Vol. 6 No. 3, November (2023)
JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND TOURISM EDUCATION
ISSN: 2659-0794 (PRINT) ISSN:2659-0808(ONLINE)
Content Available at: **https://jeate.net/index.php/Jete/issue/archive**

Fear And Sports Participation Among Secondary School Students In Cross River State, Nigeria

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Keywords
Fear, sports participation, injuries, secondary schools

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Received: 31/10/23
Revised: 1/11/23
Accepted: 1/11/23
Published: 24/11/23

Abstract

The main thrust of this study was to examine fear and sports participation among secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria. The purpose was achieved through one hypothesis formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Literature was reviewed based on the variable of the study. The study adopted the Ex-post facto design because of its appropriateness to the work. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sixty-six (66) secondary schools and one thousand three hundred and ninety-three (1393) respondents (students) used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured and validated questionnaire titled: Fear and Students' Sports Participation Questionnaire (FSPQ). Simple linear regression statistical tool was used for data analysis. The result obtained from analysis of data revealed that there was no significant influence of fear on secondary school students' participation in sports Cross River State. Based on this finding, it was recommended that various stakeholders should ensure that students are not refrained from participating actively in sports for fear of injuries in order to promote their involvement at all times.

Introduction

Sport could be regarded as an avenue through which an individual acquires physical development, mental development, moral development and social development. Sport helps in relieving emotional tension and helps an individual to attain physical prowess fame and international recognition (Odok, Dan & Akpong, 2017). Oluwaye (2017) stressed that sport is an important co-curricular activity that should be entrenched into the academic programmes of school, given that sport has physical, social, moral and emotional values that contributes to all round development of students.

Odok, Akpa and Apie (2016) asserted that participation in sports has since become common rites of passage in childhood through adulthood. They researchers recalled that at the beginning of the twentieth century, agencies and schools provided sports opportunities as a means of providing wholesome leisure time activities for children and youths. Dan, Odok, Osaji and Akpong (2020) added that participation in sports and clubbing activities moved from social gathering and youth organized activities to adult organized programmes in the twentieth-first century and has now gained ground in properly structured sports programmes which has given youths the opportunity to engage in beneficial, ascertaining, educative ad mind-relaxing sports activities.

Ojeme (2009) stated that though it had not been proven scientifically or medically that sports participation could contribute to longevity of life. It has been noted that with sports, one can live a stress free and healthy life. Sports have the potentials to enhance these and as well reduce the tendency of pathologically age. This implies that, the more one participates in sports, the younger in appearance the person may look. It is essential for both young and old to take part in one form of sports or the other, in order to live and maintain a healthy life.

Till (2014) noted that it is widely recognized that active participation of people in sporting activities is relevant and healthy for man's physical development. For instance, physical activities are known to reduce resting blood pressure, have positive impact on the psychological well-being of participants, positively reduce anxiety as well as promote an individual's self-esteem and mood. This informs why so much emphasis is placed on sports participation in the past. Taking into consideration the psychological and physiological benefits of sports, the rationale for introducing inter-house sports at both primary and secondary school level.

In the same vein Odok, Akpong and Dan (2017) stated that it is a well-documented fact that decreases in athletic performance after injury can be attributed to both psychological and physical factors. The sports professionals have become aware of the integral role that psychological factors play in the injury occurrence and recovery processes. For this reason, such constructs like 'perceiving fears', 'confidence in avoiding injury', 'fear of pain' and 'fear of injury' have become important factors to consider when dealing with injured athletes.

Sagar and Lavallee (2018) investigated the developmental origins of fear of failure in adolescent athletes. The researchers looked at the daily sport socialization interactions between

points and their children and how this could be a major factor in the development of the fear of failure in younger athlete: punitive behaviour, controlling behaviour and high expectations for achievement. The researchers found that the parental mindset that "losing competitions will lead to aversive consequences for their child's sporting progression and cancer" can contribute to the development of fear of failure.

Statement of hypothesis

Fear does not significantly influence sport participation of Secondary school students in Cross River State.

Literature Review

Fear and sports participation

The most commonly associated emotion with sports is fear which in turn is one of the great unmentionable aspects to being human. Fears refer to a feeling or state in which there is both a subject and an object. In sports, this involves the potential destruction of the physical self. Adults are supposed to control their intense emotions (Elias & Dunning, 2014).

Francis (2013) stated that most secondary school students avoid participating in sports as a result of previous sports injuries sustained by some prominent athletes who would have made a career in sports. The fear of losing a significant and delicate part of their body, or even being beaten as in the case of others, made them to develop fear in sports participation. Francis stated further, that unlike people who suffer from other anxiety disorder, people with phobia know exactly what they are afraid of, except for their fear of specific objects, people and situation, phobic individuals usually do not engage in gross distortion or reality. Nothing physical seem to be wrong with them. However, their fears are not out of proportion with reality.

Gillman (2014) posited that inappropriate or excessive fear of anything can cause a great deal of damage directly or indirectly. Damage in terms of behaviour is nothing less than social maladjustment. Otherwise, simple phobia may bring about inadaptive behaviour directly or indirectly.

Hunt (2018) opined that the general assumption is that participants must have either an unhealthy relationship to fear or they must be pathologically fearless. Although few studies have attempted to explore the relationship between fears and extreme sports, those that have focus on negative explanations, for example, explored a deep sea diver's participation and recognized her findings as a series of fear related manifestation and concluded that the diver often lacked an appropriate sense of fear.

Similarly Coventry (2014) looked at fear and students participations in sports in two universities in India and found that heightened cognitive anxiety brought on by the competitive scenario, really did affect participation and performance abilities in physical education and the same is likely to apply even for trained athletes.

Till (2014) noted that the emotion of fear has not been excluded from research on general orthopedic injuries, but it has not been highly considered among athletes. Athletes are generally perceived as warrior type individuals who do not harbor emotions such as fear. This may be a major misperception considering that athletes fall possible physical harm every time they step into the field. When a non-athletic individual suffers an injury, he or she is faced with the difficulty of completing normal daily tasks due to pain and a loss of morbidity. An athlete on the other hand, is not only faced with the challenges of daily functioning, but also faced with challenge of returning to the field. Though he or she has overcome the injury, the athlete must deal with possibility of re-injury due to the high demands of sports activity, therefore, being faced with memories of pain and discomfort is likely to cause some level of fear. Given the complexity of the athlete's experience of injury, it seems erroneous to ignore fear as a possible component of re-injury.

Methodology

The research designs adopted for this study was the Ex-post facto. This design was chosen to investigate fear and sports participation of secondary school students. The populations of this study was thirteen thousand, eight hundred and eighty-one (13,881) Senior Secondary School students in Public Secondary School in Cross River State, Nigeria. The sample for this study comprised one thousand three hundred and ninety-three (1,393) Secondary School (SS 2) students randomly selected in eleven Local Government Areas of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire titled: Fear and Sports Participation Questionnaire (FSPQ). The structured questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A addressed demographic information of the respondents. Section B measured the variable in the study that is fears. There were fifteen items that measured the variable of this study. Items 1-5 measured fear while items 6-15 measured sports participation.

Result and discussions

Ho: 1

There is no significant influence of fear on sports participation of secondary school students. The independent variable is fear while the dependent variable is sports participation. Data was analyzed using linear regression analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in table 1.

Table 1

Simple linear regression analysis of the influence of fear on sports participation among secondary school students in Cross River State (N=1,381)

Model	R	R^2	Adj.R^2	Std. error of estimate	
1	.039	.002	.001		
Source of variance	Ss	Df	Ms	F-ratio	P.level
Regression	30.085	1	30.085	2.084	.149
Residual	19908.680	1379	14.437		
Total	19938.765	1380			

The result of analysis presented in Table 1 showed that the predictor or Independent variable (fear) did not significantly influence the predicted variable (sport participation) among secondary school students in Cross River State. The predictor variable accounted for only 0.2% of the variance in sports participation among secondary school students in Cross River State. This showed a very weak relationship.

Discussion of findings

The finding obtained from analysis and testing of hypothesis one revealed that the null hypothesis was upheld. This implied that there is no significant influence of fear on secondary school students' participation in sports in Cross River State. This can be as a result of the level of awareness on the benefits associated with sport participation, which has allayed the fear of many students about the dangers inherent in various forms of sports. This has encouraged more students to engage in sporting activities.

The finding of this study contradicted the finding of Francis (2015) that most secondary school students avoid participating in sports as a result of previous sport injuries sustained by some prominent athletes who would have made a career in sports. The fear of losing a significant and delicate part of their body, fear of losing in competition or even being beaten as in the case in others, made them to develop weakness for sports participation.

The finding also contradicted the finding of Elias and Dunning (2014) which revealed that the most commonly associated emotion with sports is fear which in turn is one of the great unmentionable aspects to being humans. Fear refers to a feeling or state in which there is both a subject and an object. In sports, this involves the potential destruction of the physical self. Adults are supposed to control their intense emotions. Fear is supposed to be curtailed.

Conclusion

This study was to investigate fear and sports participation of secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria. The finding from the analysis of data and testing of hypothesis in the study revealed that there was no significant influence of fear on sports participation of secondary school students.

Recommendation

Based in the finding obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis in the study, it was recommended that: various stakeholders should ensure that students are not frightened from participating actively in sports to fear of injuries in order to promote their involvement at all times.

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