

Recreational Benefits as Determinants of Quality of Life among Physically Challenged Students in School for Special needs, Ilorin, Kwara State.

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Abstract

Recreation is an activity that is fun-filled, beneficial and carried out voluntarily irrespective of age, gender, social class, and even health status. This study examined recreational benefits as determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in school for special needs, Ilorin, Kwara State. The variables investigated are; physical benefits, social benefits, intellectual benefits and emotional benefits as determinants of quality of life.

A descriptive research design of survey method was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised students of Kwara State School for special needs with a total number of two hundred and three students (203). Purposive sampling technique was used to select half of each stratum (50%) in which one hundred and four respondents (104) were randomly* selected. The research instrument was validated and a test-retest method was adopted for reliability Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Frequency count and percentages were used to analyze the demographic data of respondents the four null research Questions were analysed using descriptive statistic. The findings from the study revealed that; Physical benefits, Social benefits, and emotional benefits are determinants of significant quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin. Based on the findings of this study, It was recommended that physically challenged students should engage in recreational activities to improve their physical fitness, socially desired behaviours, improve cognitive ability and self-confidence to enjoy the quality of life.*

Introduction

Recreation nowadays is regarded as an activity that people engage in when they are less busy, so far it is moral and conforms to the social norms of the community. It is also an activity that is fun-filled, beneficial and carried out voluntarily irrespective of age, gender, social class, and health status (Amy & Denise, 2011). Recreational activities include but not limited to sport, listening to music, interacting with people and visiting places. Also, recreation involves a wide range of activities such as sports, games, performing arts, music, traveling and social activities. For example, playing cards or monopoly,

visiting the zoo or waterfall, dancing among others are activities we engage in at our leisure which are beneficial to our body (Ibrahim, 2010).

Meanwhile, judicious utilisation of leisure hours provides an opportunity for everyone in the society including the physically challenged to satisfy their basic needs for self-expression, physical, emotional, mental and social. Recreation as an antidote to the difficulties of life experiences should help to develop good citizenship qualities and encourage democratic principles (Odumuh, 2004). Engaging in recreational activities during leisure especially physical activities makes the participants be fit and prevents all

kinds of degenerative diseases like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes to mention a few. Participation in recreational activities also helps in stress management, self-realisation, and positive thinking among others and enhances both physical and psychological well-being.

Participating in leisure activities has been found to enhance the quality of life of people living with disabilities (Badia, Orgaz, Verdugo, Ullán, & Martinez, 2013). The importance of participation in leisure activities has also been acknowledged by the United Nations, in Article 30 of the rights of persons with disabilities (2006), which highlights that persons with disabilities should be able to participate on the same terms as others in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport. The general benefits of recreation to individuals according to Haastrup, (2011) include but not limited to: improvement of individual's health and fitness, increased personal satisfaction, boosts individuals self-esteem, development, of a new skill, reduction of stress, and socialization.(Babatunde, (2004) opined that medical scientists found out leisure activities are required to control hypertension and other coronary heart diseases.) (*This statement is not clear, make it meaningful*.)

Physical benefits of recreation highlighted by authors are in the areas of weight loss, development of the health and skill related components of fitness among others. The physical benefits that are derived from engaging in recreation are necessary for the physically challenged to have a good quality of life by enjoying life to the fullest. Vigorous activities during leisure promote the development of muscular strength, muscular endurance, power, flexibility, agility, and coordination (Akorede & Adewole, 2005). These will definitely allow

healthy living and a disease-free life for the physically challenged students.

Physical recreational activity is the mainstay of chronic disease prevention and health maintenance for all with and without disability (Laskowski & Lexell, 2012; Rimmer, Chen, McCubbin, Drum & Peterson, 2010). Engaging in this kind of recreational activities reduce the risks of diseases such as diabetes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, cardiac arrest, and heart diseases among others. Also, social benefits of recreation are perceived in the area of interactions between physically challenged and other students they meet at recreational centers or in their environs. Asagba, (2004) stated that recreation provides avenues for socialization and it is conducive to the development of desirable behaviour. Mixed participation in recreation which includes but not limited to pairing-up people with disabilities and able-bodied helps people without disabilities become aware of and understand people with disabilities (Wilhite & Shank, 2009). In the developed countries people with disabilities are involved to a greater??? in various applied physical, sports, and other recreational activities. According to Skucas, (2003), recreational activities lead to successful integration of people with disabilities in society.

It has also been affirmed that intellectual benefits of recreation aid cognitive development, Ikulayo, (2007) submitted that recreation regenerates the body and the brain. It serves as a break, which prevents the body from breaking down. For the improved quality of life and fulfillment, physically challenged individuals that engage in recreational activities have developed the mental ability and they are likely to do better in their studies. Unstructured recreational activities which include play is the foundation for the optimal

development of an individual whether young or old. It is in and through play that an individual learns, in other words, to develop the emotional, social and cognitive capacity to withstand challenges in later life. Play advocates argue that there is no division between play and learning, learning cannot happen without play and play leads to learning (Pramling-Samuelsson & Johansson, 2006).

Recreation aid students living with disability emotionally to carry on with life and interact with other students at school and home. Engaging in recreational activities with family and friends will make them associate more and free their mind of worries. Participation in recreational activities increases the wellbeing of students with disabilities (Aidar, 2007; Graham, Kremer & Wheeler, 2008). The emotional and psychological benefits of engaging in recreation go hand-in-hand and it is often used interchangeably in the literature. Psychological benefits include companionship, sense of achievement, and heightened self-esteem. The emotional benefits of engaging in recreational activities are mostly seen in the aspect of stress management due to the fact that people living with disabilities go through a lot of stress maybe when crossing the road, or when walking. Martin Ginis, Jorgensen and Stapleton, (2012) argued that people living with disabilities who participate in sports and recreational activities improve self-confidence, self-esteem, and quality of life, as well as activities of daily living.

The need for physically challenged students to engage in recreational activities for a better quality of life is paramount in the sense that people living with disabilities tend to be exposed to series of diseases and this is due to the fact that they are mostly inactive because

of their difficulties in seeing, hearing or walking. They also tend to accumulate fats faster than others and which in turn will expose them to the risks of cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases to mention few. Youth with disabilities incur greater risks of developing health problems such as obesity and chronic diseases including hypertension and diabetes (Anderson & Heyne, 2010).

Relaxation, rest and revitalization through the opportunity of leisure are essential for the physically challenged students for stress management, good emotional state and to maintain a good quality of life. Meaningful leisure activity is an essential source of self-esteem and positive self-image which is mainly needed by every individual. Physically challenged individuals are not motivated in this part of the world compare to the western part of the world. People living with one disability or the other are usually kept indoors by parents, thereby making them feel inferior to others and this will definitely deprive them of good quality of life. During recreation activities or play with their peers in school they tend to stay alone. Some physically challenged students think they do not need to engage in recreation because of their challenges and differences from other students, which make them participate less in leisure activities with peers than their contemporaries (Solish, Perry & Minnes, 2010), and their degree of participation decreases with age (Wendelborg & Paulsen, 2014). This problem may be caused by the fact that the physically challenged students may feel inferior compared to other students because of the challenges they have either to walk, see or hear. The effects of this problem will certainly be low self-esteem and bad emotional state. Whereas they need recreation to maintain a good quality of life because they also go through

stress in school and home. This study, therefore, examined recreational benefits as a determinant of quality of life of the physically challenged.

Research Questions

1. Will physical benefits of recreation be a determinant of good quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin?
2. Will social benefits of recreation be a determinant of good quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin?
3. Will intellectual benefits of recreation be a determinant of good quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin?
4. Will emotional benefits of recreation be a determinant of good quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin?

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive research design of survey type. The researcher collected information for the purpose of explaining, drawing inferences and generalising the findings of the study. The population for this study was all physically challenged students in the Kwara state school for special needs in

Ilorin east local government which was two hundred and six (206). Purposive sampling technique was used to select the Kwara state school for special needs in Ilorin. Stratified sampling technique was used to sort the population into intellectual, visual and physical disabilities. This is because it is the only school in Ilorin that possesses the qualities expected by this study. Proportionate sampling technique was used to select half of each stratum. Simple random sampling was used to select the participants. The selection is illustrated below:

A researcher structured questionnaire was used for this study. The instrument comprises of section A and B. Section A dealt with demographic information of the respondents. Section B elicited information relevant to the study. A four-point Likert type of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), strongly disagree (SD) and disagree (D) was adopted in order to indicate respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with all items of the questionnaire. The instrument was validated and a test re-test method was adopted for the reliability of the instrument and a correlation coefficient of 67r was obtained. This signified that the instrument was reliable enough for the study.

Results

Table 1: Demographic information of the respondents

S/ N	VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1.	Gender		
	Male	58	55.8

	Female	46	44.2
	Total	104	100
2.	Age-range		
	10-14years	31	29.8
	15-19years	55	52.9
	20 years & above	18	17.3
	Total	104	100
3.	Disability group		
	Intellectual disability	23	22.1
	Visual impairment	19	18.3
	Physical disability	62	59.6
	Total	104	100

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents that participated in the study. It was revealed that 58 respondents (55.8%) were male while 46 (44.2%), were female. This indicates that majority of the respondents were male. Also, the age range of the respondents revealed that 31 respondents representing 29.8% were between 10-14years, 55 respondents representing 52.9% were between 15-19 years while 18

respondents representing 17.3% were 20 years and above. This connotes that majority of the respondents were 15-19 years. More so, the disability group revealed that 23 respondents (22.1%) have intellectual disability, 19 respondents (18.3%) have a visual impairment, and 62 respondents (59.6%) have physical disabilities. This shows that majority of the respondents have physical disabilities

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of Physical Benefits of Recreation as a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

S/ N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Relaxation through recreation is necessary for physical balance in an individual living with disability	68 (65.4%)	27 (26.0%)	6 (5.8%)	3 (2.9%)	104
2	Participation in recreation brings about healthy living that is necessary for the physical wellbeing of students living with a disability	32 (30.8%)	43 (41.3%)	16 (15.4%)	13 (12.5%)	104
3	The physical benefit is a major factor that leads to a stress-free life among physically challenged students	46 (44.2%)	38 (36.5%)	13 (12.5%)	7 (6.7%)	104
4	Non-participation in recreational activities like sport, games may affect the wellness of students living with disability	36 (34.9%)	38 (36.5%)	17 (16.3%)	13 (12.5%)	104
	Column Total	182 (43.75%)	146 (35.10%)	52 (12.5%)	36 (8.65%)	416 (100%)

Table two revealed that 43.75% of the respondents strongly agreed that physical benefits of recreation will not

be significantly a determinant of good quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin, 35.10%

agreed, 8.65% disagreed while 12.5% strongly disagreed. This means physical benefits of recreation is a

determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of social benefits of recreation is a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

S/ N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Recreation has many benefits for physically challenged students in terms of wellbeing and social recognition.	61 (58.7%)	23 (22.1%)	13 (12.5%)	7 (6.7%)	104
2	Pairing-up students with disabilities and students without disabilities bring about unity and improve the wellness of students living with a disability.	36 (34.6%)	36 (34.6%)	22 (21.2%)	10 (9.6%)	104
3	Engaging in recreational activities does not provide physically challenged students with desirable behaviours.	34 (32.7%)	24 (23.1%)	35 (33.7%)	11 (10.6%)	104
4	Recreation is an agent of socialisation which brings students living with disabilities and others together to form peers and interact with each other.	42 (40.4%)	26 (25.0%)	22 (21.2%)	14 (13.5%)	104
Column Total		173 (41.59%)	109 (26.20%)	92 (22.12%)	42 (10.09%)	416 (100%)

Table three revealed that 41.59% of the respondents strongly agreed that social benefits of recreation will not significantly be a determinant of good quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin, 26.20% agreed, 10.09% disagreed while 22.12% strongly disagreed. This means social benefits of recreation is a

determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

RQ 3: will Intellectual benefits of recreation will not significantly be a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of the intellectual benefits of recreation is a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

S/ N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Engaging in recreational activities	61	26	6	11	104

	makes me mentally sound and this contributes positively to my stress-free life	(58.7%)	(25.0%)	(5.8%)	(10.6%)	
2	Recreation optimizes my cognitive functioning which is key in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.	34 (32.7%)	40 (38.5%)	21 (20.2%)	9 (8.7%)	104
3	Engaging in recreational activities such as reading, working puzzles and writing boost my cognitive ability	40 (38.5%)	35 (33.7%)	18 (17.3%)	11 (10.6%)	104
4	Good state of mind is a benefit derived from recreation which lowers my chances of having a stress-free life	23 (22.10%)	33 (31.7%)	34 (32.7%)	14 (13.5%)	104
	Column Total	158 (37.98%)	134 (32.21%)	79 (18.99%)	45 (10.82%)	416 (100%)

Table four revealed that 37.98% of the respondents strongly agreed that intellectual benefits of recreation will not significantly be a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin, 32.21% agreed, 10.82% disagreed while 18.99% strongly disagreed. This means intellectual benefits of recreation is a

determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

4: will emotional benefits of recreation will not significantly be a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

Table 5: Descriptive analysis of the emotional benefits of recreation as a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Row Total
1	Recreation is a remedy for physically challenged students that are mentally stressed and lack concentration in class.	48 (46.2%)	32 (30.8%)	20 (19.2%)	4 (3.8%)	104
2	Motivation is one of the emotional benefits of recreation that can provide a life without stress for students living with one disability or the other	34 (32.7%)	50 (48.1%)	15 (14.4%)	5 (4.8%)	104
3	Engaging in recreational activities that provide enjoyment and satisfaction enhance the wellbeing of physically challenged students.	54 (51.9%)	23 (22.1%)	19 (18.3%)	8 (7.7%)	104
4	Improved self-esteem is not a rudiment of a life without stress among physically challenged student.	37 (35.6%)	26 (25.0%)	26 (25.0%)	15 (14.4%)	104
	Column Total	173 (41.59%)	131 (31.49%)	80 (19.23%)	32 (7.69%)	416 (100%)

Table five revealed that 41.59% of the respondents strongly agreed that emotional benefits of recreation will not significantly be a determinant of good quality of life among physically

challenged students in Ilorin, 31.49% agreed, 7.69% disagreed while 19.23% strongly disagreed. This means emotional benefits of recreation is a determinant of quality of life among

physically challenged students in Ilorin.

Discussion of Findings

This research investigated the recreational benefits as determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin, Kwara State.

The findings revealed that physical benefits of recreation are determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin. Badia, Orgaz, Verdugo, Ullán, and Martinez, (2013), claimed that participation in physical recreational activities during leisure can contribute to and enhance the quality of life of people with disabilities. Hsieh, Rimmer, and Heller, (2014) also buttressed that adults less than 18 years with intellectual disabilities have a higher prevalence of obesity and morbid obesity than the general population, but through the engagement in physical recreational activities the risk of obesity is reduced to the minimum level which will lead to a healthy lifestyle among people living with disabilities.

The findings further indicate that social benefits of recreation are determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin. This is in line with Zabriskie, Lundberg, and Groff, (2005) who affirmed that recreation has many benefits for physically challenged youth, especially in terms of well-being and social recognition and as a means to overcome inactivity among young people with disabilities so as to have a quality life without stress.

The findings also revealed that intellectual benefits of recreation are a determinant of quality of life among physically challenged students. Nancy, Murphy, and Paul, (2008) who concluded that participation of children with disabilities in sports and recreational activities optimizes

intellectual functioning, and enhances overall well-being. Also, Nancy, Murphy, and Paul, (2008) affirmed that engaging in recreational activities will improve the mental health status of both the physically challenged in order to possess a life with little or no stress.

The findings showed that emotional benefits of recreation are a determinant of good quality of life among physically challenged students. Martin Ginis, Jorgensen and Stapleton, (2012) who stated that people living with disabilities and participate in sports and recreational activities have a self-confidence, self-esteem, and improve quality of life, as well as activities of daily living.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study these conclusions were reached;

1. Physical benefits of recreation are determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.
2. Social benefits of recreation are determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.
3. Intellectual benefits of recreation determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.
4. Emotional benefits of recreation are determinants of quality of life among physically challenged students in Ilorin.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study;

1. Physically challenged students should engage in physical recreational activities like sport, games, fishing among others to improve physical fitness as well as the quality of life.
2. Physically challenged students should engage in recreation

- activities like others do in the aspect of sightseeing, visiting amusement parks, attending festivals and carnivals to equip them with social desired behaviours that are necessary for having a life without stress.
3. Physically challenged students should engage in leisure activities like Scrabble, Ayo, monopoly among others to improve their cognitive ability and make them perform better in a difficult situation and decision making.
 4. Physically challenged students should engage in recreational activities which will give them self-confidence, good sense of belonging, a reduction in stress, anxiety, and depression among others which is important in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
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