

MOTIVATIONAL INDICES AND SPORTS PARTICIPATION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN EKET LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigate motivational indices and sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of the study, two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Literature was reviewed according to the variables of the study. Survey research design was used and considered most appropriate for the study. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the seven public secondary schools while systematic random sampling technique was employed to select the two hundred and eighty-eight (288) secondary school students (respondents) used for the study. A structured questionnaire was the instrument utilized for data collection. The instrument was subjected to validity test by relevant persons. In testing the hypotheses formulated for study, independent t-test statistical tool was used for data analysis. The revealed that there was significant influence of school size on sports participation among secondary school students. The finding further revealed that there was no significant influence of school type on sports participation among secondary school students in the study area. Based on the findings, it was recommended that game masters and physical education teachers should ensure that younger students are adequately motivated to participate more actively in various sports in school.

Keywords: Motivational Indices, School Size, School Type and Sports Participation

Introduction

Sport has become an important aspect of the Nigerian culture due to its popularity among the citizenry. Participation in sport activities is meant to provide students with the opportunity to have fun and interact with their peers while participating in the various sports as provided by the school. Sports are motor activities that enable an individual to develop and control his physique. Active participation in sport and other academic activities has remained a major contributor to healthy living among students in terms of their mental and physical health (Ekpo & Ndum, 2021). This assumption is widely believed and held because World Health Organization (2020) recommends that for a substantial health gain to be realized through sports, adults should participate in sports for at least 150 minutes per week of moderate - intensity or 75 minutes a week of vigorous - intensity aerobic sports or an equivalent combination of both moderate and vigorous sporting activities. Bhagyasree and Shiny (2020) maintained that sports not only benefit people in terms of their health, but it also inculcates certain values like teamwork, leadership, confidence, etc., which help individuals in their overall development. Funding of sports and other academic activities in tertiary institutions has become a major concern to the management of such institution (Onabe, Ekpo, Akuh & Edoho, 2024).

Sport has become an inexorable part of modern society with its influence being felt in all facets of national life and has also become a symbol of national unity, which governments utilize to legitimize themselves. According to Greenleaf (2019), students participate in sports for various reasons, either to develop physical shape, social competence, locus of control, academic achievement or to accomplish sport goals and assume leadership positions on teams. Sport teaches skills for success in later life. The size of a school according to Okah (2019) could be another variable that could influence students' sport participation in secondary schools. It is believed that students in large schools could be privileged to have more space for various sporting activities as compared to their counterparts in smaller schools within the same locality. The size of a school could either attract or discourage a student from taking part in certain sporting activities. It is possible that students in large schools could be more privileged to take part in various sporting activities within their school premises. This might not be the case with the students who are in small schools.

School type is another demographic variable that could influence students' participation in various sports. This can promote physical, emotional and psychological development of the learner and can also enhance morale and spiritual principles in inter- personal and human relations (Ekpo, Egbula & Abang, 2016). A school can either be single-sex or mixed in nature and the mode of operation. The nature of a school either being co-education or single-sex can be a major determinant of the type of sports organized in such a school. In a single sex school where all students are of the same gender, certain sports could be organized based on the ability or gender of the students. In other schools where students of both sexes are taught together, the nature and type of sporting activities that take place under such conditions could differ from those obtainable in single sex schools.

Purpose of the study

1. To examine the influence of school size on sports participation among students.
2. To examine the influence of school type on sports participation among students.

State of hypothesis

1. There is no significant influence of school size on sports participation among students.
2. There is no significant influence of school type on sports participation among students.

Literature review

School size and sports participation among students

Sport has been credited with inculcating values of sportsmanship and fair play, while increasing educational aspiration and developing a sense of community, group cohesion and connectedness. Schools are also well placed to promote health and physical activity behaviours because of the time spent in this environment and the elements of the school curriculum that are adaptable to include such content (Jenkinson & Benson, 2019). However, this function can adequately be performed when schools are environmentally positioned in terms of premises and availability of facilities. As a result, the size of school plays a significant role in encouraging or discouraging students from developing interest and subsequent participation in sports. A school with adequate space will always promote physical activity among its students. The size of a school will always allow students freedom to take part in various sports activities during break periods or after school hours (Odok, Osaji, Dan, Odey & Iso, 2024).

Marriot (2019) maintained that recreational plans are a key part of the process of improving the leisure opportunities available in the community and through this, the health and well-being of the community. The school as a typical example of the community also needs sports facilities, which the students will use during leisure and sporting activities. Going by the above, Sport facilities are structures built for sporting activities such as athletic tracks, stadia, soccer pitches, basketball courts, lawn tennis courts, among others (Ogundairo, 2019). Sport equipment on the other hand refers to those disposable items used in sports such as horizontal bars, balls, weight lifts, basketball posts, among others (Ogundairo, 2019). The provision of this facilities/equipment is largely dependent on the available space, which describes the size of the school. The larger the size of a school, the more likely there will be availability of sports facilities and higher involvement of students in physical activities within the school premises.

The provision of a conducive environment as well as appropriate and adequate sports facilities has considerable influence on participation in sport in any establishment. Availability of adequate facilities is vital to the conduct of intramural sports and other sports programmes. The availability of space in a school determines the type of sport programmes that can be offered. Inadequate space is one of the serious challenges affecting participation of students in sports at all levels of education. At secondary school level, a lack of adequate space for sporting activities due to the size of schools continues to hinder the implementation of sporting programmes. This has also prevented the development of talents imbedded in students in various sports (Okuneye, 2021).

Thomas, Richard and Abdulahi (2019) conducted an assessment of school size in senior high schools and their effects on sports development in the Tano North and South districts of Ghana. The study was conducted to assess and evaluate the available space in schools and their effects on sports development at the Senior High School (SHS) in the Tano North and South Districts in Brong Ahafo region, Ghana. Three hundred and twenty four (324) final year students were selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques from a population of one thousand (1000). Census sampling approach was used to select all 13 Physical Education teachers in the six SHS chosen for the study. The research design used was descriptive survey method. The instruments used were interviews, observation and questionnaire. Data were analysed using chi-square (χ^2). The findings revealed that a significant relationship existed between sports performance and availability of space.

Obaji (2020) conducted a study on school characteristics and sports participation among students in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State. The study adopted the survey research design. Stratified and systematic sampling techniques were adopted in selecting the schools and three hundred and forty eight (348) respondents used for the study. A structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection in the study. The instrument went through validity by relevant experts. To test the hypothesis which stated there was no significant influence of school size on students' sports participation, independent t-test statistical tool was

employed for data analysis. The result obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis in the study revealed that the calculated t-value of 8.346 was higher than the p.value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance with 346 degree of freedom. This implied that the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there was a significant influence of school size on students' sports participation in the study area.

School size is a major determinant factor of sports participation among students in secondary schools. The size of a school is a factor that determines the level of students' participation in sports. In small school premises, students are confined to little space, which also limits the activities they can comfortably get involved in. When a school is small in size, there is usually no space for students to engage in any form of physical activity or move around freely. Physical activities cannot be carried out effectively in a school with tight and inadequate space. This point to a major challenge facing most modern schools who do not have adequate space for constructing soccer pitches, courts for various sports, athletic tracks among others. Students in such schools are constrained from taking active part in various sports of their choice due to inadequate space. The place of having adequate space in a school in terms of sports participation has become very necessary. It is almost impossible to encourage students to actively participate in sports with corresponding space for such activities to take place (Edim, Odok & Osaji, 2016).

School type and sports participation among students

The type of school a child is enrolled into whether single sex or coeducation is very important in determining the level of physical activity the child involves in. In a single sex school, students are freer to play around with their peers and usually participate freely in various sports. This feeling of freedom among the students in a single sex school encourages greater level of participation in sports. There is a higher level of understanding among students of the same sex in terms of participating in similar activities in school. The feeling of been in the midst of classmates of the same sex in a single sex school promotes the level of students' participation in sports. The level of sports participation among students in single sex schools justifies the claim that school type influences the level of spots participation among secondary school students (William, 2019).

Harry (2020) asserted that the state of a school being single sex or coeducation could determine the students' level of participation in sports. Students in coeducation or mixed schools usually experience certain restrictions with regards to their sports participation. Sports in mixed schools are usually organized along gender lines, which pose some restrictions in the type of physical activities that students can engage in. In coeducation or mixed schools, male students participate in different sports as compared with their female counterparts. In this kind of school settings, when the space is not adequate, sporting activities for male and female students are held in a rotation format to accommodate both category of students in the school. Unlike in single sex schools, students in mixed schools are limited in freedom to participate in the same sports with students of the opposite sex, which usually affect their level of participation in sports.

Education is generally accepted as an instigator of change in the needs of society. Schools, because of their location and prominence in society and because a high percentage of children attend school at some stage in their lives, are considered the ideal avenues through which most educational and sport objectives can be achieved. Schools also have the obvious advantage of reaching all sectors of society regardless of gender (boys and girls), social status, or physical fitness and skill level. Physical Education and sport activities in the school setting is therefore the most effective vehicle through which both participation objectives can be achieved (Odok, Apie, Osaji, Ahueansebhor & Ogabor, 2023).

In the first instance, physical education creates opportunities to introduce children to sport activities and also inculcates a desire in pupils to actively engage in sport. Most schools observe physical education classes and most elementary schools have recess periods, when many adolescents at schools engage in athletic activities. As a result, these institutions can serve

as agents for sport socialization and participation (DeKnop & Engstrom, 2019). This is particularly true if the schools' enrolment is small, where children are more likely to participate in sport.

Angius (2015) conducted a study on effects of participation in competitive sports on school connectedness among public secondary school students in Murang'a County, Kenya. The study determined the relationship between competitive sports participation and school connectedness among secondary school students in Murang'a County. To achieve the above, the study established the effects of: gender, age, class, school type, school status and athletic status on school connectedness. The study employed a descriptive survey design. It targeted all the 98,200 students from 257 public secondary schools in Murang'a County. The study employed stratified random sampling to select 26 schools while simple random sampling was used to select 384 students. The study used a questionnaire to collect data. Data that was collected was coded and entered into an SPSS program for analysis. Data was analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics that were used included frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations whereas inferential statistics used included two-way ANOVA, Turkey Post hoc test and t-test. The results were presented in frequency tables. The study established that a significant difference exist among students from National schools, County schools and District schools on the school connectedness and sport engagement. Based on the above finding, the study recommended that the Ministry of Education, through the County Director of Education should ensure that all secondary schools have basic sports facilities and equipment in order to promote sports participation.

Agor (2014) in the study conducted on effects of participation in competitive sports on school connectedness among public secondary school students in Muranga County, Kenya to test for school type and sport connectedness Revealed that 99(28.9%) of participants indicated that only 2 hours per week are allocated to sports in their school, followed by 98(28.7%) which allocated 3 hours, 85(24.8%) allocated 5 hours while the rest, 60(17.5) allocated 10 hours per week to games. The 99(28.9%) and 98(28.7%) of the participants hailed from mixed day secondary schools which allocated two and three hours per week to games respectively. All the mixed boarding schools allocated 5 hours per week to games while the boys and girls boarding schools allocated 10 hours to games per week. This is because boys' and girls' only schools have adequate time at their disposal after classes and freedom so they allocated more hours per week to games. The reason for the allocation of lesser time to sports in mix day schools is owed to the fact that students in mixed day schools have to cover reasonable distance to their homes and have to do this before it is dark which is sometimes risky especially for girls.

Gitonga (2017) noted that day school students spend less time in sporting activities as they spend most of this time doing assignments as well as going back home after classes. All the mixed boarding schools allocated 5 hours per week to games while the boys and girls boarding allocated 10 hours to games per week. This could be attributed to the fact that boarding schools take part in sports even during the weekends. They also take part in sports in the mornings unlike students in day schools who spend this time doing their academic assignments. Similarly, Bulinda (2020) noted that boarding schools' students participate in sports both in the morning as well as after classes. The single-sex schools have adequate time at their disposal after classes and freedom hence, they allocated more hours per week to games.

Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for this study, because it investigates the phenomena as it exists at the time of this investigation. The population of the study comprised 2,812 senior secondary school students in the 18 public secondary schools in the study area. The sample of this study was 288 senior students randomly selected from 7 public secondary schools in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The 288 sampled respondents represented 20% of proportionate sample of the total population in the seven (7) selected public secondary schools

in the study area. A questionnaire titled Motivational Indices and Sports Participation Questionnaire (MISPQ) was the instrument used for data collection. It contained two sections. Section A contained the variables in the study covering school size and school type. Section B was developed using four point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). It contained ten items measuring sports participation among students. Independent t-test statistical tool was used for data analysis.

Result and discussion

Hypothesis one: There is no significant influence of school size on sports participation among secondary school students. To test the hypothesis, independent t-test statistical tool was employed for data analysis. The result obtained from the analysis is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Independent t-test analysis of the influence of school size on sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State

School size	N	\bar{x}	SD	Cal.t	P.value
Small	114	25.9912	1.23729	7.298*	0.000
Large	172	24.5233	1.89630		

*Significant at 0.05; df = 284

The result of analysis of data presented in table 1 showed that the calculated t-value of 7.298 is higher than the p.value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance with 284 degree of freedom. The implication of this result is that the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant influence of school size on sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Hypothesis two: School type does not significantly influence sports participation among secondary school students. To test the hypothesis, independent t-test statistical tool was employed for data analysis. The result obtained is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Independent t-test analysis of the influence of school type on sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State

School type	N	\bar{x}	SD	Cal.t	P.value
Single sex	86	25.0233	1.41402	-.520	0.603
Mixed	200	25.1450	1.96041		

Not significant at 0.05; df = 284

The result of analysis as presented in table 2 showed that the calculated t-value of -.520 is higher than the p.value of 0.603 at 0.05 level of significance with 284 degree of freedom. The implication of this result is that the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant influence of school type on sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Discussion of findings

The result of hypothesis one revealed that there was a significant influence of school size on sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The findings is in line with the view of Marriot (2019) who opined that school size plays a significant role in encouraging or discouraging students from developing

interest and subsequent participation in sports, and the size of a school will always allow students to freely take part in various sports activities during break periods or after school hours.

The result of hypothesis two revealed that there was a significant influence of school type on sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The finding is in line with the view of Harry (2020) who asserted that the state of a school being single sex or coeducation may or may not determine the students' level of participation in sports. Students in coeducation or mixed schools usually experience certain restrictions with regards to their sports participation. Sport participation in mixed schools are usually organized along gender lines, which pose some restrictions in the type of physical activities that students can engage in.

Conclusion

This study examined motivational indices and sports participation among secondary school students in Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The finding obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypotheses in the study revealed that there was a significant influence of school size on sports participation among secondary school students. The finding further revealed that there was no significant influence of school type on sports participation among secondary school students in the study area.

Recommendation

Based on the finding obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis in the study, it was recommended that:

1. Game masters and physical education teachers should ensure that younger students are adequately motivated to participate more actively in various sports in school.

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