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The Strategies Used by Teachers in Identifying Pupils' Sports Talents for Future Career Opportunities in Public Primary Schools in Shinyanga Urban District, Tanzania

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Abstract
The study aimed to examine the strategies teachers use to identify pupils' sports talents for future career opportunities in public primary schools in Shinyanga Urban District. The study was guided by Holland's Career Development Theory, developed by John L. Holland in 1959. A qualitative research approach and phenomenological research design were employed. The study involved 41 respondents, including 1 District Primary Education Officer, 1 Culture and Sports Officer, 3 head teachers, 12 teachers, and 24 pupils. Purposive and quota sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions, analysed thematically, and presented through narratives and direct quotations. The findings revealed five main strategies teachers use to identify pupils' sporting talents: observation during Sports and Arts lessons, school sports competitions, participation in UMITASHUMTA, extracurricular activities, and pupils' self-identification of their sporting abilities. The study concludes that identifying pupils' sporting talents requires teachers to observe them in different sporting activities and provide opportunities for them to demonstrate their abilities. The study recommends that the government and education authorities should provide adequate sports facilities, equipment, qualified teachers, and professional training. It also recommends that schools, parents, communities, and sports organisations should work together to identify, support, and develop pupils' sporting talents for future career opportunities in the sports sector.

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INTRODUCTION

The identification, development, and management of sporting talent are important aspects of achieving athletic excellence and promoting national development in the global sporting arena. Many countries have established systems to identify and nurture young athletes, creating opportunities for them to participate in sports at national and international levels (Epuche, 2025). Sports talent identification enables young people to discover and develop their abilities while contributing to social and economic development. It also helps address challenges such as youth unemployment, social exclusion, and underutilisation of young people's abilities (Adeleke & Bakare, 2020). The researcher considers sports talent management an important approach to helping young people realise their potential and access future career opportunities.

Sports activities such as football, athletics, netball, volleyball, and basketball provide opportunities for identifying and developing pupils' sporting abilities. Wilfred and Tarmo (2024) explain that teachers can identify sporting talents by observing pupils' performance, consulting parents, and obtaining information from fellow pupils. Therefore, teachers should not only supervise sports activities but also act as talent identifiers and mentors who guide pupils towards appropriate sporting opportunities. In the researcher's view, teachers are strategically positioned to identify pupils' sporting abilities because of their regular interaction with them during school activities. Historically, school sports developed from the late eighteenth century to the twentieth century and became an important pathway for identifying and nurturing young athletes who later participate in national and international competitions (International Olympic Committee, 2024).

Globally, sports talent identification and management have been practised in different countries, including Indonesia and Iran, to identify and develop young people with sporting abilities. In Indonesia, schools play an important role in developing sporting talents through the guidance of physical education teachers. Article 18 of Law Number 3 of 2005 on the National Sports System allows educational institutions to organise sports competitions from school level to local, regional, national, and international levels, providing pupils with opportunities to demonstrate their abilities in different sporting activities (Sugiharti et al., 2021). Similarly, Iran emphasises the identification and development of individuals with athletic potential by guiding them towards appropriate sporting disciplines and future professional opportunities. This approach helps improve athletic performance and ensures that talented individuals are directed towards sports that match their abilities (Siahaan & Sinulingga, 2020). The researcher considers these international experiences important in demonstrating how organised school sports programmes can create pathways for identifying and developing young sporting talents.

In African countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, and Uganda, sports talent management has been emphasised as an important approach to identifying and developing young athletes. In Nigeria, sports talent identification begins at the grassroots level through interschool competitions, community sports festivals, and partnerships with different organisations. These activities provide opportunities to identify talents in football, athletics, basketball, volleyball, and table tennis, followed by training, coaching, nutritional support, and academic guidance (Okpara, 2021). Similarly, in South Africa, schools with strong sporting programmes provide opportunities for talented learners to develop their abilities while maintaining academic standards. These programmes focus on identifying and nurturing talents in athletics, football, rugby, cricket, and swimming (Ekron et al., 2025). In Kenya, the introduction of the competence-based curriculum in 2017 increased investment in talent development in public primary schools, although sports activities have sometimes received less attention than academic subjects (Mwangi et al., 2023). The researcher observes that these experiences demonstrate the importance of combining talent identification with continuous

training, mentorship, and institutional support to prepare young athletes for future opportunities.

In Tanzania, Physical Education and school sports have been recognised as important components of the education system since independence. These activities aim to promote learners' physical fitness, social development, health, and sporting abilities (Siayi et al., 2023). Different school competitions, including Umoja wa Michezo na Taaluma kwa Shule za Msingi Tanzania (UMITASHUMTA) and Umoja wa Michezo ya Shule za Sekondari Tanzania (UMISSETA), have been introduced to identify and nurture talented pupils in sports such as football, athletics, netball, volleyball, and basketball (Mussa & Rwabunywenge, 2025). Successful sports talent development requires appropriate assessment tools, focused training programmes, early investment, and continuous monitoring of pupils' progress (Simwanza & Paul, 2024). The researcher considers these competitions important platforms for discovering pupils' sporting abilities, although their effectiveness also depends on the support provided beyond competition periods.

Similarly, the Tanzania Education and Training Policy of 2014, 2023 Edition, emphasises the identification and development of learners' abilities and talents at all levels of education. Section 3.2.3 recognises the importance of establishing systems for identifying and nurturing learners' talents, including sporting abilities. The policy further recognises sports as an important means of developing discipline, confidence, self-esteem, resilience, social relationships, and physical and mental well-being, while providing opportunities for participation in international competitions (URT, 2023). Therefore, teachers and school administrators have an important responsibility to identify talented pupils, organise sports programmes, monitor their progress, and provide opportunities for further training and development. Their involvement is essential in preparing pupils for future sporting careers and other employment opportunities (Simwanza, 2026). The researcher believes that translating these policy provisions into practical school-level activities is necessary to ensure that pupils' sporting talents are identified and developed alongside their academic abilities.

Similarly, in Shinyanga Urban District, primary schools participate in different sports activities and competitions organised at school, ward, district, regional, and national levels. These activities include football, athletics, netball, and traditional games such as rede, mdako, and rope skipping. District records indicate that approximately 120 pupils participate in district and regional sports competitions annually. Furthermore, between 2020 and 2026, a total of 214 pupils from primary schools in Shinyanga Urban District participated in national-level sports competitions (District Sports Officer, 2026). These competitions provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their abilities and develop their sporting talents. The researcher recognises these achievements as evidence of existing opportunities for sports talent identification, but considers it important to examine whether participating pupils receive adequate support to develop their abilities further.

However, despite the existence of different sports activities and competitions, many pupils with promising sporting abilities do not progress into structured sporting careers. This situation raises concerns about teachers' contributions to the management of pupils' sports talents and the effectiveness of strategies used to support talented pupils in accessing future career opportunities (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023). The researcher is concerned that inadequate identification, guidance, training, and follow-up support may prevent some talented pupils from realising their sporting potential. Teachers' involvement is particularly important because they interact with pupils daily and can identify their sporting abilities, provide guidance, and connect them with appropriate development opportunities. Understanding teachers' contributions is essential because effective sports talent management can increase pupils' opportunities to obtain scholarships, pursue professional sporting careers, and access other sports-related employment opportunities. Therefore, the researcher seeks to examine

teachers' contributions to the management of pupils' sports talents for future career opportunities in Shinyanga Urban District.

Theoretical Review

This study is guided by the Career Development Theory developed by John L. Holland in 1959. The theory explains that career success and satisfaction depend on the relationship between an individual's interests, abilities, personality, and working environment (Holland, 1959). According to Janine (2022), the theory focuses on identifying individuals' skills and interests and matching them with suitable career opportunities. The theory explains that individuals have different abilities, interests, and personalities that influence their career choices. People are more likely to succeed when their abilities match their working environments (Wunderlich, 2022; de Vries et al., 2024). In sports, teachers play an important role in identifying and developing pupils' sporting talents through training, guidance, and encouragement (Simwanza & Paul, 2024). The theory is useful to this study because it explains how teachers can help pupils identify, develop, and manage their sporting talents for future career opportunities. Its strengths include promoting early talent identification and recognising individual abilities, while its weaknesses include giving less attention to economic, cultural, and environmental factors that influence career development. The theory is relevant because it emphasises the importance of matching pupils' sporting abilities and interests with suitable careers. It also highlights teachers' roles in coaching, mentoring, and guiding pupils towards careers such as professional athletes, coaches, and sports managers. Therefore, the theory provides a foundation for understanding teachers' contributions to managing pupils' sports talents for future career opportunities.

Literature Review

Maulidin et al. (2024) conducted a study in Indonesia on improving sports teachers' capacity to identify talented athletes at an early age. The study found that early talent identification helps recognise children with sporting potential and guide them towards appropriate sports for future performance. It also emphasised the importance of teachers' knowledge and skills in identifying and developing young athletes. However, the study did not specify the pupils' educational levels or explain the strategies teachers used to identify sporting talents. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the strategies teachers use to identify primary school pupils' sporting talents for future career development in sports.

Faridniya et al. (2024) conducted a qualitative study in Iran on factors influencing sports talent identification among primary school pupils. The study found that teachers identify talented pupils through physical fitness assessments, motor skills, competitive performance, and behavioural observations. It also emphasised the importance of teachers' expertise in talent identification. However, the study relied mainly on expert opinions rather than direct school observations. Therefore, this study collected data from the district primary education officer, sports and culture officer, teachers, and pupils to understand the strategies teachers use to identify primary school pupils' sporting talents.

Botha and Van der Klashorst (2020) conducted a qualitative study on sports development initiatives in three previously disadvantaged communities in Tshwane, South Africa. The study found that teachers and coaches played important roles in identifying and nurturing sports talents through organised training, competitions, and skill-development programmes. These activities helped learners improve their athletic abilities and increased their opportunities for future sports careers. However, the study focused mainly on community-based sports initiatives rather than talent identification within formal public primary schools. Therefore, a research gap remains regarding the specific strategies teachers use to identify pupils' sporting talents for future career opportunities in public primary schools.

In Uganda, the Ministry of Education and Sports (2025) highlights teachers' roles in identifying and nurturing sports talents through physical education lessons, inter-school competitions, and co-curricular activities. Teachers are encouraged to observe learners' physical abilities and refer talented pupils to higher sports development programmes. However, the evidence is mainly based on government policies and programme reports rather than empirical research. It provides limited information on the specific strategies teachers use in primary schools and their effectiveness in supporting future sports careers. Therefore, this study examines how teachers implement talent identification strategies in everyday school settings.
In Tanzania, Wilfred and Tarmo (2025) conducted a qualitative multiple-case study involving 70 participants to examine how primary school teachers identify pupils with non-academic talents. Using interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and document reviews, the study found that teachers identified talents through direct observation, performance assessments, pupils' self-identification, parental reports, and peer recommendations. However, the study focused on non-academic talents generally rather than sports specifically, leaving a gap in understanding the effectiveness of these strategies in identifying pupils' sporting talents.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed qualitative research approach and a phenomenological research design, where the researcher gets detailed information from participants due to their ideas, experience perceptions, and interpretations of a particular phenomenon. The research targeted a population of 6653 individuals in Shinyanga Urban District, categorized as 1 District Primary Education Officer (DPEO), 1 Culture and Sport Officer, 54 head of public primary schools, 585 public primary school teachers, and 6012 class six public primary pupils. The sample size of this study was 41, including 1 DPEO, 1 Culture and Sport Officer, 3 head teachers, 12 teachers and 24 pupils respondents and quota sampling and purposive sampling techniques were applied to choose the respondents. Also, the instruments for data collection were focus group discussions, and interviews. Trustworthiness of the qualitative research data was addressed through credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability criteria. Data were analyzed thematically and presented with interpretation by using narration and direct quotations which described the obtained ideas. Ethical considerations involved obtaining permissions from relevant authorities, ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining confidentiality, and adhering to APA 7th edition standards.

DISSCUSSION

Strategies Used by Teachers in Identifying Pupils' Sports Talents

The study explored the strategies teachers employed to identify pupils' sporting talents. It was found that teachers use several techniques to identify pupils' talents in sport; the strategies were: observation during Sports and Arts lessons, school sports competitions, participation in UMITASHUMTA, participation in extracurricular activities, and pupils' self-identification of sports talents. The findings indicate that teachers did not identify sports talent using a single method. Instead, they used different school activities and situations in which pupils could demonstrate their abilities. The opportunities provided through commonly played sports, including football, netball, athletics and traditional games such as rede, mdako and skipping rope, enabled teachers to observe different dimensions of pupils' sporting abilities. For example, football and netball provided opportunities to observe ball control, passing, speed, coordination and teamwork, while athletics enabled teachers to observe running speed, endurance, jumping ability and physical strength. Traditional games such as rede, mdako and skipping rope also provided opportunities to observe agility, balance, coordination, rhythm and physical endurance.

Observation During Sports and Arts Lessons

The study revealed that observation during Sports and Arts lessons was one of the major strategies used by teachers to identify pupils' sports talents. Teachers explained that they observed pupils as they participated in different sporting activities and paid attention to those who demonstrated better skills and performance. One participant in the focus group discussion explained:

> *During Sports and Arts lessons, we observe pupils participating in different games to identify their abilities. In football, we assess ball control and passing, while in netball, we observe coordination and movement. Athletics helps us identify pupils with speed and jumping abilities. Traditional games, including rede, mdako, and skipping rope, also reveal pupils' coordination, balance, and other special talents. (T from school A, FGD, Sept 2026*).

This means teachers identified sporting talent by observing pupils as they participated in football, netball, athletics, and traditional games. Rather than relying only on academic records, teachers assessed pupils' physical abilities and performance during sporting activities. This finding is supported by Wilfred and Tarmo (2025), who identified direct observation as an important strategy for recognising pupils' non-academic talents in Tanzanian primary schools. Similarly, Faridniya et al. (2024) identified physical fitness assessments, motor skills evaluation, and competitive performance as useful approaches to sports talent identification. These findings relate to Holland's Career Development Theory (1959), which emphasises recognising individuals' interests and abilities to guide them towards suitable future career pathways. Another participant explained:

> *We observe pupils during Sports and Arts lessons to identify their abilities. Some pupils demonstrate talent in football, netball, or running, while others excel in skipping rope or rede. Regular observation helps us recognise pupils' strengths and identify the sports activities in which they excel. (T from school C, FGD Sept 2026*).

The quotation implies that observation allows teachers to identify pupils who demonstrate particular sporting characteristics such as speed, coordination, ball control, endurance, agility, teamwork, balance and confidence. It further shows that talent identification needs to take place across different sporting activities because pupils do not necessarily demonstrate talent in the same type of sport. This interpretation is consistent with Maulidin et al. (2024), who emphasised the importance of teachers' early identification of sports talent. Their study focused on enhancing sports teachers' capacity to identify outstanding athletes through early talent identification. The study supports the view that teachers are strategically positioned to recognise pupils' sporting potential through their participation and performance in different sporting activities.

School Sports Competitions

The second strategy identified was school sports competitions. Participants explained that competitions provided teachers with opportunities to observe pupils while they competed against one another. Competitions were held across different sports, including football, netball and athletics, while traditional games also provided opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their abilities. In the interview section, one interviewee stated:

> *School competitions help us to know which pupils are good at different sports. When we have football and netball competitions, we can see pupils who perform better under competition. In athletics, it is easier to compare pupils because we can see who runs faster or jumps better. We also encourage pupils to participate in traditional games such as rede, mdako, and skipping rope because some*

> *pupils demonstrate special abilities in these activities (H1, Interview, Sept 2026).*

The quotation suggests that competitions provide a practical environment for teachers to compare pupils' performance. While ordinary Sports and Arts lessons allow pupils to demonstrate basic skills, competitions provide opportunities to observe their performance in more demanding situations. This finding is supported by Ekron et al. (2020), who examined sports scholarships and the selection criteria used by South African schools. Their work demonstrates the importance of sporting performance and selection processes in recognising pupils who show sporting potential. The finding is also consistent with Barraclough et al. (2022), who identified competitive performance as one of the contexts through which sporting potential can be assessed. Thus, the present finding suggests that competitions provide teachers with observable evidence to help them distinguish pupils who demonstrate stronger sporting performance. A respondent from the focus group discussion explained:

> *During competitions, talented pupils become more visible. For example, in football you can see pupils who are good at controlling the ball, passing and scoring. In netball, you can identify pupils who understand positioning and passing. In athletics, the results can show who is fast or has good endurance. Even when pupils compete in skipping or other traditional games, you can see those who have better coordination and control. (T from school B, FGD, Sept 2026*).

The quotation indicates that competitions enable teachers to identify pupils who consistently perform well against their peers. Competitions can therefore be regarded as a form of performance assessment because they allow teachers to observe pupils' abilities in actual competitive situations. This interpretation is supported by Faridniya et al. (2024), who identified competitive performance as an important factor in recognising sports talent among elementary-school pupils. Similarly, Siahaan and Sinulingga (2020) examined sports talent among junior-school pupils, highlighting the importance of identifying sporting abilities at the school level. These findings relate to Holland's Career Development Theory (1959), which emphasises identifying individuals' interests and abilities to guide suitable career pathways. Therefore, school competitions provide teachers with opportunities to recognise pupils' sporting potential and guide the development of their talents towards future sports-related careers.

Participation in UMITASHUMTA

Another important strategy emerging from the data was participation in UMITASHUMTA. Participants explained that UMITASHUMTA provides opportunities for pupils who demonstrate sporting abilities at school level to participate in competitions beyond their individual schools. The findings indicate that participation in UMITASHUMTA is an important stage in sports talent identification, as it provides opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their abilities in a broader, more competitive environment. The interviewee explained:

> *UMITASHUMTA allows pupils to take their sporting abilities beyond the school. Before a pupil reaches that level, teachers normally identify pupils who perform well in sports such as football, netball and athletics. Some pupils may also be selected because they demonstrate good ability in activities such as traditional games. The pupils are then given opportunities to compete and represent their schools (Interviewee X, Interview, Sept 2026*).

The quotation indicates that UMITASHUMTA is not necessarily the starting point for identifying sports talent but rather a progressive stage in a process that begins at school level. This finding relates to Maulidin et al. (2024), who emphasised the importance of early talent identification in recognising children's sporting potential for further development. Similarly,

Faridniya et al. (2024) identified physical fitness assessments, motor skills evaluation, competitive performance, and behavioural observation as important approaches to recognising sporting talent. These findings relate to Holland's Career Development Theory (1959), which emphasises identifying individuals' interests and abilities to guide suitable career pathways. Therefore, school-level observation and competitions can help teachers identify talented pupils and recommend them for wider sporting opportunities, supporting the development of their abilities towards potential future careers. The interviewee Y stated:

> *The selection of pupils for UMITASHUMTA usually starts at the school level. Teachers observe pupils during football, netball, athletics and other sporting activities and identify those who perform well. After school-level selection, pupils can participate in higher-level competitions where their abilities can be further observed and assessed (Interviewee Y, Interview, Sept 2026).*

This provides further evidence that UMITASHUMTA is connected to earlier stages of the talent identification process. It demonstrates that teacher observation, school-level selection and competitive participation are interconnected rather than independent activities. The findings show that participation in UMITASHUMTA may strengthen the relationship between talent identification and talent development. Identification without subsequent opportunities for practice and competition may not be sufficient to develop a pupil's potential. Therefore, UMITASHUMTA can be understood not only as a selection platform but also as an environment in which identified pupils can gain competitive experience and continue developing their abilities. The findings also imply that schools should ensure that the selection process for UMITASHUMTA is sufficiently inclusive and transparent. If teachers focus only on highly popular sports such as football, pupils with abilities in athletics, netball or traditional games may be overlooked. This finding is strongly consistent with Henriksen and Stambulova (2023), who emphasised the importance of the social environment surrounding youth talent development. Their work highlights that talent development does not occur in isolation but is influenced by the environments and opportunities available to young athletes.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

The study also revealed that teachers identify sports talents through pupils' participation in extracurricular activities. Participants explained that pupils' sporting abilities were sometimes more visible outside formal classroom lessons, particularly during games, sports clubs and other school activities. In the focus group discussion conducted at School B, participants responded that:

> *We do not only observe pupils during the Sports and Arts lesson. During break time and after classes, pupils play football and netball, and sometimes practise athletics. Girls may also practise skipping rope, while other pupils participate in rede or mdako. When we watch them regularly, we can notice pupils who have particular abilities even before they participate in a formal competition (T from school B, FGD, Sept 2026*).

The quotation demonstrates that teachers extended their observation beyond formal Sports and Arts lessons to include pupils' participation in informal and extracurricular sporting activities. These activities provided opportunities for repeated observation as pupils participated in football, netball, athletics, skipping rope, rede, and mdako. This finding relates to Henriksen and Stambulova (2023), who emphasised the importance of the environment in youth talent development. Furthermore, Holland's Career Development Theory (1959) explains that individuals' interests and abilities are important in guiding career choices. In this context, observing pupils during break time and after classes helps teachers recognise sporting interests and abilities that may not be evident during formal lessons. Therefore, extracurricular activities

provide additional opportunities for teachers to identify and nurture pupils' sporting talents towards potential future careers. Another respondent further explained:

> *Extracurricular activities give pupils more time to practise. Some pupils who are not very active during lessons become very good at football or netball after classes. We also see pupils practising athletics and skipping rope. Because we see them repeatedly, it becomes easier to know which pupils have genuine ability and interest in a particular sport (H2, Interview, Sept 2026*).

The statement suggests that extracurricular activities create additional opportunities for pupils to practise and demonstrate their abilities. They also allow teachers to conduct repeated observations, which can help distinguish consistent ability from temporary performance. This finding is supported by Ropret and Jevtic (2019), who emphasised the long-term nature of athlete development. Their work suggests that sporting potential needs to be considered over time rather than through isolated performances. Therefore, the repeated practice and observation provided by extracurricular activities can help teachers understand whether a pupil's sporting performance is sustained.

Pupils' Self-Identification of Sports Talents

The final strategy that emerged from the findings was pupils' self-identification of sports talents. The data revealed that some pupils can recognise their own sporting abilities and communicate their interests to teachers. Pupils also voluntarily participated in sporting activities in which they believed they had greater ability or interest. This suggests that pupils can play an active role in identifying their own sporting potential rather than relying entirely on teachers to discover their talents. Through self-identification, pupils may draw teachers' attention to abilities that might otherwise remain unnoticed during formal Sports and Arts lessons. The findings further indicate that pupils' self-identification can occur across different sporting activities, including football, netball, athletics, skipping rope and traditional games such as rede and mdako. By informing teachers about the sports they enjoy or perform well in, pupils provide an initial indication that can guide teachers towards further observation and assessment of their abilities. Also, respondent P, at the time of the focus group discussion, responded that:

> *I like playing football, and I told my teacher that I am good at playing. The teacher watched me when we were playing and later selected me to play for our class. Some of my friends are better at netball or running, while others like skipping rope and reading. We tell our teachers which sports we like so we can have the opportunity to participate (P from school C, FGD, Sept 2026*).

The quotation demonstrates that pupils can play an active role in talent identification by recognising their abilities and seeking opportunities to demonstrate them. This finding is supported by Wilfred and Tarmo (2025), who identified self-identification as one of the strategies used to recognise pupils' non-academic talents in Tanzanian primary schools. Similarly, Faridniya et al. (2024) emphasised the importance of identifying pupils' sporting potential through assessments of their abilities and performance. These findings relate to Holland's Career Development Theory (1959), which emphasises the importance of understanding individual interests and abilities when guiding career choices. Therefore, encouraging pupils to communicate their sporting interests and abilities can strengthen teachers' efforts to identify and develop their talents for potential future sports careers. Another pupil stated:

> *I like athletics because I can run faster than many of my peers. I also participate in skipping rope, but I am better at running. When we have competitions, I tell the teacher that I want to participate. The teacher then watches us and chooses pupils who perform well. (P from school A, FGD, Sept 2026*).

The quotation implies that pupils may recognise their own interests and abilities before teachers identify them. Therefore, allowing pupils to express their sporting interests can help teachers identify talents that might otherwise remain unnoticed. This interpretation is supported by Wilfred and Tarmo (2025), whose study recognised pupils' self-identification as a strategy for identifying non-academic talents in Tanzanian primary schools. Similarly, Faridniya et al. (2024) emphasised the importance of assessing pupils' sporting abilities and performance when identifying talent. Self-identification can occur across different sports, as pupils may express interest in football, netball, athletics, or traditional activities such as rede, mdako, and skipping rope. Such information can guide teachers' further observation. This finding relates to Holland's Career Development Theory (1959), which emphasises the importance of individual interests and abilities in career development. Therefore, teachers should encourage pupils to communicate their sporting interests and subsequently verify their abilities through repeated observation and actual sporting performance. This participatory approach balances pupils' self-perceptions with observable evidence of sporting potential.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that teachers use several strategies to identify pupils' sports talents, including observation during Sports and Arts lessons, school sports competitions, UMITASHUMTA, extracurricular activities and pupils' self-identification. During Sports and Arts lessons, teachers observe pupils' abilities in football, netball, athletics and traditional games, focusing on skills such as speed, coordination, ball control, endurance, teamwork and agility. School competitions and UMITASHUMTA provide opportunities to assess pupils under competitive conditions and compare their abilities with others. Extracurricular activities also allow teachers to observe pupils repeatedly, while pupils' self-identification helps teachers recognise their interests and abilities. Therefore, sports talent identification is a continuous process that involves observation across different sporting contexts. Using different strategies enables teachers to observe pupils in different sporting situations and increases the possibility of identifying pupils with different forms of sporting potential.

Recommendation

The study recommends that the government and education authorities improve support for sports development in public primary schools by providing adequate equipment, facilities, qualified sports teachers, and regular training. District authorities should organise more sports competitions and strengthen links between schools and sports organisations to help identify and develop talented pupils. Head teachers and teachers should encourage participation in different sporting activities, create opportunities for pupils to develop their abilities, and monitor their progress. Parents and community members should also support pupils' involvement in sports, while sports organisations should provide coaching, mentorship, competitions, and career guidance to help pupils explore future opportunities in the sports sector.

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