



RECREATION AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING AMONG STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS:
IMPLICATION FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

By

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Abstract

Participating in recreational activities is of great importance in an individual's wellbeing as it contributes in a great way to the cognitive, social wellbeing of both old and young. This study examined the effect of involvement in recreational activities on the social wellbeing of undergraduate students of the University of Lagos. Data was collected using a structured social wellbeing questionnaire administered unto 300 respondents. Results indicated that there was no significant relationship between involvement in recreational activities among students and social integration, social acceptance, and social contribution wellbeing. At the same time, there was a significant relationship between recreation, social actualization and social coherence among students ($M=46.52$, $S.D. =2.78$). It further revealed that there was a significant influence on student types on recreational activities on social wellbeing ($F(2, 297) = 6.94$, $p < .05$). At the same time, there was also a significant influence of time spent on recreational activities on social wellbeing ($F(2, 295) = 5.09$, $p < .05$). It was concluded that involvement in recreational activities has a positive relationship on the social wellbeing of students of the University of Lagos. It is therefore recommended that university authority should promote participation in recreational activities among students.

Keywords: Recreation, Social acceptance, Social contribution, Social coherence, Social actualization and Well-Being

Introduction

The need for recreation cannot be overemphasized because it contributes immensely to the development and wellbeing of all and sundry, students inclusive. Students are considered an impressive social class in sustainable development; therefore, their social wellbeing status is capital for society. Recreation is exercises that are leisurely embarked upon alone or in the group and which is free and pleasurable (Cletus & Alozie, 2019). It is usually appealing and not determined by a delayed reward or by any immediate necessity. Research confirms that juveniles that participate in recreational activities and programs are more active than those that are not involved in recreation activities (Caldwell & Faulk, 2013).

Participating in recreational activities helps to build relationships because it provides individuals with the ability to meet different kinds of people from different backgrounds by getting to know and relate with them. Recreation can be indoors or outdoors: it may include physical sports, reading, playing, listening to music, dancing, watching television, travelling amongst many other related activities. Choi, Yoon, and Lee (2012) noted that recreational facilities in schools provide several options for students to unwind and become less stressed up. Consequently, the inability to let off steam can affect undergraduates in terms of being aggressive and possibly violent, which can, in turn, disturb their social wellbeing. Recreational activities help in relaxation and reduce the impact of work-related stressors. The frequency at which young adolescents participate in a recreational program, determine their total physical activity. According to the World Health Organization (2015), social wellbeing is a crucial aspect of health together with physical and mental health: - It contributes significantly in improving the quality of life, self- efficacy and the social contribution of members of the society. It contains five domains which include social integration- "the evaluation of one's relationship with the society and community", social acceptance- "the understanding of society through the character and qualities of other people as a generalized category", social contribution- "the belief that one is a vital member of the society, with something of value to give to the world", social actualization- "the evaluation of the potential and trajectory of society" and social coherence- "the perception of the quality, organization and the operation of the social world, and it includes a concern for knowing about the world".

This paper is anchored on Seligman (2004) theory of wellbeing which postulates that there exist five good characteristics that promote higher levels of wellbeing which are: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment. These characteristics are adjustable and can be an effective intervention program that is capable of bringing improvement at the individual level, group, school or community's overall wellbeing through improvement in the identified five characteristics. This theory emphasizes a developmental process that leads to the development of positive characteristics in human, which in turn leads to effective human development. Adequate involvement of university students in recreation activities can ensure the creation of these positive characteristics in students and thereby translate into positive wellbeing for them.

Obesity is on the increase, and every society is looking for a solution through fitness and recreation to serve as a factor in combating the problem which is affecting millions of young adults (Ofstedal & Schneider, 2013). Notably, in the developed world, a significant number of students are already becoming sedentary upon entering college. This has led to a further decline in their involvement in physical activities in the college years (Caspersen, Pereira, & Curran, 2000). Sedentary behaviour has been associated with an increased risk of death as a result of the development of chronic diseases that include depression and anxiety (Ku, Fox, & Chen, 2016). University students can prevent unhealthy weight gain through recreation and also manage the effects of the stresses of university life. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate student's participation in recreation activities and their social wellbeing.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

1. Students who participate in recreational activities will not significantly report better social wellbeing than those who did not participate in recreation activities.
2. There will be no significant influence of types of recreational activities engaged in by undergraduate students of the University of Lagos on their social wellbeing among.
3. There will be no significant influence of time spent on recreational activities on social wellbeing among undergraduate students of the University of Lagos.

Methods

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study with the intent to find out the relationships between the operating variables within the context of the study. The study was conducted at the University of Lagos located at Akoka area of Yaba local government in Lagos, State Nigeria. The University comprises of twelve faculties namely, Arts, Basic Medical Sciences, Business Administration, Clinical Sciences, Dental Sciences, Education, Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Law, Pharmacy, Science, and Social Sciences. Full-time male and female undergraduate students of the University of Lagos within the ages of 17 and 27 were selected for the study. There are thirty-one thousand, four hundred and eight (31,408) full-time undergraduates in the institution as at the time of data collection exercise.

Three hundred undergraduate students who are both males and females from four faculties of the University represent the entire undergraduate population. The purposive sampling technique, also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, was chosen in selecting students from all the levels. The questionnaires had different sections based on the objectives of the study. Section A covered the socio-demographic information, while section B was examined the participation of students in recreational activities, the type of recreational activities they participated in and the amount of time spent in participation. Section C consisted of questions that measured the social wellbeing of all participants in the study.

Data Collection

Data were collected through the administration of structured questionnaires to students who participated in the study, and confidentiality was maintained by ensuring that all personal identifiers were removed from the questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis

Data generated from the questionnaires were scientifically processed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15.0 software. For ease of computation, close-ended responses were used to code into numbers. Pearson's correlation and t-test were used to test the hypotheses.

Results

Demographic Classification of Respondents

The result of the descriptive statistics shows that 111(37%) of the respondents fall between the age bracket of 16-19 years, 152(50.7%) belong to the age bracket of 20-23 years, and 37(12.3%) fall between the age range of 24-27 years old. It was revealed that 149 (49.7%) of the respondents were female, and 151 (50.3) were males. Majority 182(60.7) were Yoruba, 90(30%) were Igbo, 28(9.3%) were Hausa. Also, Majority 113 (37.7%) of the respondents were 100 level students, 43(14.3%) were 200 level students, 58(19.3%) were in 300 level and 400 level respectively, 28(9.3%) were 500 level students. Delineation of respondents in line with their faculties indicated that 47(15.7%) of them were in faculty of social sciences, 61(20.3%) were in faculty of environmental, 115(38.3%) were in faculty of Arts, and 77(25.7%) were in faculty of education. Regarding their religious affiliation, 224(74.7%) were Christians, while 76(25.3%) were Muslims.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One:

H₀: Students that participate in recreational activities will not significantly report better social wellbeing than those who did not participate in recreation activities.

Table 1: T-Test Summary Table Showing Influence of Participation in Recreational Activities on Social Wellbeing

	participation in recreational activities	N	\bar{X}	SD	t	p
Social integration	Yes	149	9.5101	2.87726	-8.20	<.05
	No	151	12.8278	4.02949		
Social Acceptance	Yes	149	8.2617	2.41447	1.18	>.05
	No	151	7.8940	2.96682		
Social Contribution	Yes	149	8.2953	2.52154	-0.51	>.05
	No	151	8.4570	2.98158		
Social Actualization	Yes	149	10.9128	2.85442	3.69	<.05
	No	151	9.4834	3.78568		
Social Coherence	Yes	149	9.4362	2.77859	4.42	<.05
	No	151	7.9735	2.95510		
Social wellbeing	Yes	149	46.4161	7.26999	-0.12	>.05
	No	151	46.5232	7.94299		

The result from table 1 shows that student who participated in recreational activities ($M=9.51$, $S.D= 2.88$) significantly reported lower scores on social integration compared to students reported not participating in recreational activities ($M=12.82$, $S.D. =4.03$), ($t (298) = -8.20$, $p<.05$). The table also revealed that student who participated in recreational activities ($M=8.26$, $S.D= 2.41$) were not significantly different in the level of social acceptance compared to students that did not participate in recreational activities ($M=7.89$, $S.D. =2.97$), ($t (298) = 1.18$, $p>.05$). Also, students who participated in recreational activities ($M=8.30$, $S.D= 2.52$) were not significantly different in the level of social contribution compared to students reported not participating in recreational activities ($M=8.46$, $S.D =2.99$), ($t (298) = -0.51$, $p>.05$).

Furthermore, student who participated in recreational activities ($M=10.91$, $S.D= 2.85$) significantly reported higher scores on social actualization compared to students reported not participating in recreational activities ($M=9.48$, $S.D =3.79$), ($t (298) = 3.69$, $p<.05$). More so, the student who participated in recreational activities ($M=9.44$, $S.D= 2.78$) significantly reported higher scores on social coherence compared to students reported not participating in recreational activities ($M=7.97$, $S.D. =2.96$), ($t (298) = 4.42$, $p<.05$). Student who participated in recreational

activities ($M=46.42$, $S.D= 7.27$) were not significantly different in the level of social wellbeing compared to students reported not participating in recreational activities ($M=46.52$, $S.D =2.78$), ($t (298) = -0.12$, $p>.05$).

Hypothesis Two:

H₀: There will be no significant influence of types of recreational activities engaged in on social wellbeing among undergraduate students of the University of Lagos.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA showing the influence of types of recreational activities student participate on social wellbeing

	Source	S	df	.S. M.S.	F	Sig.
Social integration	Between Groups	763.644	2	381.822	30.463	<.05
	Within Groups	3722.636	297	12.534		
	Total	4486.280	299			
Social Acceptance	Between Groups	131.811	2	65.905	9.495	<.05
	Within Groups	2061.426	297	6.941		
	Total	2193.237	299			
Social Contribution	Between Groups	48.189	2	24.095	3.212	
	Within Groups	2228.248	297	7.503		<.05
	Total	2276.437	299			
Social Actualization	Between Groups	128.776	2	64.388	5.658	
	Within Groups	3380.010	297	11.381		<.05
	Total	3508.787	299			
Social Coherence	Between Groups	240.508	2	120.254	15.054	
	Within Groups	2372.492	297	7.988		<.05
	Total	2613.000	299			
Social wellbeing	Between Groups	772.040	2	386.020	6.942	
	Within Groups	16514.690	297	55.605		
	Total	17286.730	299			<.05

The result in table 2 shows that there was a significant influence of student types of recreational activities on social integration ($F (2, 297) = 30.46$, $p<.05$). Also, there was a significant influence of types of recreational activities on social acceptance ($F (2, 297) = 9.50$, $p<.05$). There was a significant influence of types of recreational activities ($F (2, 297) = 3.21$, $p<.05$) on social contribution, there was also the significant influence of types of recreational

activities on social actualization ($F(2, 297) = 5.66, p < .05$). More so, there was a significant influence of types of recreational activities on social coherence ($F(2, 297) = 15.05, p < .05$), there was also the significant influence of types of recreational activities on social wellbeing ($F(2, 297) = 6.94, p < .05$).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics showing a mean difference in the type of recreational activities engaged in on social wellbeing

	Type of recreational activities	N	Mean	S.D.
Social integration	Physical sports	205	12.1756	3.93556
	Dancing	74	9.6351	2.45270
	Group reading	21	6.9048	2.48807
	Total	300	11.1800	3.87354
Social Acceptance	Physical sports	205	7.7805	2.71445
	Dancing	74	9.1892	2.50848
	Group reading	21	7.0476	2.22432
	Total	300	8.0767	2.70836
Social Contribution	Physical sports	205	8.1756	2.96191
	Dancing	74	8.5541	2.18426
	Group reading	21	9.7143	2.12468
	Total	300	8.3767	2.75926
Social Actualization	Physical sports	205	9.7854	3.45032
	Dancing	74	11.3243	2.99364
	Group reading	21	10.1905	3.85511
	Total	300	10.1933	3.42565
Social Coherence	Physical sports	205	8.1220	2.90702
	Dancing	74	10.2162	2.44541
	Group reading	21	9.0000	3.25576
	Total	300	8.7000	2.95620
Social wellbeing	Physical sports	205	45.9561	7.54029
	Dancing	74	48.9189	6.60792
	Group reading	21	42.8571	9.29670
	Total	300	46.4700	7.60363

Descriptive analysis revealed that student who participated in physical sports activities significantly reported a higher level of social integration. In contrast, those who participated in dancing reported higher social acceptance. Also, those who participated in group reading reported a high level of social contribution. Apparently, those who participated in dancing reported high social actualization, social coherence and high social wellbeing.

Hypothesis Three:

H₀: There will be no significant influence of time spent on recreational activities on social wellbeing among undergraduate students of the University of Lagos.

Table 4: One-way ANOVA showing the influence of time spent on recreational activities on social wellbeing

	Source	S	df	.S.		Sig.
				M.S.	F	
Social integration	Between Groups	544.890	4	136.223	10.196	<.05
	Within Groups	3941.390	295	13.361		
	Total	4486.280	299			
Social Acceptance	Between Groups	10.458	4	2.615	.353	>.05
	Within Groups	2182.778	295	7.399		
	Total	2193.237	299			
Social Contribution	Between Groups	248.582	4	62.146	9.041	<.05
	Within Groups	2027.855	295	6.874		
	Total	2276.437	299			
Social Actualization	Between Groups	384.664	4	96.166	9.081	<.05
	Within Groups	3124.123	295	10.590		
	Total	3508.787	299			
Social Coherence	Between Groups	411.230	4	102.807	13.774	<.05
	Within Groups	2201.770	295	7.464		
	Total	2613.000	299			
Social wellbeing	Between Groups	1117.496	4	279.374	5.097	<.05
	Within Groups	16169.234	295	54.811		
	Total	17286.730	299			

The result in table 4 shows that there was a significant influence of student time spent on recreational activities on social integration ($F(2, 295) = 10.20, p < .05$). More so, there was no significant influence of time spent on recreational activities on social acceptance ($F(2, 295) = 0.35, p > .05$). There was a significant influence of time spent on recreational activities ($F(2, 295) = 9.04, p < .05$) on social contribution. There was also a significant influence of time spent on recreational activities on social actualization ($F(2, 295) = 9.08, p < .05$). More so, there was a significant influence of time spent on recreational activities on social coherence ($F(2, 295) = 13.77, p < .05$). Finally, there was also significant influence of time spent on recreational activities on social wellbeing ($F(2, 295) = 5.09, p < .05$).

Table 5: Descriptive statistics showing a mean difference of time spent on physical activities on social wellbeing

	Time spent	N	Mean	S.D.
Social integration	Less than 30 minutes	166	12.3313	4.20013

	30 minutes	21	9.1429	1.93095
	45 minutes	67	9.8955	2.93946
	1 hour	24	10.7500	3.52938
	more than 1 hour	22	8.8182	2.17423
	Total	300	11.1800	3.87354
Social Acceptance	Less than 30 minutes	166	8.0060	2.87412
	30 minutes	21	8.1905	2.63854
	45 minutes	67	7.9701	2.49223
	1 hour	24	8.6667	2.38959
	more than 1 hour	22	8.1818	2.57527
	Total	300	8.0767	2.70836
Social Contribution	Less than 30 minutes	166	8.3735	2.86763
	30 minutes	21	8.2857	1.76473
	45 minutes	67	9.5970	1.99286
	1 hour	24	6.1667	2.66485
	more than 1 hour	22	7.1818	2.95420
	Total	300	8.3767	2.75926
Social Actualization	Less than 30 minutes	166	9.3855	3.67079
	30 minutes	21	8.9048	3.36013
	45 minutes	67	11.7015	2.67432
	1 hour	24	11.0417	2.59563
	more than 1 hour	22	12.0000	1.51186
	Total	300	10.1933	3.42565
Social Coherence	Less than 30 minutes	166	7.9277	2.99811
	30 minutes	21	9.7143	2.41128
	45 minutes	67	10.7015	2.41218
	1 hour	24	8.4583	2.02117
	more than 1 hour	22	7.7273	2.43353
	Total	300	8.7000	2.95620
Social wellbeing	Less than 30 minutes	166	45.9217	8.24988
	30 minutes	21	44.2381	6.72982
	45 minutes	67	49.8657	6.36014
	1 hour	24	45.0833	2.51805
	more than 1 hour	22	43.9091	7.61520
	Total	300	46.4700	7.60363

Descriptive analysis revealed that student who spent less than 30 minutes significantly reported a higher level of social integration compared to those 30 minutes, 45 minutes, 1 hour, and those who spent more than 1 hour. There is no significant difference in the time spent on physical activities on social acceptance. Also, those who number of longer times in on physical activities significantly reported high social contribution, social actualization, social coherence and social wellbeing. This implies that number of hours spent on recreation significantly reported increased wellbeing.

Discussion

The first hypothesis states that students that participate in recreational activities will significantly report better social wellbeing than those who did not participate in recreation activities. The result shows that student who participated in recreational activities significantly reported lower scores on social integration compared to students who did not participate in recreational activities. Students who did not participate in recreational activities significantly reported a higher level of social integration than those who participated in recreational activities. The result demonstrates that participation in recreational activities did not significantly influence overall social wellbeing of the students. This may be because student engaged in other activities like going for parties, club and other social functions for better social wellbeing than recreational activities which are not captured in this study. The result corroborates the study by Raadik, Cottrell & Fredman (2010). They demonstrated in their study that positive affective responses to physical activity might be increased with the group or social environments as opposed to those environments in which exercising is done alone.

The second hypothesis stated that there would be significant influence of types of recreational activities engaged in on social wellbeing, the result shows that there was a significant influence of student types of recreational activities on social integration. Also, the student who participated in physical sporting activities significantly reported higher level of social integration, while those who participated in dancing reported higher social acceptance. Also, those who participated in group reading reported a high level of social contribution. Apparently, those who participated in dancing reported high social actualization, social coherence and increased social wellbeing. The result implies that the types of recreational activities the student participated in is subject to their level of social wellbeing and how they will be accepted by their peers. Participation in reading, physical sports activities and dancing may increase the student self-perception, self-worth and esteem, which will, in turn, increase their social wellbeing. The result supports the study by Hartman, Barcelona, Trauntvein & Hall (2019) who described recreation as a human activity, which is very useful and constructive to human health. They further asserted that recreation is worthwhile, socially acceptable and promotes moments of happiness, joy, fun, excitement, pleasure, engrossment, and highly refreshing through active participation.

The third hypothesis stated that there was a significant influence of student time spent on recreational activities on social integration. More so, there was no significant influence of time used on recreational activities on social acceptance. There was a significant influence of time used on recreational activities on social contribution. Also, there was a significant influence of time used on recreational activities on social actualization. There was a significant relationship between the influences of time used on recreational activities on social coherence. This indicates that those who spent longer times on physical activities significantly reported high social contribution, social actualization, social coherence and social wellbeing. The number of hours spent on recreational activities is a contributory factor to better social wellbeing. The result is in line with the study of Andre, Williams, Schwartz & Bullard (2017) who expressed that recreation is rewarding and it is a globally acceptable leisure experience that is gratifying to the individuals who willingly get involved in such activities. While Kim, Kim, & Gwon (2012) also corroborate this finding that recreation is any socially desirable leisure activity in which people get involve willfully and get immediate gratification.

Implication of Findings for Social Work Practice

The findings of this paper have implication for Social Workers in that it will help School Social Workers understand the importance of recreation to the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of students thereby paying attention to factors influencing social wellbeing of students. More so, knowing how recreational involvement influence social wellbeing should motivate the School Social Workers in creating awareness in schools on the need for students to participate in recreational activities. It also affords School Social Workers the opportunity of contributing to policy on education at the level of making recommendations on how to improve students' social wellbeing via recreational activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results that emanated from the study, it is concluded that involvement in recreational activities significantly influences the social wellbeing of the undergraduate students of the University of Lagos. Though not all the social wellbeing indicators were positively influenced by the students' involvement in recreational activities. Below are some recommendations which could help in the promotion of health social wellbeing amongst undergraduate students of the University of Lagos:

School social workers should advocate for students whose class schedules are in conflict with the recreation activity period, or at risk for injury. Universities could also work to remove every obstacle hindering students from participating by making access to these activities free and in cases where payment is inevitable, very minimal. Universities should work with the school social workers who in turn, engage students in determining a "best fit" for participation in recreation that builds on student's interests. Universities should encourage going into partnerships with the outside community in joining forces to find sponsors and funding for a variety of recreational activities that are beneficial to students.

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