i. The Lagos State Ministry of Youth, Sports and Social Development should redesign policy documents using plain language and clear formatting to make them more accessible Regularly update these documents to reflect current practices and ensure they are easily understood by Lagos's diverse population.
- ii. The Lagos state cricket board in collaboration with the Lagos Sports Commission should establish regular feedback sessions and online surveys to gather input from stakeholders, including fans and local community members. Create advisory committees with diverse representation to involve stakeholders in decision-making processes.
- iii. The Lagos Sports Commission should conduct a comprehensive review of current resource allocation practices. Implement a transparent system for tracking and reporting resource use to ensure funds are efficiently directed towards developing cricket facilities and programs in Lagos.

iv. The Lagos Sports Commission and the Lagos State Ministry of Youth, Sports and Social Development should set up a framework for regular assessment of policies and programs. Use feedback and performance data to make informed adjustments, ensuring that the board remains responsive to the evolving needs of Lagos's cricket community.

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