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School Environment and Sports Participation Among Secondary School Students in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to examine school environment 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 (1,393) respondents (students) used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured and validated questionnaire titled: School Environment and Students' Sports Participation Questionnaire (SESSPQ). Simple linear regression statistical tool was used for data analysis. The result obtained from the analysis of data revealed that there was a significant positive influence of school environment and students' participation in sports. Based on this finding, it was recommended that relevant authorities should ensure that school premises are adequately provided with relevant facilities and equipment that would promote better sports participation among students in secondary school in Cross River State.

Introduction

Sports participation is believed to promote a healthy and stress free life and has gain attention globally as an activity that helps in developing individuals and promotes healthy leaving. Pret (2019) observed that, sports participation has the ability to improve one's daily life, whether it

is any type of activity such as training in the gym or running outdoors. Pret maintain that sports participation also helps in reducing stress and depression. Active sports participation helps in relieving negatives thought and distractions.

Webind (2019) opined that sports participation will help an individual get better night sleep, and wake you up in a better state of mind. Active participation in sporting activities is relevant to and healthy for man's physical development. Webind added that sports activities helps in reducing high blood pressure, help to maintain healthy weigh, improve self-esteem, provide social integration and instilled the rule of law.

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.

Till (2016) maintained that taking into consideration the psychological benefit of sports participation, children who participate in sports tend to be more disciplined and happy, they learn faster and adapt better to the society, they are moreable to retain information than sedentary children. Furthermore, till stated that, in adult and children alike, sports participation helps children to develop a healthier lifestyle, better hygiene, bath more often and cut their nails more regularly. They are more prone to stay away from fatty foods.

The school environment in relation to school is a formal institution of learning that is saddled with the responsibility of developing individuals in the society; the school is expected to inculcate socially acceptable knowledge, attitude and skills in individuals who pass through it. Most times, students only acquire theoretical knowledge with complementary practical or psycho-motor skills (Lorenz, 2013).

Literature review

School environment and sports participation

Participation in sports has a history that is as old as man's existence. An effective sports programme is tailored towards developing the various components of human personality including physical, mental, moral and skills that are socially acceptable.

In a study conducted by Leandro, Catarina, Kelly, Rafael, Ivan Maria and Jose (2015), the role of school environment in physical activity among 109, 104 Brazilian adolescent students. They observed that, the number of sports courts and swimming pools in a school were associated

with participation in physical education classes. Availability of sports courts, running/athletes tracks and swimming pools in schools were associated with leisure-time physical activity. Total physical activity was associated with schools with sports courts, schoolyard with teacher-directed physical activities and swimming pool.

Similarly, Sillas (2014) stated that schools with improved physical activity facilities and supervised activities were more likely to stimulate students to be physically active. These are important results because several health benefits related to physical activity e.g. adiposity level, cardio metabolic health, mental health, academic self-concept, bone strength and physical fitness could be achieved when school-aged children and youth participate in 60 or more minute daily of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Sillas stated further that, it is important to highlight that even modest amount of physical activity e.g. 30 minutes can have health benefits; especially among high risk youngsters e.g. those who are obese. Therefore, rather than meeting the current physical activity guidelines, the main purpose of the availability of physical activity facilities and the offers of extracurricular sports activities should be to promote incremental increase in daily physical activity among all students.

In the same vein, Robertson-Wilson, Leatherdale and Wong (2008) reveal that a relationship exists between physical activity facilities and physical activity practice. It is important to emphasize that, the existence of the features is a proxy for the organization of school activities. School policies which encourage investment in physical activity facilities in the school are needed. They emphasized that physical resources contribute decisively, but they alone do not promote physical activity, if the whole school and policy makers are not committed to it. Thus, educational and health policy makers should consider that a diverse, attractive and enjoyable school environment in terms of physical activities facilities and extracurricular sports activity. programmes might be a priority if we want to promote this behaviour.

McGrath, Hopkins and Hinckson (2015) stated that schools with a higher number of physical activity facilities had a higher participation in physical education classes and leisure time physical activities guidelines. They stated further that school context had important potential to increase the engagement of adolescent in physical activities (PA). Therefore, school environment had a fundamental role in allowing adolescents, who spend part of their day in school, to have a more active lifestyle.

Odok, Osaji and Adie (2017) posited that sports arenas provide students with the opportunities to imbibe honesty, integrity and ethical behaviour, depending on the setting. Sport could also be the grounds for a youngster to learn how to be dishonest, pious and hypocritical.

Odok (2018) measured the prevalence of participation in physical education classes, leisure-time activity, and total physical activity level. He also evaluated the following physical activity facilities: sports fields, courts, running/athletic tracks, schoolyard with teacher-directed physical activities, swimming pools, locker rooms; and the offer of extracurricular sports activities. Schools with at least one physical activity facility had increased odds of participations in physical education.

Statement of hypothesis

School environment does not significantly influence sports participation of secondary school students in Cross River State.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was the Ex-post facto. This design was chosen to investigate school environment and sports participation of secondary school students. The population 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) Senior Secondary School (SS 2) students randomly selected in eleven Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Instrumentation

A structural questionnaire title: School Environment Questionnaire (SEQ). The structural questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A addressed demographic information of the respondents. Section B measured the variable in the study that is school environment. There were fifteen items that measured the variables of the study. Items 1-5 measured school environment while items 6-15 measured sports participation.

Result and discussion

Ho: 1

There is no significant influence of school environment on sports participation of secondary school students. The independent variable is school environment 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 school environment on sports participation among secondary school students in Cross River State (N=1,381)

Model	R	R^2	Adj.R^2	Std. Error estimate	
1	.202	.041	.040	3.724224	
Source of variance	Ss	Df	Ms	F-ratio	P.level
Regression	812.059	1	821.059	58.548	.000
Residual	19126.705	1379	13.870		
Total	19938.765	1380			

The result of analysis presented in Table I showed that the predictor or independent variable (school environment) significantly influenced the predicted variable (sports participation) among secondary school students in Cross River State. The predictor variable accounted for only 4.1% of the variance in sports participation among secondary school students in Cross River State. This showed a relationship.

Discussion of findings

The finding obtained from analysis and testing of hypothesis revealed that the null hypothesis was rejected. This implied that there is a significant positive influence of school environment on secondary school students' participation in sports in Cross River State. This is because the provisions of sports facilities in some schools encourage students to develop interest in and participate actively in various forms of sports within state. This finding is in agreement with Sillas (2014) which stated that lack of space and physical activity facilities among are the main barriers to students' participation in sports. Schools with improved physical activity facilities and supervised activities are more likely to stimulate students to be physically active. This is one important result because several health benefits related to physical activity e.g. (adiposity level, cardio metabolic health, mental health, academic self-concept, bone strength and physical fitness) could be achieved when school age children and youth participate in 60 or more minute of moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Kelly, Rafael, Ivan, Maria and Jose (2015) also stated the number of sports courts and swimming pool in a school were associated with participation in physical education classes, Availability of sports courts, running/athletic tracks and swimming pool in schools were associated with leisure-time physical activity. Total physical activity was associated with schools with sports courts, schoolyard with teacher-directed physical activities.

Conclusion

This study investigated school environment and sports participation of secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria. The finding obtained from the analysis of data and testing of hypothesis in the study revealed that there was a significant influence of school environment on secondary school students' participation in sports.

Recommendation

Based on the finding obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis in the study, it was recommended that: the government authority should ensure that school premises are adequately provided with relevant facilities and equipment that would continue to promote sport participations among students in secondary school.

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