



PERCEPTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ON THE IMPACT OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES ON MENTAL AND PHYSICAL FITNESS IN MINNA, NIGER STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: Recreational activities play a vital role to the development of the well being of individuals. This study investigated the perception of secondary school teachers in Minna metropolis on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness of individuals. The study used stratified and random sampling technique. A total of sample of 140 respondents were used including male and female folks. The instrument used for data collection was a self developed questionnaire titled "Recreational Activities for Mental and Physical Fitness of the Body" (RAPMFB) validated by two Physical Education experts from Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai Niger State. Test and re-test method was used within two weeks interval to obtain reliability coefficient of 0.83, which was found suitable for the study. The result of the study revealed that teachers conceded positively to the statement on the impact of recreational activities on the basis of gender and marital status. It was also revealed that recreational activities enhance smooth movement of joints and muscles for daily engagement, mitigate the rate of stress, anxiety and emotional imbalance, rejuvenate ones body, contribute to mental alertness required to face challenges of daily life. The researchers concluded that recreational activities impacted positively to mental and physical wellbeing of individuals and recommended that schools authorities and individuals should provide adequate sports facilities and equipments, to increase the level of involvement in regular recreational activities among teachers in secondary schools for effective service delivery in Niger State.

Keywords: Perception, Recreational activities, Mental and Physical fitness,

INTRODUCTION

Recreational activities are physical activities engaged by individuals during leisure hours to become refreshed or recreated, which gives a rejuvenating state for one to return to the position of rebirth. Common recreational activities engaged by individuals includes; cycling, sports, fishing, swimming, boat cruising, sunbathing, picnicking, walking, birds watching, hunting, wilderness relaxation mountain climbing, to mention but a few (Lawal and Bilesanmi, 2013). Nigeria is a home to many national miscellaneous and cultural institutions, most of them located in

metropolitan cities, including the national library and the national theatre in Lagos. There are endless beaches and dazzling wildlife reserves, natural areas of cultural importance, such as Osun Sacred Forest - protected area accommodating traditional sculptures and shrines within one of the country's vast wild rainforest. Nigeria's rich cultural heritage is embodied in the treasures of traditional art; the country has to offer such as naturalistic statues, bronzes, terra-cotta figurines, masks and shrines all of great relevance to visitors from within and abroad.

There are also numerous attractions, place of interest and cultural opportunities that Nigeria has to offer are part to fulfil anyone's taste in addition to wonderful natural endorsement in which Niger State housed many of such destinations as Zuma Rock in Suleja, Kainji National Park, Gurara Waterfall and Ladi Kwali pottery etc. which the country boasts of as cultural institutions, providing avenue for some sort of leisure activities to enjoy in Nigeria. The Institute of African Studies, tasks with rekindling the population of traditional and indigenous culture and art. Music and dance are deeply rooted in the Nigerian soil and identity and have historically been used to celebrate and punctuate social events widely used traditional instruments include; musical bows, xylophones, clappers, trumpets, flutes and drums (Expert Guide, 2020). The development of recreational activities in Nigeria, according to Aibeku (2002), can be analyzed from several perspectives. They maintain that generally, the issue of fitness and wellness has become very topical, giving that galaxy of societal changes, which bring about rapid alterations in our ways of life, particularly those things pertaining stress, emotion and anxiety. The alternatives people give to it now is to live a sedentary lifestyle by reading, watching and listening to all sort of media, instead of engaging in active recreational activities that will engages the real exercise of using physical body. In this respect, watching electronic media makes viewers to be spectators rather than being active participants. However, these spectators enjoy viewing and because of joy derived from it, it tends to reduce stress and anxiety. Owie (2003) maintained that recreational activities are holistic concepts of total fitness and has to do with the Physical Mental, Social Emotional and Spiritual wellbeing of the individual. The American



Association for Health, Physical discussed education and recreation AAHPER (2014) stated that areas of physical fitness in recreation include; proper, regular and effective exercise and healthy play. Anderson (2007); Adeyanju (2008); Levy and Delancy (2012) revealed that there are various types of recreational activities. These according to them, include; school recreation, community recreation, industrial recreation, therapeutic recreation, family recreation, commercial recreation, religions recreation and municipal recreation. However, for the purpose of this study recreation was vied as one concept that border on exercise fitness and wellness.

World Health Organization ,WHO (2006), asserted that participation in recreation and physical or sports activities can have many benefits for both the individual as those activities are enjoyable and are effective ways to improving health and well-being; they can relieve stress, increase fitness, improve physical and mental health, and prevent the development of chronic disease, such as heart disease. Though previous studies ascertained the relevance of participation in recreational activities but very little was said about its impacts on mental and physical fitness of secondary school teachers in the area under study. This motivated the researchers to undertake this study with the sole aim of finding out the perception of secondary school teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness of individuals in Minna metropolis, Niger State, Nigeria.

The Problem

Teachers were known to engage in hectic and holistic series of chains of activities to include; teaching, planning, organizing, and marking assignments and examinations of students which narrow their free hour to recreate. These schedules of duties are capable of creating stress and depression to teachers for lacking time for leisure pursuit. To provide a room for participation, curriculum developers have scheduled time on the time-table for academic physical activities in the morning hours and extracurricular sport session in the evening (Adeyanju, 2008 and Vankateswalu, and Gwani, 2008).

Observed by the researchers was that students and teachers are confronted with responsibilities and challenges such as; lack of confidence, frustration, increase in task demand, inability to cope with sensory information, inability to estimate actual performance response, lack of psychological balance, fear of failure, family and persona-social engagements. This call for a need to recreate in order maintain psychological balance of state of mind and to attain a healthy condition of life. There is also an observed increase in cardiovascular diseases due to sedentary life style among teachers in secondary schools leading to poor physical and mental health which in turn affect the quality of their lives. It is based on the above backdrop, the researchers intended to investigate the impact of various recreational activates as perceived by teachers in secondary school in Niger State Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the difference in the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on their mental and physical fitness based on gender?
2. What is the difference in the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on their mental and physical fitness based on the marital status?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on their mental and physical fitness on the basis of gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness on the basis of marital status.

METHODOLOGY

Survey design was used for this study to investigate teachers' perception on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness on the basis gender and marital status. The sample size for this study was 140 respondents, drawn at random from a population of 7,402. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire tagged, 'Recreational Activities for Mental and Physical Fitness of the



Body" (RAPMFB) containing 15 items validated by experts in the department of Human Kinetics and Health Education IBB University Lapai, Niger State. It was later exposed to a pilot study where 0.83 test re-test method result was obtained as reliability index, which was found suitable for the study. The researchers there after administered the questionnaire to the selected respondents in the schools to elicit their responses. All (140) returned questionnaires were collated and was exposed to data analysis using T-test statistics at 0.05 alpha levels for the respondents.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness on the basis of gender.

Table 1: Showing T-Test Analysis on the Impact of Recreational Activities on Mental and Physical Fitness on the Basis of Gender

Variables	N	X	SD	DF	Cal-T	Cal-Cri	Decision
Male	73	50.61	6.91				
Female	67	49.89	6.11	118	0.41	1.96	NS

The table above shows a calculated T-value of 0.41 and a critical t-value of 1.96. Since the calculated T-value was less than the critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness of individuals.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness on the basis of marital status.

Table 2: Showing T-test analysis on the Impact of Reactional Activities on Metal and Physical Fitness on the Basis of Marital Status

Variables	N	X	SD	DF	Cal-T	Cal-Cri	Decision
Male	73	50.61	6.91				

Female	67	49.89	6.11	118	0.41	1.96	NS
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The table above shows a calculated T-value of 0.41 and a critical t-value of 1.96 since the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value; the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implied that there is no significant difference in the perception of married and unmarried teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness of individuals.

DISCUSSION

The study investigated the impact of recreational activities on the physical and mental fitness of the body on the basis of gender and marital status. The result in table one showed that a calculate t-value 0.41 was less than the critical t-value of 1.96. This implied that there was no significant difference between the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness of the body on the basis of gender. Some of the statements or items in the questionnaire were that; recreational activities makes one to cope with stress, anxiety, emotional disturbance, can generate motivation, confidence, endurance, enhancing performance, enjoying relaxation and leisure periods to mention a few. This result corroborates with Aibeku (2002), Anderson (2007) Ibrahim and Cordes (2008), Lawal and Bilesanmi (2013) and Expert Guide (2020) whom were of the view that recreational activities impacted not only on the physical and mental fitness but also makes one to cope with multidimensional implications such as; confusion, destabilization, dissatisfaction in duty performance, loneliness, and in general enhances spiritual and emotional wellbeing of individuals.

Hypothesis two of this study was tested to find out if there is significant difference between the perception of teachers on the impact of recreational activities on mental and physical fitness of the body on the basis of marital status. The result indicated that married and unmarried respondents acceded that recreational activities are capable of impacting positively on the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals. This result does not synchronize with the previous findings of Ibrahim and Cordes (2008); Lawal and Bilesanmi (2013) and Bamide (2015) who discovered that married and unmarried respondents equally



responded that confidence, endurance, regular exercise can be enhanced with nutritious food and all these have impacted on recreational activities, physical and mental fitness of the body and wellbeing of individuals.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that recreational activities are very pertinent to enhancing mental and physical fitness of human body. The study discovered that recreational activities could be used to cope with stress, anxiety and emotional disturbance, prevent the development of chronic diseases such as heart diseases, weakness of the body, dissatisfaction in service delivery, reduction of social stigma and promoting social inclusion, particularly, among introverted individuals and physically challenged persons.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made by the researcher.

1. School authorities are to provide and maintain recreational facilities for staff and students to provide avenue for them to recreate.
2. Recreational activities such as cycling running, climbing hills, swimming and indoor games should be given priority for teachers and students in various educational institutions for sound physical and mental fitness.

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