

## **Perceived Motives for Participation in Leisure-Time Physical Activity among Employees of Tertiary Institutions in Ondo State, Nigeria.**

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### **Abstract**

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The purpose of this study was to find out the perceived motives for participation in leisure-time physical activity among employees of tertiary institutions in Ondo State, Nigeria. The population for the study was two hundred (200) teaching and two hundred (200) non-teaching staff of Government-owned tertiary institutions in the State. A structured and validated questionnaire named, "Motives for Physical Activity Questionnaire (MPAQ)" was used to collect data for the study. The data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and standard error) to establish the motives influencing leisure-time physical activities. The results of the study indicated that attainment of physical fitness, longevity and stress reduction ranked highest as the motives for employees' participation in leisure time physical activities. Based on the findings, it was recommended that coaches, sport managers and other ancillary leisure professionals should have the knowledge of motives for participation in leisure time physical activities as this will assist in planning activities that will meet the goals of the staff. Lastly, it was also suggested that employers should create, sustain and offer incentives to motivate employees to get involved in leisure time physical activities for its attendant health benefits.

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## **Introduction**

Leisure represents an important aspect of national and community life (Yoshioka, Nilson and Simpson, 2002). Iso-Ahola and Crowley (1991) equally pointed out that leisure time physical activities are important because, in addition to providing opportunities to socialize, they provide human beings with good opportunities to explore their individuality, create identities and form social bonds. Thus, having the opportunity to enjoy quality leisure time physical activity is vital to the health and personal development of all individuals regardless of gender, functional ability, socio-cultural background or economic status. According to Wayne and Dale (2002), it is in leisure that human beings finds opportunities for individual and creative expression; seek for social interaction and opportunities for self-development which contribute to the raising of the general level of their society. The short and long-term benefits of participation in regular leisure-time physical activities include improved psychological and emotional well-being. In his literature review Ajibua (2012) noted that results from laboratory studies, clinical trials and epidemiological investigations provide convincing evidence that increasing one's level of activity- especially for those who are sedentary- has multiple health benefits.

In a report by the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (2009), regular physical activity has shown to have preventive effect against the onset of over 25 chronic diseases including cardiovascular diseases, type II diabetes mellitus, colon and breast cancers, stroke and osteoporosis etc. The World Health Organization (2002), in a separate but similar reports, observed that in 2001, 1.9 million global deaths were attributed directly to physical inactivity. Specifically, physical inactivity caused a 15% increase in the onset of some cancers, diabetes and heart diseases. In Nigeria, chronic diseases caused by physical inactivity accounted for 24% of all deaths (WHO, 2005). This organization also estimated that Nigeria lost 400 million US dollars in national income to premature deaths due to heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. It was projected that these losses caused by sedentary lifestyle will reach 8 billion US dollars by 2015. Sallis (2011) also claimed that physical inactivity is the fourth leading cause of deaths worldwide. What is distressing about these statistics therefore is that the solution to prevent these deaths has been with us for decades, which is regular participation in leisure-time physical activity. This provides one of the first lines of defence needed to prevent these premature deaths that are daily experienced in our society (Mondigo, 2010).

It is very obvious that mechanization and computerization at work have increased workplace physical inactivity (Sallis, 2011). Talabi, Ajayi-Vincent, Adesina and Aribamikan (2010) in their study noted with affirmation that physical activity is no longer part of our daily lives in Nigeria. According to their report, cars have replaced walking, elevators have taken the place of stairs, while washing machines have replaced manual laundry, mobile communication and various remote controls have reduced the general movement of people. The effect of these technological advancements has placed individuals in a state of inactivity and sedentary lifestyle with concomitant increase in diseases and subsequent fatalities.

In 2008, non-communicable diseases (NCD) accounted for 63 % of global deaths, representing 36 million deaths with 80% of this from developing countries (WHO, 2010; 2011). Considering the inadequacy of medical facilities and personnel in most developing countries to reduce these deaths, it is necessary to advocate active participation in leisure time physical activity as preventive mechanism against the spread of NCD. Onywera, Adamo, Sheel, Waudo, Bolt and Tremblay (2012) and Bartels (2013) in separate reports claimed that the burden of diseases in developing nations such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa is currently shifting from infectious diseases to NCD despite the improved hygiene/medical practices. Anna (2013) posited that little is being done to improve physical activity participation in developing nations (Anna, 2013). The consequent effect of this, is the wide spread of NCD.

Calga, Canlan and Demir (2009), revealed that the majority of research reports examining leisure-time physical activity participation have focused on economically well-developed countries. In developed countries like United State of America, Australia, Germany, Canada many research studies have been carried out on leisure time physical activity participation (Bright Futures, 2006; Pihu, 2009; Taylor, Ntaoumanis, Standage and Spray, 2010). The western world countries were believed to have been the first generation of human in history where mass of population has deliberately exercise to be healthy (Anna, 2013). This lifestyle is probably due to knowledge of the health benefits of active participation in physical activity.

In 2010, African Physical Activity Network (AFPAN) was formed to coordinate research works in the field of physical activity and health promotion in Africa (Bartels, 2013). Onywera et al (2013) stated that there is no comparable data to ascertain the status of physical activity in African countries. However, Ajibua's (2012) reported that participation in physical activity among Nigerians was decreasing.

This seems to be the position in most African countries. According to him, the situation would improve if higher institutions are involved through government policy to drive the concept of "Fitness for all". This view might have arisen as a result of the general assumption that institutions of higher learning could generate ideas that are capable of changing the lives of people. National Policy of Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1981) confirmed this statement to be true. The document described institutions of higher learning as centres of excellence established to contribute to the up-keep of the society through manpower and knowledge development and social services as well as helping to set the agenda for its continue growth and development. For this reason, employees of tertiary institutions are respected and perceived as knowledgeable individuals who should be emulated. One therefore expects this category of people to be models to others in active participation in physical activities.

However, Ikhioya and Sosanya (2002) discovered that most employees of tertiary institutions in Nigeria apart from those in Physical and Health Education Department and Sports Centres tend to exhibit non-challant attitude towards active involvement in leisure time physical activity. Ajibua (2012) discovered that the few that are involved, did not meet the World Health Organization guidelines of 150 minutes physical exercise for five days a week. Damfe, Mensa, Wilson and Atikumi (2011) asserted that participation of employees of tertiary institutions in physical activities in any society will motivate and promote active involvement of students as well and therefore having multiply effect on the society as whole.

It may be argued that higher institution staff in Nigeria do not have time to participate in leisure time physical activity because of increased workload and job stress, but Ajibua (2012) discovered that lack of time was not part of the barriers preventing university staff from participating in leisure time physical activity. Jeroh (2012) in his own study submitted that the cause of lack of active participation in leisure time physical activity among employees of tertiary institutions is attitudinal. In order to understand how to develop result-oriented interventions that would promote leisure time physical activity among employees of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, it is essential to investigate their motives for participation in leisure time physical activities. This is so because motivational and behavioural factors will ultimately determine the frequency, intensity and duration and types leisure time physical activity involvement. Ingledew and Sallivan (2002) submitted that motives are important determinant of type and extent of physical activity participation.

Understanding these motivational factors have implications for physical activity planning, organization, control and coordination.

The purpose of this study therefore, is to examine the motives for participation in leisure-time physical activity among employees of tertiary institutions in Ondo State with a view to developing effective intervention strategies that could encourage staff to participate in leisure time physical activity. Motives stimulate human behaviour every time a wish for certain goal arises. It actually determines the lever that determines whether a person will participate in leisure time physical activity or not.

## **Research Methods**

### **Research Design**

The descriptive survey design was used for the study to find out the existing situation of a particular phenomenon of the relationship among non-manipulated variables (Gay, 1992). This study is descriptive in nature, hence the adoption of the design.

### **Population Sample and Sampling Procedures**

The population for this study were all the teaching and non-teaching staff of 5 Government-owned tertiary institutions in Ondo State. The institutions include Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba, Akoko; Adeyemi College of Education Ondo; Federal College of Agriculture, Akure; Federal University of Technology, Akure and Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo. The convenience sampling technique was applied to select 40 teaching and 40 non-teaching staff from each of the five tertiary institutions. The respondents from each of the five (5) institutions were 80 which made the total respondents for the study to be 400.

### **Instrument**

The instrument used for data collection in the study was a structured and validated questionnaire tagged "Motives for Physical Activity Questionnaire" (MPAQ). The 5 points Likert Scale format was adopted to design the questionnaire.

The instrument contained statements followed by responses, "strongly agreed" (5 value), "agree" (4 value), "undecided" (3 value), "disagree" (2 value), "strongly disagree" (1 value). The respondents were to tick appropriate column.

### **Validity of the Instruments**

The content and face validity of the instrument was determined by 2 experts from the Department of Physical and Health Education Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

The instrument was subjected to a pilot study during which it was administered twice within three weeks using the test- retest method. Twenty five (25) teaching and twenty-five (25) non-teaching staff of the Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State were randomly selected to fill the questionnaire. The reliability test was carried out by obtaining Cronbach Alpha statistic which is a measure of how reliable and consistent the instrument was. The result showed that Cronbach Alpha was 0.896, which showed that the research instrument was reliable and consistent. This agreed with recommendations of Thordike and Hagen (1997) and Wiseman (1999) that a high reliability value of 0.70 or higher shows that instrument is reliable.

### **Data Collection**

Administration of the questionnaire was done by the researcher and a research assistant. The collection was done by the same process from 10<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> August, 2011.

### **Data Analysis**

The data from four hundred (400) questionnaires containing 5 items were analyzed item by item. Statistical tools used in analyzing were descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and standard error). Descriptive statistics describes the statistics as they are, while inferential statistics test research questions and come up with deductions whether the research question be accepted or rejected.

## **Results**

Table 1 shows the mean scores of responses of subjects to questions on staff motives for participating in leisure-time physical activities. The mean score of teaching staff that participated in leisure-time physical activities to achieve physical fitness/health/longevity/stress reduction was 4.04 while that of non-teaching staff was 3.84. The deduction therefore was that though more teaching staff were involved in physical leisure activities for these reasons, it also showed that majority of non-academic that participated in leisure time physical activities did it for physical fitness/health/longevity/stress reduction purposes too. As in the case of staff that participated in physical leisure time activities for aesthetic and beauty purposes, table 1 showed that teaching staff had mean score of 2.67, while non-academic was 2.65. This result indicated that academic and non-academic staff were involved in leisure time physical activities for aesthetic/beauty motives. The table further revealed that the mean score of teaching staff that were involved in leisure time physical activities for the purpose of socialization was 3.31 and that of non- teaching staff was 3.21. From the result it could be inferred that both the teaching and the non- teaching staff participated in leisure activities for the purpose of socialization.

Respondents were also asked to indicate if they participate in leisure activities to gain recognition in the immediate community. The data collected indicated mean score of 3.43 for the teaching staff whereas that of non- teaching staff was 3.51. This suggests that non-teaching staff were involved in physical leisure activities for the purpose of achieving recognition more than teaching staff. Involvement in physical leisure activities also has the capacity to enhance self-discipline. The above table showed that the mean score of teaching staff that responded to the questionnaire item relating to participation in leisure activity because they want to achieve self-disciplined was 3.02 while that of non- teaching staff was 2.97. This revealed that teaching staff that participated in leisure activities because they want to achieve self-disciplined were more than that of non- teaching staff.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to identify the motives for employees' participation in leisure time physical activity. The variables examined as motives for physical activity involvement were the need for physical fitness, longevity and stress reduction, aesthetics and beauty, socialization, recognition, discipline and personal values.

The study indicated that attainment of physical fitness, longevity and stress reduction ranked highest as the motives for staff participation in leisure time physical activities (teaching staff,  $\bar{x}$  = 4.04, non-teaching staff,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.84). This is in agreement with a similar study carried out by Cacchini, Mendez and Muniz (2002). They were able to establish that most the important motive for participating in physical activities is the quest for fitness. Ajayi (2002) reported that longevity is a motive for participation in physical activity. According to him, this may be because people have started to understand the relative relationship between physical activity involvement and longevity. Armstrong (1997) also confirmed that physical activity involvement is an effective method for stress reduction.

The results of the study showed that one of the motives for participation in physical activity among employees (teaching staff,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.67, non-teaching,  $\bar{x}$  = 2.65) of higher institutions in Nigeria was to achieve aesthetics and beauty objectives. Abass (2010) asserted that participating in leisure time physical activities helps to lose weight, tone body and help people maintain glowing body.

As contained in table 1, the result (teaching staff,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.31; non-teaching staff,  $\bar{x}$  = 3.21) showed that respondents considered socialization as a motive for physical activity involvement. Abass (2010) explained that participation in physical activity programme is more interesting and better enjoyed when done in group. During physical activity, participants engage in social comparison, assess one another's strengths and weaknesses and the possibility of developing deeper relationship. The medium of human movement provides meaningful form of symbolic interactions between groups and among groups. It helps to build fundamental qualities necessary for social cohesion such as personal and group integrity, loyalty, cooperation, courtesy and respect for others. In the case of Fadoju and Aletta (2010) they remarked that a good leisure time physical activity programme will help build social and interpersonal interaction, which by extension would have favourable social benefits and lead to greater social adjustment. Nwankwo (1998) maintained that physical activity involvement enhances socialization of individual through comradeship, group involvement, cooperation, competition and service to others. Salami (2002) also stressed that one of the opportunities people enjoy through participation in leisure time physical activity is meeting personalities.



As contained in table 1, the results showed (teaching staff,  $\bar{x}=2.43$ ; non-teaching staff,  $\bar{x}=2.51$ ) that while teaching staff of higher institutions may not participate in physical activities for the purpose of gaining recognition, non-teaching staff did. This finding as it relates to non-teaching staff is in tandem with Ajayi (2002) which reported that the need for recognition is a motive for participation in leisure time physical activity.

The result (teaching staff,  $\bar{x}=3.02$ ; non-teaching staff,  $\bar{x}=2.97$ ) implied that respondents agreed that discipline and personal values were motives for participation in physical activity. Battista (1990) supported this finding. He posited that participation in leisure time physical activity is a powerful tool to discipline the body and attain personal value objectives

## Conclusion

The results of the study showed that people participate in leisure time physical activity for various reasons (motives). This is in consonant with Zambri, et al. (2013) which proved that there was relationship between motives and physical activity participation. Motive is considered as a factor within an individual which attracts him to or repels him from objects, persons and activities. Individual attitude most times is a by-product of his or her motives. Motives reflect the way individual feels or reacts toward a given activity. It influences the way people perceive and respond to other people or events (Cordes and Ibrahim, 1996). Iso-Ahola (1998) opined that some of the factors central to observable leisure behaviour are the underlying motivations. He further remarked that motivation is the main determinant defining intensity and depth of involvement in leisure time physical activity programmes. It provides mental energy necessary for active leisure and also contributes to effortless leisure experiences.

Arising from the foregoing, it is imperative to appreciate that the knowledge of the motives behind participation in leisure time physical activity is very important. This sort of knowledge and more detailed understanding of the meanings that individuals give to why they participate (or not participate) in leisure time physical activities are very important to leisure managers. This may form the basis for leisure programme planning and development.

It is therefore recommended as a matter of priority for coaches, sport managers and other ancillary leisure professionals to put into consideration these learning outcomes before designing programmes. This is important in order to promote participation across the diverse groups of people that may want to participate in physical activity. It may also be valuable in the development of focused leisure policies and strategies for intervention that can help to provide organized leisure-time physical activities. Workplace leisure programmes should really be emphasised for people who do sedentary work such as people working in higher institutions. To enhance their health, employers should create, sustain and offer incentives in form of reward system to motivate and get employees involved in physical activities during their leisure hours. It thus means that motivation to participate in leisure time physical activity as recommended by Parker (2004) is something that needs to be nurtured and elicited through supportive strategies.

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**Table 1 showing mean scores for Motives for Physical Leisure Activity Involvement- N= 400**

<b>MOTIVES FOR INVOLVEMENT</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
Physical fitness /longevity/ stress reduction	Teaching	200	4.04	1.279	.090
	Non- Teaching	200	3.84	1.625	.115
Aesthetic/beauty	Teaching	200	2.67	1.457	.103
	Non- Teaching	200	2.65	1.530	.108
Socialization	Teaching	200	3.31	1.281	.091
	Non- Teaching	200	3.21	1.589	.112
Recognition	Teaching	200	2.43	1.448	.102
	Non- Teaching	200	2.51	1.582	.112
Discipline personal values	Teaching	200	3.02	1.468	.104
	Non-Teaching	200	2.97	1.771	.125

*Source: Fieldwork 2011*