
ASSESSMENT OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND ITS EFFECTS ON STUDENTS' BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN EKITI STATE. NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The uneven scholarly existence of Nigerian students tends to build the life and strain in student's social life in Nigeria higher institutions, hence the hazard of students' contribution in cultism and craziness which increases amid examination periods. It has also been uncovered that these wonders are generally initiated by the diminished or apathetic state of mind of students towards recreation, presumably because of, ignorance of the advantages resulting from such or the non accessibility or deficiency of the vital recreational facilities. The social life of students on the campus are bit by bit diminishing in cordiality due to absence of sporting activities and spaces to unite them for vital relaxation to enhance good relationship among them. This paper is therefore set to examine the impact of sports and recreation in enhancing the students' physiological, sociological and mental status in the campuses of Nigeria Higher Institutions

KEYWORDS: Recreational Facilities, Students' behaviours, Tertiary Institution, Ekiti State.

INTRODUCTION

Recreation is considered to be activity voluntarily undertaken primarily for pleasure and satisfaction during leisure time and widely regarded as an activity that includes physical, mental, social and emotional involvement as contrasted with sheer idleness or complete rest (Agbola, 2001). Recreation is also a form of play or amusement, refreshment of body and mind and something that pleasantly occupies one's time after work is done. It can also be seen as an activity that involves play which allows for self expression and from which relaxation, pleasure and satisfaction can be derived.

Recreation is refreshment of body and or mind through engagement undertaken during ones leisure time (Mohammad, 2006). Like all working machines, the human body and mind have to be maintained periodically. Indeed, largely because of the special circumstances of humans in the civilization that they have fashioned for themselves, periodic recreation has become an essential element in the maintenance package available for the optimum lubrication and prolongation of human life and enhancement of quality and output in human labour. <http://rwuhp.tripod.com/ca/ampark/senior/intro.html> (2002) ascertained that recreation is rooted in a Latin word "recreatio" which refers to restoration or recovery. The term 'recreatio' implies the recreation of energy or the restoration of ability to function.

However, these huge drastic planning and developmental oversights cannot de-emphasize the unquantifiable value/need for recreational facilities in our cities today. Recreation is defined as a recreation or restoration of depleted motor power or emotional state. It was also described as a socially acceptable leisure experience or activity that rests men from work, brings satisfaction often by giving them a change, and restores them for work (Jedo, 2016).

From these various definitions, one could deduce the following characteristics of any recreation activity- it should be an activity engaged in during one's free time, it should be enjoyable, it must be voluntary and constructive. We should not expect any reward from it. There should be moral, social, mental, or physical advantage of such recreational activities, if continued for a reasonable length of time.

The place of recreation in the life of man cannot be overemphasized. It is indeed, part and parcel of living process. There has always been innate urge for man to engage in one type of recreational activity or the other during his work free period. Some people recreate for fun and relaxation, others recreate to lose weight and stay fit. There are still others who recreate for revitalization of health. Recreation is not a panacea to the attainment of high level of health, but combined with other factors which affect health it can elevate health for normal individual. Contrary to the popular idea about recreation, it is not physical. Any worthwhile activity could constitute recreation. Recreation activities are therefore, limitless. They are the most useful way to use up one's leisure, and they have both rehabilitative and therapeutic values (Muhammad, 2006).

However, recreation should be generally conceived as the consumption of leisure and leisure facilities for the purpose of refreshing oneself, but a distinction in line with Butter (1960) can be readily made on the one hand between active or outdoor recreation that involving participants in sports and outdoor games, driving, fishing for pleasure, swimming and climbing; and on the other hand, passive or indoor recreation in which the individual is essentially a spectator as in sightseeing, watching and listening to electronic gadgets and relaxation with indoor game.

It can reward the participants in terms of intellectual, physical and social growth, better health, improved citizenship and other qualities of personal development. Several researches have been carried out to determine the positive benefits (both physical and psychological) of recreational open spaces on human beings. The role of the open spaces in providing a healthful environment was also enumerated in some Nigerian cities such as Lagos (Arikawe 1985) Ile-Ife (Falade 1988) and Ibadan (Obateru 1981). But the true appreciation of the contributions which recreation could make to the quality of life in the environment seems to be just, commanding only more than lip service it receives from public officials. Hence the need for more researches on the existing situations and the necessity for appropriate suggestions for improvement and sustenance.

Campus Environment and Recreational Needs

Structured education in Nigeria started as far back as 1948 with the establishment of University College Ibadan. Shortly after independence in 1960, four more Universities came into existence. These are the University of Lagos, University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and University of Nigeria Nsukka (Akintude, 2011).

However, the number of higher institutions in Nigeria has continued to be on the increase since then and by 1990, there were 22 Federal and State Universities, 16 Federal and State Polytechnics, and Six Degree-awarding Colleges of Education. Today there are about 354 higher institutions in Nigeria: 158 universities, 110 Polytechnics and 82 Colleges of Education. These also include the Private Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges). (NUC 2017)

Coupled with continuous increase in the number of higher institutions in Nigeria is the ever increasing number of students in take to each institution. This necessitates a corresponding greater demand on the available recreational and sporting facilities. The result is that the available facilities have become grossly inadequate thereby requiring an expansion of the existing ones as well as the addition of new proposals. The severity of academics could become too much for students with the attendant negative effect where there are no provision for leisure time for recreation, thus confirming the saying that “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy”. To balance this academic severity, students’ need these facilities within the campus where they can recreate or participate in physical activities to enable them return to their studies with renewed vigour and vitality. Sports centres in the campuses are therefore at an advantaged position to enhance and promote the kind of balance required in the academic life of students.

In an attempt to disseminate sporting activities among Nigerian students in various campuses, various sporting competitions were held either bi-annually or annually under the umbrella of the following bodies: Nigeria. Hence, this has greatly helped in unifying students from various geo-political zones and ethnic groups in the country. Since the programme is periodical and sectional, the effect may therefore not be continuously far-reaching and effective in all the campus.

Several authorities such as Federal Ministry of Sports and Youth Development, Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA), Olympics among others regard sports as a social institution that faithfully teaches and reinforces esteemed societal values, thereby contributing to socializing men and women in the major cultural, social and behavioural patterns of their society. In this regard, sport contributes to the development, stability and future progress of individual and the society at large. So also are the development of physical fitness, mental alertness, self-control, self-discipline, and appropriate blend of competitive values within individuals through sports. The identified factors which influence recreational behaviours among urban residents include age, level of income, level of education, distance of users’ residence to recreational centre, sex and the number of available recreational facilities (Obateru 1981). However, other factors which influence recreational pursuit as highlighted by Falade and Bakare (1992) are the amount of available time for leisure and other factors relating to recreational areas such as accessibility, landscape quality, marketing and publicity.

Furthermore, the increasing demand for sports had been attributed to man’s changing way of life by the diminishing requirements of physical efforts both in man’s occupation and daily life as a direct result of scientific and technological process. Researchers have also revealed that the change from muscular work to sedentary work has led to over –weight (obesity) becoming largely psycho-nervous in origin, culminating in tension syndromes which exhibit more harm and longer lasting effect than those associated with purely muscular fatigue (Akintude, 2011). However, it has been observed that members of the institution community see no reason why they should earmark time for

recreational: probably because of ignorance of benefits derivable from such, or because of lack of provision of such facilities. Therefore, this study strives to investigate the effects of the presence of recreational facilities on students' behavioural pattern in our higher institutions of learning in Nigeria and proffer appropriate.

Research Methodology

The 420 research questionnaires prepared for the study were distributed among the users of the higher institutions sport centres spread across Ekiti States (for the purpose of this research, Universities, Polytechnics and College of Education are classified as higher institutions). These higher institutions in the state are: Colleges of Education, Ikere Ekiti (COE), Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti (EKSU), The Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti (FEDPOLY) and The Federal University Oye Ekiti (FUOYE). The rest are Crown Polytechnic Ado –Ekiti (CPA) and Afe Babalola University Ado –Ekiti (ABUAD). While the first two institutions are owned by the Ekiti State Government, both Federal Polytechnic Ado Ekiti and Federal University Oye Ekiti are owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria and the last two are owned by private individuals.

Incidentally, these institutions spread across the three senatorial districts of the state which give the research a very wider coverage. 70 questionnaires were distributed in each school randomly among the students, the academic and non-academic members of staff of each institution. The students were giving more priority in the administration of the questionnaires because of their population and being the major users of the recreational centres. Therefore, 60% were distributed among the students, 25% and 15% for non-academic and academic members respectively.

However, 362 questionnaires (86.19 %) 62 from COE, 54 from CPA 65 from FEDPOLY, 63 from ABUAD, 60 from EKSU and 58 from FUOYE were retrieved for the data analysis.

The following variables were investigated in the study (a) Status of the respondents (b) Purpose of participation in sports and recreation (c) Impact of recreation on academic life of people on campus (d) Impact of active participation in sports and recreation on cultism (e) Rating of the effects of sports on human relationship in the campus (f) Reasons for nonparticipation by respondents (g) Rating of facilities available in the campus.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1 revealed that a total of 362 respondents were interviewed for this research work. Out of this, 235 (64.9%) were students, 67 (18.5%) were lecturers while 60 (16.6%) were administrative staff which is otherwise called non-academic staff. This indicates that despite the fact that the highest percentage (64.9%) of users are students, other categories of people such as academic and non-academic staff also make use of the institutions sport centres.

The study also revealed that recreation has the highest percentage of 59.35 as the major purpose of participating in sports. This is followed by the quest for physical fitness which recorded an average of 33.15% response. However, (7.46%) of the respondents chose to participate in sporting activities simply because it has to do with their future careers or it is their course of study.

The result in table 1 further revealed that, a total of 106 respondents (29.28%) strongly believed that sports had improved their learning ability and health. They further explained that they always return

to classroom with renewed energy and strength as a result, they are mentally alert for their lectures. One could link this response to the fact that if an idle hand is a workshop for the devil, then an idle body will also be a workshop for sickness and diseases. Also, an incredible number of respondents totaling 174(48.07%) agreed that sporting activities and recreation excellently promote a good level of friendliness and mutual interactions among students.

This is a fact since students in higher institutions anywhere in the world are neither from the same family nor from the same socio-cultural background. Though few people about 22.65% still see sporting activities as unseriousness and wastage of time, the positive aspect of the result is encouraging.

The result in Table 1 further revealed that active sports have great tendency to influence participant's human relationship. People that cannot easily express their mind to others due to phobic disorder of audience and spectators, find such easy to do with sports bringing them into contact with people from different backgrounds (races, sex and religion). Thus, people who were introverts and become extroverts to recorded 28.45%, while those from extroverts to a more stable extrovert's character recorded 71.55% response.

On whether active participation in sports and recreation could reduce students' involvement in cult related activities, more than 2/3 of the total respondents (74.59%) believed and agreed that a sure way to reduce to the barest minimum the national syndrome is by getting all the students involved in sporting activities in all campuses of Nigeria higher institutions.

Despite the warm embracement of sports and recreation as a panacea to ever increasing secret cult activities in Nigeria campuses, some see it as an open invitation to sports men and women especially the stars among them. At this juncture, I believe that if sporting facilities are adequate in various campuses and are fully utilized by the students, they (students) will not have such time for such social vices.

While about 31.22% went for the former a reasonable number of interviewees (157) about 43.39% agreed with the latter. Some also attributed their non-participation in sporting activities and recreation to lack of time as they are always busy with their studies and religious activities. Only a very few (8.56%) confirmed that laziness on their part was the sole cause.

While as much as 213 interviewees (about 58.84%) claimed that they did not have adequate sport facilities, only 72 out of 362 interviewed (19.89%) confirmed that they had enough sport facilities. It was also revealed that it's only in Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) that sporting facilities were most adequate.

The study revealed that most of the sport facilities are not well maintained; hence they are mostly in the state of disrepair. In EKSU, the two football pitches are not standard and are only used for practicing rather than competition. A sport that has gained a worldwide popularity and recognition While only FEDPOLY had squash Racket hall, Hockey pitch and Hand ball court, the only sport facility available at CPA was a rectangular shape they called football pitch which lacks grasses and goal posts.

Generally, the sport facilities in the six campuses as revealed by table 2 are grossly inadequate. Even the very few ones on ground are in bad conditions. The study has thus evaluated the importance of sporting facilities in higher institutions in Ekiti State with regards to the various programmes, they serve. It also focused on the available sporting facilities, the conditions of the facilities recreational satisfaction of users and the appraisal of their influence on the behavioural pattern of users.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on the various facts that emerged from this study, the following recommendations are therefore made.

1. The study revealed that students mostly patronize the recreational facilities as expected. However, other members of the institution community should be encouraged to actively participate in the use of the centres, to entrench adequate control and maintenance of the existing facilities.
2. The facilities provided in the institutions understudy are grossly inadequate for social and intellectual satisfaction of the students. The authorities should therefore declare state of emergency in sport and beam their search light on the facilities they are lacking.
3. With the expected facilities made available by the schools' authorities, they (the authorities) should therefore constantly arrange inter-unit games within the institution and with other sister institutions. This would subdue the idleness in students, which causes bad association and the attendant social vices.
4. It is evidently clear from the submission that the benefits derivable from regular participation in sports and recreation include vigor, feeling of well-being, weight reduction, and resistance to stress, obedience to rules, good relationship and ability to cope with emergencies. These are necessary prowess required by students to sustain their academic and social life both during the lecture and examination periods on the campus and outside the campus and this should be encouraged.
5. Authorities such as National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), National Commission on Colleges of Education (N.C.C.E.) and National Universities Commission (NUC) should not be concerned only with the academic standards of higher institutions, they should set up a board each to plan, execute, supervise and monitor sporting and recreational activities and projects in the institutions. This will improve the students' social and psychological value and enhance their academic pursuit in life in particular and improve societal values in general.
6. Higher institutions in Ekiti State should be encouraged by their authorities to host both the National and zonal sporting competitions. This will go a long way in updating the already existing sporting facilities and putting in place new ones that will be required by such competitions.

The inventory, analysis and assessments carried out in the study have identified the wealth of sporting and recreational resources in higher institutions in Ekiti State. The lopsidedness in the use of the facilities by students and inadequacy of the facilities pose a challenge to the authorities and other members of the institution community. It could be concluded that sports are forms of diversion, in which the participants become completely immersed in activities that can provide relieve to tensions and emotions.

Hence, it would reduce cultism, subdue depression and promote a high level of discipline, excellence, dedication, determination, dependability and a better self- image expected in the society. It is hoped that if the above recommendations are implemented, the higher institutions in

Nigeria in general and Ekiti State in particular will be devoid of its untold tension and stress.

TABLE 1: RESPONSE OF USERS OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE SELECTED INSTITUTIONS

VARIABLES	COE	CPA	FEDPOLY	ABUAD	EKSU	FUOYE	Total	% of total
1. Personal data respondent								
a. Students	37	35	43	42	40	38	235	64.9
b. Academics	16	14	12	09	08	08	67	18.5
c. Non academic	09	05	10	12	12	12	60	16.6
Total	62	54	65	63	60	58	362	100
2. Purpose of participation in sports								
a. Recreation	33	34	37	37	40	34	215	59.39
b. Physical fitness	18	18	24	21	15	24	120	33.15
c. Future career	08	01	04	03	03	-	19	5.25
d. Course of study	03	01	-	02	02	-	08	2.21
Total	62	54	65	63	60	58	362	100
3. Opinion on impact of sports on students								
a. Waste of time	10	08	07	02	06	03	36	9.94
b. Improves learning ability and health	18	17	25	21	08	17	106	29.28
c. Increases unseriousness	06	06	10	06	10	08	46	12.71
d. Increases friendliness	28	23	23	34	36	30	174	48.07
Total	62	54	65	63	60	58	362	100
4. Impact of active participation in sports and recreation on cultism								
a. Increase cult activities	18	19	10	09	24	12	92	25.41
b. Reduces cult activities	44	35	55	54	36	46	27	74.59
Total	62	54	65	63	60	58	362	100
5. Rating the effect of sports on human relationship of sportsmen and women								
a. Extro to introvert	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
b. Intro to extrovert	16	18	10	23	16	20	103	28.45
c. Extrovert to stable extrovert	47	35	55	40	44	38	259	71.55
d. Introvert to less stable introvert	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	62	54	65	63	60	58	362	100
6. Why some members do not participate in sports								
a. Lack of time	12	08	10	09	12	10	61	16.85
b. Inadequate sport facilities	21	17	20	20	18	17	113	31.22
c. Laziness	07	03	05	08	04	04	31	8.56
d. Ignorance of benefits	22	26	30	26	26	27	157	43.37
Total	62	54	65	63	60	58	362	100
7. Rating of sport facilities in the campuses								
a. Adequate	08	03	15	36	07	03	72	19.89

b. Averagely adequate	16	10	18	12	12	09	77	21.27
c. Inadequate	38	41	32	15	41	46	213	58.84
Total	62	54	65	63	60	58	362	100

AUTHORS FIELD SURVEY, 2017

TABLE 2: SPORTING FACILITIES PROVIDED AT THE CAMPUS

S/N	ITEMS	NUMBER OF AVAILABLE FACILITIES					
		COE	CPA	FEDPOLY	ABUAD	EKSU	FUOYE
i.	Indoor sports hall	-	-	1	1	-	-
ii.	Football pitch	1	1	5	1	2	1
iii.	Basketball court	1	-	2	1	-	-
iv.	Lawn Tennis court	1	-	1	1	-	-
v.	Volleyball court	1	-	2	1	-	1
vi.	Handball court	-	-	1	-	-	-
vii.	Hockey pitch court	-	-	1	-	-	-
viii.	Cricket pitch	-	-	-	-	-	-
ix.	Table tennis hall	-	-	4	2	2	-
x.	Squash racket hall	-	-	1	-	-	-
xi.	Swimming pool	-	-	-	-	-	-

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