

Effect of Recreational Activities on Performance of Child Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools in South-Eastern, Nigeria

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Abstract: This research focused on the effect of recreational activities on the performance of child education in elementary and secondary Schools in South Eastern, Nigeria. Recreational activities serves many purposes in child performance which includes; enhanced brain function, improved brain attribute, improved academic performance, stress management, self-esteem, positive lifestyle development and Personal satisfaction . Childs Performance on the other hand is how well a child performs in academics within a stipulated time frame. The specific objectives examined the effect of recreation (physical fitness) on emotional wellbeing and effect of amusement park visitation on academic excellence. The study findings would be of great importance to the government, parents, teachers, and pupils. The research was achieved through the use of survey research with focus on select functional elementary and secondary Schools in South East Nigeria. However 1124 pupils were surveyed in the process. All data generated was analysed using chi-square statistical techniques. Findings from the study revealed that there is a strong significant relationship between physical fitness and student's emotional well being, there is also a strong significant relationship between Amusement park visitation and students academic performance in the select elementary and secondary schools in South East, Nigeria. The researchers concludes that for pupil's in elementary and secondary Schools to perform creditably the need to constantly participate in Recreational activities and recommend that Schools who wishes her pupil's to constantly perform outstandingly should encourage her pupils to participate in Recreational activities during recess, holiday's and Free period since it can boost emotional well-being and academic performance..

Keywords: Education, School, Physical Fitness, Government, holiday

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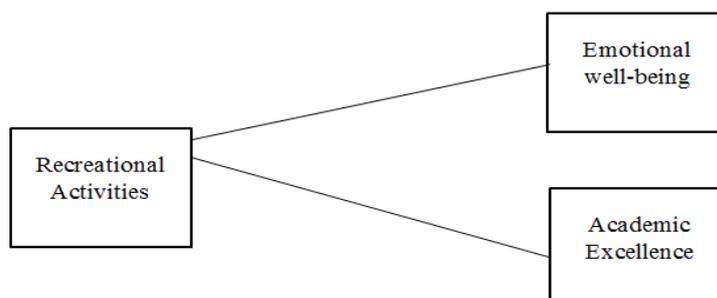
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to (Ademuwagun, 2012) Recreation serves many purposes but perhaps what is more important is the contribution it makes in educational pursuit. It clearly recognized the primary aims of recreation in academic learning to include; enhanced brain function, body build/perception, self-esteem, improved brain attribute and improved academic performance.

However (Daniel, 1995) is of the view that it is obvious that many positive relationships is attributed to recreation, thereby making recreational facility relevant in any educational environment. Perhaps instead of decreasing recreational activity, schools administrators/officials should consider developing enhanced recreational activity programs. Recreational

activities are designated as hobbies which are done for pleasure on a regular basis.

(Doninic, 2012) posits that academic success is important because it is strongly linked to the positive outcomes we value. Adults who are academically successful and with high levels of education are more likely to be employed, have stable employment, have more employment opportunities than those with less education and earn higher salaries, are more likely to have health insurance, are less dependent on social assistance, are less likely to engage in criminal activity, are more active as citizens and charitable volunteers and are healthier and happier. Academic success is important because working people will need higher levels of education to tackle the technologically demanding occupations of the future. However the researchers focused on the following frame work below during the research process.



Frame work on the effect of Recreational activities on performance of elementary and secondary Schools in South Eastern Nigeria.

Source: (Echeta & Koya, 2021) field research.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

With the increase of sedentary activities such as watching television, playing video games, increased computer technology, automated and reduction of physical fitness schedules, young people are most likely to become overweight, and less fit. Lack of good health among Nigeria students is noticeable because of many reasons such as obesity, lack of self awareness of health fitness and health related issues which has also led to the decline of student performance. (Kinetics, 2017)

Around the whole world, each tertiary institution wants productive students with high performance but if institutions skips making their institutions enjoyable (i.e no recreational activity), they will be unable to note better performance from students (kulkarni, 2013). On this basis, is why important issue of recreational activities at school area is being focused.

As this is the mind of the researchers the study is undertaken to investigate the effect of recreational activities on child education with focus in select elementary and secondary schools in South Eastern Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of study established the effect of recreational activities on Performance of elementary and secondary schools in South Eastern, Nigeria. Specifically the researchers focused on the below.

- Determine the effect of physical fitness on improving students emotional wellbeing.
- Examined the effect of amusement park visitation on academic excellence.

Reasearch Questions

The research questions are stated below:

- What is the effect of physical fitness on improving student's emotional wellbeing?
- What is the effect of amusement park visitation on academic excellence?

Significance of Study

The result of this study would help parents, government, teachers, school officials as well as our educational professionals. It would make available information for researchers in further study on recreation and how to improve it even more to help the students. The **students**; it will help the learners/students to realize the basic importance of recreation as related to their academic performance in school. It will help learners find their way around balancing recreational activities and school work. **School official** can from this research restructure their teaching strategies towards delivering a sound education to student base on how the recreational activities in their environment has affected them. **The Government** will know the need to provide

recreational facilities in schools. The Parents it will help parents in deciding how best schools with recreational facilities will aid their ward's performance in school and also in life.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Recreation

Recreation is an activity of leisure, leisure being discretionary time. The "need to do something for Recreation is an essential element of human biology and psychology. Recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, amusement, or pleasure and are considered to be "fun" (Luetkens, 2004).

According to (Ademuwagun, 2002) Recreation is an activity of leisure, which is an essential element of human biology and psychology. Recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, amusement, pleasure or health benefits and are considered to be fun. Recreation refers to the time spent in an activity one loves to engage in, with an intent to feel refreshed. It is a break from monotony and a diversion from the daily routine. It is a positive change from the stereotypical lifestyle. Recreational activities give enjoyment because while recreating one engages in something he likes. (Mcquitty, 2011).

Recreation is popular for various reasons. Besides being a way to enjoy free time, many people use recreation as a way to socialize. For instance Martinez (2013) posits that American Recreation Coalition discovered that, 88 percent of parents believe that participating in recreational activities strengthens family relationships. Parents ranked camping as the best outdoor activity, followed by hiking, bicycling, and fishing. They are a source of joy and provide relaxation for one's mind and body. Recreational activities can be grouped into two groups: indoor and outdoor activities. (Peterson, 2011).

INDOOR recreation activities are undertaken on the comfort of one's home or more specifically indoor and they are to recreate the mind and soul. For such indoor recreation activities there are well-established clubs or recreation centres offer a varied programme of activities throughout the year. Activities on offer include basketball, swimming, volleyball, chess, table tennis, bowling, singing, reading, listening to music etc.

Secondly, (Martinez, 2013) is of the view that OUTDOOR recreation provide us with the means to exercise and hence happen to be one of the best forms of recreation. Outdoor recreation sport examples include nature walks, river rafting, cycling, camping, fishing, hiking, Adventure Park, surfing and sports. Outdoor recreational activities can range from nature

walks to river rafting. Organized recreational activities are often planned by private clubs or government organizations. Sports, cultural activities and social gatherings are some of the organized ones. Clubs and recreation centres offer a variety of recreational programs for people of different ages and varied interests.

Types of Recreation

(Macmillian, 2012) is of the opinion that Recreation can be categorized into two general types:

- **Active: Active recreation, entailing direct participation, involves activities such as jet skiing in bays and kayaking down rivers**
- **Passive: Passive recreation, involving observation, includes such activities as walking along rivers, sunning at beaches, and watching swim competitions.**

ADVANTAGES OF RECREATION

To encourage the support of recreational activities, consider the following benefits as pointed out by (Pinsker, 2019)

- **Stress management** – the mild stress of leisure activity can reduce overall negative stress by contributing to relaxation.
- **Self-esteem** – especially in children and seniors, mild exercise, group activities, and hobbies and crafts will help create positive self-images.
- **Positive lifestyle development** – contributing to society, social interaction, development of leaders, being part of organized sports all encourage good lifetime activities.
- **Personal satisfaction** – any creative outlet will enhance personal satisfaction. Being part of the leadership offers self-satisfaction, and those who work in the recreational areas can feel the pride in keeping these areas vital and available to others.
- **Quality of life** – fresh air, sunshine, social interaction, health benefits and self-esteem all will improve quality of life.
- **Preventative health** – regular exercise, physiological benefits from mild exercise, and stress reduction all are made easier by having leisure and recreational activities readily available.

Since the future seems to be headed for a shorter work week and more extra time, support of leisure and recreational outlets and locations would be prudent, and benefit all involved.

Below are eight key marketing messages taken

from the (Benefits of Recreation Catalogue). According to (Rechner, 2020) Recreation is **Essential to Personal Health as listed below.**

- Recreation helps people live longer
- Recreation prolongs independent living for seniors - keeping seniors vital and involved in community life
- Recreation and fitness significantly reduces the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- Recreation and fitness combat osteoporosis
- Recreation and fitness combat diabetes
- Recreation and fitness help in preventing specific types of cancers - particularly in the colon, breast and lungs
- Recreation and fitness help prevent and rehabilitate back problems
- Recreation and arts/culture contribute to mental health
- Recreation and arts/culture enhance overall health and well-being
- Recreation is a proven therapeutic tool - helping to restore physical, mental and social capacities and abilities

Recreation is Key to Balanced Human Development (Rechner, 2020).

- We develop intellectual capacities and concepts through play - as well as many other life skills
- Recreation provides the opportunity for adults to develop their full and holistic potential
- Recreation and adult leisure learning provide exceptional opportunities

He further listed also that Recreation is Essential to Quality of Life

- Recreation and arts/culture build self-esteem and positive self-image
- Recreation and arts/culture enhance life satisfaction levels
- Recreation and arts/culture enhance perceived quality of life - for individuals, families and communities
- Recreation, sports and arts/culture nurtures growth, acquisition of life skills and independent living for those with a disability

However (Smith & Raab, 1986) pointed out that Recreation Reduces Self-Destructive and Anti-Social Behaviour as contained below:

- Recreation, sports and arts/culture reduce self-destructive behaviour and negative activity in youth - an antidote to smoking, substance abuse, suicide and depression

- Recreation and arts/culture can reduce crime
- Recreation and arts/culture can reduce racism - building understanding between diverse cultures
- Recreation reduces isolation, loneliness and alienation

They further posit that Recreation Builds Strong Families and Healthy Communities below:

- Families that play together, stay together
- Recreation provides safe developmental opportunities for the latch-key child
- Recreation, sports and arts/culture produce leaders who serve their communities in many ways
- Recreation, sports and arts/culture build social skills and stimulate participation in community life
- Recreation is often the catalyst that builds strong, self-sufficient communities (i.e. sport groups, arts guilds)
- Arts/culture helps people understand their neighbours, their history and their environment
- Recreation and arts/culture build pride in a community

(Surujlal, 2012) equally suggested that Recreation Reduces Health Care, Social Service and Police/Justice Costs as listed below:

- Fitness and well-being reduce both the incidence and severity of illness and disability - lowering healthcare costs
- Recreation supports families - reducing costs of social service intervention and foster care
- Recreation reduces crime and social dysfunction - reducing police, justice and incarceration costs

He further said that Recreation and Parks is Significant Economic Generators in the Community below:

- Recreation and fitness improve work performance - increase productivity, decrease absenteeism, decrease staff turnover and reduce "on the job" accidents
- Recreation and arts/culture attract businesses to the community - prime economic development and relocation magnets
- Recreation, sports and arts/culture draw tourism - the third largest and one of the fastest growing industries in the world

- Recreation, fitness, sports and arts/culture are significant economic generators on their own - providing many jobs
- Small investments in recreation, sports and arts/culture often yield large economic returns - money generated by events, capital development and providing ongoing services is spent several times in the community

Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas are Essential to Ecological Survival

- Green space protects habitats, biodiversity and ecological integrity
- Green spaces improve air quality - removing carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide and other pollutants from the air
- Outdoor recreation is one of the best approaches to environmental education - a key to long-term sustainability
- Protecting land from development (keeping it as open space) mitigates against potential environmental disasters (flooding, slip zone, aquifer depletion)
- Trail and pathway systems save energy and protect air quality by encouraging non-motorized transportation
- Arts/culture is one of the best ways to express the spirituality of the land, thereby encouraging stewardship ethics

How Recreational Activities is Carried Out

There are many forms of recreational activities and some of recreation activities are being listed below by (Torkildsen, 2005):

- Cycling the streets and valley: Cycling is one of the ancient and healthy sports that gets you out of your busy workstation. You might experience pain in neck and back because of continuously working on your laptop without taking any healthy breaks. You can cut yourself free from the pains and relax your mind by cycling through the streets or adventuring to the nearest valley.
- Early morning walks: Going for an early morning walk, meeting community people in the park in the evening or strolling alongside a river is included in passive recreational activities and are equally beneficial for mental and physical health. The serenity and peace of early mornings are incomparable to anything else in the world as you can enjoy the dew drops, the chirping of birds, cool breezes and obviously less polluted air.
- Listening to music / watching movies: Find the huge entertainment industry around you and go for your favourite singers, film stars, comedians and lots of

more. Overlook the charts and plan a movie in the cinema with your best buddies. Check out the availability, if you can invite friends and watch the movie at a home theatre while eating, drinking and gossiping.

- Visiting amusement parks: An amusement park is a hub of entertainment and recreation. You can find a whole lot of fun filled activities at a central place. Go on the thrilling rides, watch the amusing shows and enjoy as much as you can.
 - Photography: Grab your camera or cell phone, select a theme and go out. Nature is so lovable that you will never stop yourself in capturing a scenic view! Try photographing rough pathways, barns, cute little puppies and birds, and other things that may interest you. Try your skills and share them with family and friends.
 - Browsing the internet for what you love: You might laugh at it, but frankly speaking, a hectic routine often stops you searching for your interests. The extensive research and an urge to deliver high-quality work stops you from surfing the internet for your favourite things. You can relax your mind by finding something you have never searched for, despite an inclination. Take a day off or a few hours to explore the cyber world without the intention of earning money from it and you will love it. (G. Torkildsen, 2017)
- PERFORMANCE is how well a person or persons does a piece of activities over a time frame (Luetkens, 2004).

According to (Yukic, 1870) Importance of performance in recreational activities can lead to the following:

- Improved emotional wellbeing - helps young children feel more confident, happy and relaxed, with improved self-esteem and self-concept

- Improved health - encourages healthy growth and development of children's bodies, and similar benefits of physically active adults
- Improved mental health - improves concentration skills and ability to manage anxiety and stress
- Enhanced social skills - develops skills such as cooperation and teamwork, and a great way to have fun, meet new people and develop friendships
- Increased capacity for learning and productivity - active children are generally more motivated and better organised than children who are inactive, and physical activity has direct links to improved learning outcomes
- A more positive school environment - active students are generally less aggressive and experience fewer discipline problems
- A reduction in anti-social behaviour - active children are less likely to smoke, use illicit drugs or be involved in criminal activity.

All these will lead to an increase in performance of the students which is why performance relatively depends on recreational activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This researched work focused on the effect of recreational activities on performance of child education in elementary and secondary schools in South Eastern Nigeria. To achieve this, the researcher purposively selected ten schools from each of the State that constituted South Eastern Nigeria by law governing the federal republic of Nigeria. This serves as sample for the study. However a total of population of 2,250 students was sampled but only 1124 were completely returned for analysis at the time of analysis. Nevertheless chi-square statistical technique's was employed based on its general acceptancy in all field of human endeavor.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

General Observation on Distribution of Questionnaire

S/N	School	No. Of Pupil	No Sample	Total Used	Total	Percentage
1	Owerri City School	3,000	200	110	3310	9.8
2	Madonna Primary School	750	100	80	930	7.1
3	Evangel, High School	600	80	50	8,650	4.5
4	Ohokobe Primary School	900	120	90	1110	8.0
5	Awka Primary Schools	2,500	200	120	2820	10.7
6	Redeemer Inter, High School	500	100	70	670	6.2
7	Govt. Sec. School Enugu	1,500	400	189	2,089	16.8
8	Holy Family Model Edu. Center Enugu	2,300	450	161	2,911	14.3
9	Evangel Primary School	2,100	400	142	2,642	9.9

10	Govt. Secondary School Afikpo	2,100	400	142	2,642	12.7
	Total		2,250	1,124		100

Hypothesis One

There is no significance relationship between physical fitness & student emotional well-being.

Research question one, "What is the physical fitness on student emotional well-being"?

Table-1: Contingency Table for Hypothesis One

S/N	S.A	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
1	700	250	50	50	74	1,124
2	850	100	60	64	50	1,124
3	500	500	24	50	50	1,124
4	450	470	80	90	34	1,124
Total	2580	1320	214	254	208	4,496

Table-2: Expected & Observed Frequencies

CELL	O	E	O-E	O-E	O-E ² /E
A	700	625	75	5625	9
B	250	330	-80	-6,400	-19.4
C	50	53.5	-3.5	-12.25	-0.23
D	50	63.5	-13.5	182.25	2.88
E	74	52	22	484	9.4
F	850	625	225	30,625	81
G	100	330	-230	-52,900	-160.3
H	60	53.5	6.5	42.25	0.79
I	64	63.5	0.5	0.25	0.004
J	50	52	-2	4	0.08
K	500	625	-125	-15,625	-25
L	500	330	170	28,900	87.58
M	24	53.5	-29.5	-870.25	-16.3
N	50	63.5	-13.5	-182.25	-2.88
O	50	52	-2	-4	0.08
P	450	625	-175	-30,625	-49
Q	470	330	140	19,600	59.4
R	80	53.5	26.5	702.25	13.13
S	90	63.5	26.5	702.25	11.06
T	34	52	-18	-324	-6.24
TOTAL	4496	4496	27	-75.5	-4.946

However $X^2 t = (C-1)(R-1) = df$
 Therefore $5 - 1 = 4, 4 - 1 = 3$
 $0.05 = \sigma 4 \times 3 = 12 df$
 $X^2 t (12) 0.05 = 21.026$

Decision Rule

If $X^2 C < X^2 t$ we reject Ho and accept Hi and if the $X^2 C$
 $X^2 t$ we accept Ho and reject Hi
 Therefore $X^2 C = -4.946 < X^2 t = 21.026$

We however rejects the Ho which contained that there is no significant relationship between physical fitness and students emotional wellbeing in elementary and secondary schools and accept Hi which posits that there is a strong significant relationship between

physical fitness and students emotional wellbeing. Therefore in this research the researchers conclude that physical fitness helps in student's emotional wellbeing which results in efficient academic performance child education in elementary & secondary schools south eastern Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

Significant there is no significant relationship between amusement park visitation and academic excellence.

Research Question

What is the effect of amusement park visitation on academic excellence of children in Elementary and Secondary schools.

Table-3: Contingency Table for Hypothesis

Questions		Responses				
S/N	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
5	700	248	52	74	50	1124
6	899	200	5	9	11	1124
7	900	110	50	50	14	1124
Total	2,499	558	107	133	75	3,372

Table-4: Expected & Observed Frequency

CELL	O	E	O-E	O-E ²	O-E ² /E
A	700	833	-133	-17,689	-21.24
B	248	186	62	3,844	20.67
C	52	35.7	16.4	268.96	7.6
D	74	44.3	297	882.09	19.92
E	50	25	25	625	25
F	899	833	66	4,356	5.23
G	200	186	14	196	1.06
H	5	35.7	-30.6	-936.36	-26.4
I	9	44.3	-35.3	-1,246.09	-28.13
J	11	25	-14	-196	-7.84
K	900	833	67	4489	5.49
L	110	186	-76	-5776	-31.06
M	50	35.7	14.4	207.36	5.83
N	50	44.4	5.7	32.49	0.74
O	14	25	-11	-121	-4.84

However $X^2_t = (C-1)(R-1) = df$
 Therefore $5-1 = 4, 3-1 = 2$
 $0.05 = \alpha 4 \times 2 = 6$
 $X^2_t (6) 0.05 = 12.592$

Decision Rule

If $X^2_C < X^2_t$ we reject the Ho and accept the Hi as alternative
 $X^2_C = 27.97 < X^2_t = 12.592$

We reject the null hypothesis Ho which posits that there is no significant relationship between amusement park visitation and academic excellence in elementary & secondary school and accept the alternative Hi which contained that there is no positive significant relationship between amusement part visitation as a recreational activities and academic excellence.

The researchers concludes that amusement park visitation as recreational activities helps in student academic excellence in elementary & secondary schools in south eastern Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

It is Crystal clear in this researched study that recreational activities plays a major role in shaping the brain and ways of life of child education and behaviors especially in elementary and secondary Schools as confirmed by this study. Therefore child educational performance is strongly linked to involvement in recreational activities.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been established by the researcher based on the findings as contained in this researched work.

- i. Based on the findings in this research which confirmed that physical fitness helps in students’ performance, the researchers recommend that government at all tiers should assist schools in creating more recreational centres. ,
- ii. Based on the findings of the study which confirmed that visiting of amusement parks helps improve students’ performance, the researchers recommend the establishment of an agency whose responsibility will be on the enlightenment of the general public on the need for regular visits to Amusement parks during recreation period as it helps to recall memories.

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