



PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AND SPORTS PARTICIPATION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OBUDU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated psychological factors and sports participation among secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve this purpose, two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A detailed review of literature was carried out in accordance with the variables of the study. Survey research design was used for the study. To select the eight public secondary schools, simple random sampling technique was adopted while systematic sampling technique was adopted to select the two hundred and forty five (245) respondents used for the study. A structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by relevant persons. To test the hypotheses formulated for the study, Pearson product moment correlation statistical tool was adopted for data analysis. The result obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypotheses revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-concept, motivation and sports participation among secondary school students in the study area. Based on the conclusion and findings, it was recommended among others that school authorities should provide adequate extrinsic motivation in order to complement students' intrinsic motivation and encourage them to participate more actively in sports.

KEYWORDS: Psychological factors, Sports Participation, Self-concept, Motivation, Students

INTRODUCTION

Sport provides an arena for the development of social skills such as cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Youth involved in sport often demonstrate discipline and commitment.

These traits are usually carried over into other domains of life such as school and community. Initiative, a key component to youths' positive social development, can also be developed through these structured activities. Given today's job demands and basic lifestyle requirements, Larson (2017) argues that youth need to take

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charge of their lives through the development of initiative. Larson believes that initiative is constructed of three key elements (intrinsic motivation, concerted engagement, and temporal effort directed towards a goal) and suggests that structured voluntary activities such as sports, arts, music, hobbies, and organizations offer the best contexts for initiative development, as they are voluntary (require youth to be intrinsically motivated), require attention (elements of challenge), and require effort over time.

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 and mind-relaxing sports activities. Sports in Nigeria have grown from a humble beginning as an entertainment and recreational activity to a prominent phenomenon whose influence is felt in all facets of life. Sport has become an important aspect of the Nigeria culture due to its popularity among the citizenry (Razai, 2018). Participation in any 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. It is an activity involving physical exertion and skills in which an individual or team competes against another or for the purpose of entertainment. The act of participating in sports has enabled several students to discover their talents and develop them into useful means of livelihood.

There have been certain psychological factors that could influence students' participation in sports, one of such is self-concept. A student's self-concept has either encourages the student to participate in sports or not. A student who thinks that he/she has the ability, talent, skills, and competence to actively and satisfactorily participate in sports will always be committed to taking part in the sport of his/her choice. The issue of self-concept is very vital in determining students' sports participation because it involves the way the student thinks about his/herself with regards to been able to participate in sports.

Another psychological factor that could influence students' participation in sports is motivation. Amos (2016) asserted that motivation has been identified as another psychological factor in determining students' level of sports participation. The level of motivation either intrinsic or extrinsic that is available to the student who participates in sports is very vital. The absence of motivation has continued to discourage students from taking part in sports. The introduction of certain forms of motivation can help encourage more students to develop interest and commitment in participating in various sports. As a result, motivation could be a driving force that could either push or withdraw students from taking active part in any sport of their choice.

Statement of hypotheses

- i. There is no significant relationship between self-concept and sports participation among secondary school students.
- ii. Motivation does not significantly relate with sports participation among secondary school students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-concept and sports participation

Self-concept is the basis for personal activity demonstration, stimulation, goal-setting and achievements. Athletes' Self-concept study helps to estimate significant factors and characteristics. They are important from the point of view of sports activity effectiveness. The study by Smith (2018) presented the results of Self-concept study among students-athletes. The results reflect partial content similarity of girls' and boys' Self-concept. It is in identification through professional roles and Self-concept differences. They are demonstrated in more vivid desire of girls to realize self-actualization. Self-concept gender characteristics study among students-athletes helps to explain the necessity to create gender-specific conditions of athletes' sportsmanship development.

It is necessary to understand the conditions and factors of athletes' personality self-concept formation. It is a special personal formation, connected with self-consciousness, reflexion. It demonstrates the essence characteristics of self-understanding, the specificity of interconnection between individual and environmental characteristics. It conditions all demonstrations of a personality's activity, the

unique character of his choices and style of activity. It plays great role in self-regulation of an athlete at the initial stages of sportsmanship formation. Studying the characteristics of self-concept helps to reveal significant and important directions of an optimal psychological potential revelation. The main instrument of this potential revelation is inner psychic powers of athletes, self-determination and self-understanding. Because of the kind of sport specificity, there are special demands claimed on personal structure and its dynamics, connected with the ability to stand superloads and regulate own state on the way to super-important aim achievement (Barry, 2019).

The relationship between sport participation, personality development, self-concept and self-esteem has repeatedly been discussed within the framework of legitimation discussions in the sector of school sport. The research by Allen (2018) showed contradictory findings. These contradictions concern, inter alia, the direction of causal associations of the investigated features. Sport and physical activity are often attributed in general with personality development impact, but this is not clearly and empirically established in this generalized point of view. Character development is often mentioned (e.g., in most Physical Education curriculum documents, but no underlying concepts are explained to us that could enable empirical testing. The idea of "educational physical education" is, among other things, based on precisely these attributed effects. Thus, it remains an empirical question to prove or refuse these assumed effects, which cannot be answered in a general and simple point of view.

A study by Harry (2018) investigated the relationship between sports activity, motor performance and physical self-concepts. The extent to which the physical self-concept is influenced by stable personality traits is another subject of this study. The linking of the self-concept approach with the older, partly controversial trait approach should illuminate some new aspects. One further aim is the construction of a short scale to measure two important aspects of the physical self-concept, which are highlighted in this paper. One is the assessment of own physical attractiveness, the second is the assessment of own motor performance (general athleticism).

Psychological well-being also depends on how people perceive and assess themselves in relation to their own appearance and their physical potential. In this respect, we expect relationships between self-concept and psychological well-being. Furthermore, it should be possible to find important indicators for psychological well-being. Self-concept comprises knowledge and the assessment of own competence and ability as well as the evaluation of further traits that directly or indirectly affect one's own self. Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (2017) see self-concept as a subjective theory about the self that is structured hierarchically and that develops in interaction with the environment and relevant interacting persons (significant others). At the apex of the hierarchy is a general self-concept which can be divided into two different components, the academic self-concept on the one hand and the non-academic self-concept on the other hand.

Self-concept is ubiquitous and an integral part of any learning situation. It plays an inevitable part of both outcome and condition of learning whether the teacher is aiming for it or not. It is likewise believed that an adequate understanding of the casual role of self-concept is essential in gaining a clearer insight into an individual learning process (Burns, 2019). From this statement, one can make an assumption that there is a relationship existing between the students' self-concept and their participation in sports. It has been observed that prevailing problems of students like leaving school, dropping out, poor attendance, low grades, truancy, and negative attitude toward teachers and peers which affect their learning outcomes and adjustment in school are often due to negative self-concept (Odok, Dan & Basse, 2024). The self-concept of the students can be influenced by certain factors. It can be due to the teachers' attitude toward them or the way their parents treat them. The result of the influence of these factors can be positive or negative level of self-concept and that level of self-concept may greatly affect the level of sports participation among students.

According to Huitt (2019), self-concept is the cognitive or thinking aspect of self (related to one's self-image) and generally refers to the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence. There is a great deal of research which

shows that self-concept is, perhaps, the basis for all motivated behaviour. It is the self-concept that gives rise to possible selves, and it is possible selves that create the motivation for behaviour. This supports the idea that one's paradigm or world view and one's relationship to that view provide the boundaries and circumstances within which we develop our vision about possibilities. This is one of the major issues facing children and youth today with regards to sports participation.

Motivation and sports participation

There exists a common perception that sport athletes require motivation from their coaches, friend and family members. This perception has resulted in a number of programme being instituted with prominent and successful sport personnel presenting and promoting various games in school (Odok, Osaji, Dan, Odey & Iso, 2024). According to Adebayo (2018), motivation is a deceive transfer enhancer, that as one constantly watch others perform, there is a tendency that the student will love to participate or choose the game. The scholar further opined that motivation is a very important factor in elite level sports for the simple reason its what makes you do what you do, if you're not motivated to be a top level athlete then you have a chance of not being the best you can be.

Odok, Apie, Osaji, Ahueansebhor and Ogabor (2023) opined that motivation can be described as an individual's inner will and dedication or focus to achieve a goal they have set for themselves. Therefore, motivation is a very important factor in sports participation among students. The scholar further explained that motivation play a big part in younger people getting involved in sports for example David Beckham was the role model for many younger athletes when he was at Manchester United, because everyone wanted to be like him, from his skills even down to his hairstyle. Therefore, motivation improves athletes' love for a particular sport and encourages them to choose it above other games. Samuel (2016) submitted that an athletes' motivation is based on internal impetuses and pressures, their behaviour is not self-determined due to the regulation of external factors. For example, an athlete might feel unwell, but chooses to continue with an interval workout because of internal pressure, like posting her/his training on social media. In this case, the audience acts as motivational tool on the

behaviour of the athletes even down to their choice of sport.

Akintola (2019) opined that motivation improve the emotional arousal of an individual and makes him or her attached to the game. Motivation reduces fear for failure and the feeling of helplessness. It improves self-confidence and increase demand to try more in the sport activity. Chidozie (2016) added that the issue of the psychological readiness of and athletes as a major aspect of preparing is of incredible intrigue. The scholar added that there are various strategies for upgrading a sport person's motivation. The author further revealed that they include, giving additional time and consideration regarding an athlete when he/she is experiencing issues taking in a skill and a particular sport.

According to Vallerand (2017), a MANOVA was performed in which the (experimental-incremental, experimental-entity, control) group was entered as a fixed factor and age, gender, habitual physical activity and general perceived competence were entered as dependent variables. The results showed that there were no significant differences among the three groups (Wilk's $\lambda = .97$, $F(8.714) = 1.31$, $P > .005$). later univariate analyses showed that there were no significant difference in age $F(2.360) = 1.93$, $P > 0.05$, or in gender $F(2.360) = .85$, $P = 0.05$, or in physical activity $F(2.360) = 0.75$, $P > 0.05$, or in general perceived competence $F(2.360) = 0.87$, $P > 0.05$). So there were three homogenous groups at the start and one can see the mean and standard deviation in the variables ages, physical activity and general competence and the distribution of the groups by athletes.

Kendzierski (2018) opined that, some student view sport as an opportunity to learn new skills and an opportunity to be active and have social connections. They may have interest in trying a new sport, spending time with friends while playing sport and using sport to live a healthier lifestyle. Other students use sports as a stress relief and away to keep up their focus levels. Students are generally motivated to or not to participate in sports when there is no level playing ground for sport activities to strive, students do not have interest in other activities other than their priorities. Some students are hardly motivated to participate in sport where there are no trained or motivation.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study adopted survey research design. This research design studies phenomena as it exist at the time of an investigation.

Population

The population of the study consisted of all Senior Secondary School one (SS 1) students in public secondary schools in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State, consisting a total of 2,136 SS 1 students in the twenty-six public secondary schools in the study area.

Sample

The sample for this study comprised of 245 respondents (students) randomly selected from 8 public secondary schools in the study area.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled “Psychological Factors and Sports Participation Questionnaire (PFSPQ)”. The questionnaire divided into two sections. Section A comprised personal data of respondents. Section B was designed using modified four point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). It contained twenty items that measured the variables of the study. Items 1-5 measured motivation, items 6-10 measured self-concept, while items 11-20 measured sports

participation among secondary schools students in the study area.

Validity and reliability of the instrument

Validity of the instrument was ascertained by two experts. One from the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education while the other one from measurement and evaluation. Both from the University of Calabar, Nigeria. The items were found to be valid, especially as the items comprehensively reflected the variables in the hypotheses.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was carried out using fifty (50) students who were not involved in the actual study. The data generated were analyzed to establish its internal consistency using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient Method. The result shows that the reliability estimates of the sub-scales ranges from 0.60 to 0.89. This was considered high enough to justify the instrument for use.

Result

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between self-concept and sports participation among secondary school students. The independent variable in this hypothesis is self-concept while sports participation among secondary school students is the dependent variable. Pearson product moment correlation statistical tool was employed for data analysis. The result obtained is presented in table 1.

TABLE 1: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between self-concept and sports participation among students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State (N = 241)

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum Xy$	Cal.r	P.value
Self-concept	3338	5309	9006	0.397*	0.000
Sports participation among students	6853	8354			

*Significant at 0.05; df = 239

The result of analysis of data presented in table 1 showed that the calculated r-value of 0.392 is greater than the p.value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance with 239 degree of freedom. This implied that the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, there is a significant relationship between self-concept and sports participation among secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Hypothesis two

Motivation does not significantly relate with sports participation among secondary school students. The independent variable in this hypothesis is motivation while sports participation among secondary school students is the dependent variable. Pearson product moment correlation statistical tool was employed for data analysis. The result obtained is presented in table 2.

TABLE 2: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between motivation and sports participation among students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State (N = 241)

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum Xy$	Cal.r	P.value
Motivation	3679	6007	9473	0.511*	0.000
Sports participation among students	6853	8354			

*Significant at 0.05; df = 239

The result of analysis of data presented in table 2 showed that the calculated r-value of 0.511 is greater than the p.value of 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance with 239 degree of freedom. This implied that the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, there is a significant relationship between motivation and sports participation among secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis one in the study revealed that the null hypothesis is rejected. The implication of this finding is that self-concept significantly relates to sports participation among secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. The reason for this finding could be that most students see sports as a very demanding activity that requires enormous energy to carry out. The perception that sports is a difficult task has scared several students from taking active part in sports. This has contributed to students developing negative self-concept as it relate with sports participation. The idea of thinking that it is not possible to meet up the requirements for effective and active sports programme has continued to keep numerous students away from taking part in sports.

The finding of this study is in agreement with that of Barry (2019) who reported that it is necessary to understand the conditions and factors of athletes' personality self-concept formation. It is a

special personal formation, connected with self-consciousness, reflexion. It demonstrates the essence characteristics of self-understanding, the specificity of interconnection between individual and environmental characteristics. It conditions all demonstrations of a personality's activity, the unique character of his choices and style of activity. It plays great role in self-regulation of an athlete at the initial stages of sportsmanship formation. Studying the characteristics of self-concept helps to reveal significant and important directions of an optimal psychological potential revelation. The main instrument of this potential revelation is inner psychic powers of athletes, self-determination and self-understanding. Because of the kind of sport specificity, there are special demands claimed on personal structure and its dynamics, connected with the ability to stand super loads and regulate own state on the way to super-important aim achievement.

The finding obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis two in the study revealed that the null hypothesis is rejected. The implication of this finding is that motivation significantly relates with sports participation among secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. The reason for this finding could be that motivation is usually seen from two perspectives, with each complementing the other. A student who is intrinsically motivated and does not enjoy a corresponding extrinsic motivation usually develop cold feet towards sports. The level of motivation available can significantly attract

students to participate in various sports. As intrinsic motivation is mostly not sustain by extrinsic motivation, the level of sports participation among secondary school students has continued to decline.

The finding of this study is in agreement with that of Odok, Apie, Osaji, Ahueansebhor and Ogabor (2023) who opined that motivation can be described as an individual's inner will and dedication or focus to achieve a goal they have set for themselves. Therefore, motivation is a very important factor in sports participation among students. The scholar further explained that motivation play a big part in younger people getting involved in sports for example David Beckham was the role model for many younger athletes when he was at Manchester United, because everyone wanted to be like him, from his skills even down to his hairstyle. Therefore, motivation improves athletes' love for a particular sport and encourages them to choose it above other games. Samuel (2016) submitted that an athletes' motivation is based on internal impetuses and pressures, their behaviour is not self-determined due to the regulation of external factors. For example, an athlete might feel unwell, but chooses to continue with an interval workout because of internal pressure, like posting her/his training on social media. In this case, the audience acts as motivational tool on the behaviour of the athletes even down to their choice of sport.

CONCLUSION

This study examined and presents findings on psychological factors and sports participation among secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. The findings obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypotheses in the study revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-concept, motivation and 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, the following recommendations are made:

1. School counselors and physical education teachers should help students to develop positive self-concept with regards to sports in order to promote their participation in sports.

2. School authorities should provide adequate extrinsic motivation in order to complement students' intrinsic motivation and encourage them to participate more actively in sports.

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