

The Constraints of Participation in Leisure Time Activities among the Civil Servants in Ekiti State, Nigeria

¹. Isaac Olusola AKINDUTIRE (PhD), ². Samuel Tope AJAYI

Dept. of Human Kinetics and Health Education,

Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Correspondence Author: Professor I. O. Akindutire,

Abstract: *This study investigated the constraints of participation in leisure time activities among the civil servants in Ekiti State, Nigeria. It also examined knowledge level and types of leisure time activities involvement, frequency and duration of participation and constraints to participation in leisure time activities. The study adopted a descriptive research design of survey type. A simple random technique was used to select 1000 civil servants in Ekiti State. A questionnaire whose validity and reliability were ascertained was used for the study. Descriptive Statistics was used to answer the general questions. Inferential statistics of t-test was employed to test the hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.*

Findings of the study revealed that 66% of respondents participated in leisure time activities while only 22% of respondents spent 30minutes per activity schedule. It was also revealed that 85% of respondents agreed that tight work schedule prevents them from participating in leisure activities, while, 73.1% agreed that lack of recreational facilities and leisure amenities affect their participation in leisure activities. It was therefore, concluded that tight schedule of work, family obligations and lack of recreational centres are the major constraints of participation in leisure activities. Based on the findings, it is recommended that the employers should provide compulsory leave, strict maximum hours for office assignments and conducive environment for employees to avoid staying in office long after working hours.

Keywords: *Leisure, Recreation, Socio-economic, Constraint, Civil Servant.*

Date of Submission: 02-12-2019

Date of Acceptance: 18-12-2019

I. Introduction

Life satisfaction and quality of life are two concepts tied to successful aging. It is the perception of how satisfied one is with life and the quality of one life that accounts for a positive or negative feeling about life experiences. The daily activities chosen or not chosen make up one's life experiences. Spending one's life at leisure is one of the oldest dreams of human beings. Just as war is made in order to have peace, the reason one labours is to have leisure. Free time was viewed as "time when we are not involved in an activity for which we receive money" Godbey, 2010.

Leisure is the time left over when the necessities of life have been taken care of. Bammel and Bammel, 2012 viewed leisure as activities that people engage in during their free time – activities that are not work-oriented or that do not involve life maintenance tasks, such as house cleaning or sleeping.

The fast moving tempo of urban life has caused an alarming increase in mental illness, and many people never seem to be able to relax. (Illious, Anderson and Jakici, 2008). Life in the home has changed, and there is increased pressure upon the school, the church, and other community agencies to assume greater responsibilities than ever before to meet the changing needs of all age groups. Many urban areas no longer have open spaces, which are safe for children's play or challenging to adults. Since 1950 the concept of leisure has undergone considerable changes. The rapid development of technology, transportation, mobility and communications have increased considerably. The satisfaction of the lower echelon of needs as described by Maslow's hierarchy of individual needs has been widely used as a way of interpreting the World Health Organization's definition of health as a state of physical, social and mental wellbeing. His hierarchy, post physiological needs, such as thirst, food and rest as the base pyramid of motivation to satisfy physical needs, safety, belonging and love, esteem and self-actualization needs Rebecca, 2012.

Today, balancing work and leisure pursuits in technologically driven society, can be challenging, especially in Nigeria. The competitive culture encourages people to go above and beyond, often leading to long work hours and less time for leisure. Yet, other cultures seem to have achieved this balance. By studying their methods of recreation, sport and leisure, Nigerians can learn ways to enjoy their leisure time and lead to better-rounded, fulfilling lives. The World Health Organization (2000) defined health as a state of complete physical,

mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. This implies that one must be fit in all aspects before one can be considered to be healthy.

Separation from major population centres can create a number of barriers and constraints for leisure professionals and their constituents. Constraints may be intrapersonal, interpersonal, or structural in nature. Several factors, including accessibility, mobility, relative location of recreational facilities and resources to create opportunities, have been documented as constraints on leisure. It has been observed that a number of intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural constraints exist, impacting on civil servants' participation in leisure and recreational activities. Also, scholars in leisure time activity discovered that lack of leisure time activities occurs in all age groups, sex and religion among civil servants who have office based jobs, spending large amount of time sitting at their desks, leading to boredom, fatigue and chronic morbidity (Bath, 2009). The identification of these constraints is important to enhancing the body of knowledge regarding barriers and constraints to leisure opportunities to civil servants'. This information will also be beneficial to leisure providers wanting to design effective programs for civil servants' living in Ekiti State.

Research has shown that societal customs play another key role in the acceptance and value of leisure activities. When leisure activities become part of everyday culture, they become more important within a certain society and this will enhance health. Football, tennis, volleyball, basketball and swimming play important roles in the customs of leisure activities in England, Mexico, and other European countries. In Nigeria, especially Yoruba culture, engaging in social activity which could be regarded as participation in leisure like "Ayo Olopon" (local Mathematics), "Arin" (Targeting object), "Aloo" (Tale) and "Ijakadi" (Local wrestling) to mention a few. Weekends might be spent playing or watching sports with friends or family (Emiola, 2008).

However, categories of social status of people in a society, based on the income and job type, often influence the type of games they play during free time. For example, not participating in one type of leisure can be owing to the fund required to participate. For instance, Golf requires quite a lot of money to participate in, because equipment and membership rates for these clubs are high. This may limit the scope of people that participate in the recreation activities.

Research has also shown that little or no data exists on leisure time activities among civil servants in Ekiti State. It appears that civil servants are not really participating in leisure time activities regularly and adequately, which may affect their health status, either now or later in life. Nevertheless, Akindutire, (2013) noted that individuals must, as a matter of necessity, establish a pattern of life that will involve regular participation in fitness exercises for 30 minutes per day and at least 3 days per week. Also, Emiola (2008) noted that adopting and maintaining an active lifestyle has several health benefits. Based on this background, this study is designed to examine the constraints in the participation of leisure time activities by civil servants in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

II. Method and Procedure

The following questions were raised for the study:

- (1) Do civil servant in Ekiti State participate in leisure time activities?
- (2) What are the constraints of participation in leisure time activities among the civil servants?

The following hypotheses were tested:

- (1) There is no significant difference in the constraints of participation and duration of time spent between male and female civil servants of Ekiti State.
- (2) There is no significant difference in the utilisation of available recreational facilities by male and female civil servants.

The population for the study consisted of all Civil Servants in the Ministries and 16 Local Government Area in Ekiti State. The study employed multistage sampling technique to select 1000 as respondents. The ministry workers consisted of 700 and local Government workers from all the sixteen Local Government Areas in Ekiti State being 300.

III. Instrumentation

The instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. A pool of 27 items constituted the draft instrument. The questionnaire had two sections. Section A dealt with the personal data of the respondents, while Section B, had a modified Likert four point (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree) respectively.

Both descriptive statistical techniques of percentage, frequency and mean counts were used to answer the research questions and inferential statistics such as t-test was employed to analyse data of the hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

IV. Results and Discussion

Research Questions

Question 1: Do the civil servants participation in leisure time activities?

Table 1: Percentage showing frequency of Civil Servants participation in leisure time activities

Question items	Variable	Frequency	%
Do you ever participate in any leisure activities?	Yes	660	66
	No	150	15
	Not Sure	190	19
	Total	1000	100
What is the duration of time spent on leisure activities?	30 mins	220	22
	1 hour	495	49.5
	2 hours	140	14
	>2 hours	145	14.5
	Total	1000	100
How often in the last 1 year did you participate in a leisure time activities?	Always	315	47.7
	Sometimes	279	42.3
	Rarely	66	10
	Total	660	100
How often in the last 3 months did you participate in a leisure time activities?	Always	210	31.8
	Sometimes	218	33.0
	Rarely	232	35.2
	Total	660	100

Table 1 shows the frequency of civil servants’ participation in leisure time activities. results revealed that 66% of the respondents agreed that they engaged in leisure time activities, 15% are not, while 19% are not sure of their participation. On the duration of participation, the result showed that 22% spent 30 minutes, 49.5% spent an hour, 14% spent 2 hours while 14.5% spent more than 2 hours. Result also indicated that, 47.7% always participated in leisure time activity in the last 1 year, while 10% rarely participated. It was also noted that, 31.8% always participated in leisure time activity in the last 3 months, while 35.2% rarely participated.

Question 2: What are the constraints to participation in leisure time activities among the Civil Servants in Ekiti State?

Table 2: Frequency and percentage showing the constraints of participation in leisure time activities among the Civil Servants in Ekiti State.

Constraints to Participation in Leisure Activities	Agreed		Disagreed	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Tight schedule of work prevent me from participating in leisure activity.	850	85	150	15
My institutional policy does not give room for leisure activity.	29	2.9	971	97.1
Family obligations does not allow me to participate in leisure activity.	828	82.8	172	17.2
Lack of recreation centre affect my participation in leisure activity.	731	73.1	269	26.9
Leisure activity is only meant for male participants.	271	27.1	729	72.9

Table 2 shows constrains of the senior Civil Servants participating in leisure time activities. The results showed that 850 (85%) respondents agreed that tight schedule of work prevent them to participate in leisure activity, while 150 (15%) disagreed. Also, 29 (2.9%) agreed that their institutional policy does not give room for leisure activity while, 971 (97.1%) disagreed. Results also shows that, 828 (82.8%) agreed that family obligations does not allow them to participate in leisure activity, while 172 (17.2%) disagreed; 731 (73.1%) agreed that lack of recreation facilities and leisure amenities affect their participation in leisure activity while 269 (26.9%) disagreed. Therefore, tight schedule of work, family obligation and lack of recreation centre are major constraints of participation in leisure activities.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the constraints of participation and duration of time spent between male and female civil servants of Ekiti State.

Table 3: t – test analysis showing difference in the constraints of participation in leisure time activities between male and female civil servants in Ekiti State.

Variable	Mean	Std. D	N	df	t-cal	t-tab	Result
Male	2.12	.246	570	998	40.07	1.96	Significant
Female	3.15	.539	430				

*P<0.05

Table 3 showed that calculate t-test value (40.07) was greater than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore, rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the constraints of participation in leisure time activities between male and female civil servants.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the utilisation of available recreational facilities by male and female civil servants.

Table 4: t-test analysis showing difference in the utilisation of available recreational facilities by male and female civil servants.

Variable	Mean	Std. D	N	df	t-cal	t-tab	Result
Male	1.56	.525	570	998	15.75	1.96	Significant
Female	2.43	.111	430				

*P<0.05

Table 4 showed that calculate t-test value (15.75) was greater than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore, rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between male and female civil servants in Ekiti State in their participation in leisure time activities.

V. Discussion

The findings revealed that the constrains of participation in leisure time activities among the civil servants in Ekiti State varies depending on frequency of participation, duration of time spent and how often they engaged in it. This is consistent with the findings of Bath (2009), which states that lack of leisure activities occurs in all age group, sex and religion among civil servants who have office- based jobs, spending large amount of time sitting at their desks, leading to boredom, fatigue and chronic morbidity.

It was discovered from the study that tight schedule of work, family obligation and lack of recreation facilities are major constraints to participation in leisure activities. The outcome of the study also revealed that there is significant difference in the participation of leisure time activities between male and female civil servants. It was also revealed from the findings that there is significant difference in the duration of time spent in leisure activities between male and female civil servants. The result supported Rebecca (2012) who found that females tend to spend time in smaller groups and engage in verbal games, conversation and socializing whereas males play in large groups which lend themselves more to physical active games. However, American Heart Association (AHA) (2005) found that leisure time activity is bodily activity that maintains physical fitness and overall health and wellness. Stressing further, AHA disclosed that leisure time activities are necessary for different reasons such as killing boredom, strengthening muscles, weight maintenance, and for the purpose of enjoyment. Not only that participation in leisure time activity promote mental health and wellbeing, it enhances quality of life characterized by happiness and daily satisfaction, relief tension from stress, sound sleep after daily activities, blood pressure control etc. Therefore, members of the public need to be educated and sensitized about the influence of leisure time activities on their health, a continuous awareness campaign is necessary so as to meet up with that popular saying “all work without play makes Jack a dull boy”

VI. Recommendation

Based on the findings the following recommendations are given:

This study investigated the problems faced by civil servants in participation in leisure time activities. There are powerful socio-economic factors limiting the ability of civil servants to participate in leisure activities, particularly for junior workers. An increased understanding of socio-economic constraints civil servants face will enable us to fight more coherently for increased leisure opportunities to be made available for civil servants. In order to encourage civil servants’ on full participation in leisure activities, employers are advised to offer a range of recreational programs and initiatives, for the benefit of their employees. Also, employers should provide compulsory leave, strict maximum hours and a conducive environment for employees to limit their staying in office after working hours.

References

- [1]. Akindutire, I.O. Adegboyega, J.A., Ajayi-Vincent O.B., & Olanipekun, J.A. (2013), Ekiti State University Physical Fitness Programme. EKSU Press, Ado-Ekiti.
- [2]. American Heart Association (2005), Strategic Activities Dallas Texas.
- [3]. Bammel & Bammel (2012), Leisure and Human Behaviour W.C. Brown, USA 2nd edition.
- [4]. Bath J., & Jackson, V. (2009) Effect of the Physical activities in Leisure time and commuting to work on mental health.
- [5]. Emiola, M.L. (2008), All Work and All Play: The Health Assurance in Exercise, University of Ilorin 86th Inaugural Lecture.
- [6]. Godbey, Geoffrey (2010), Leisure in your Life. Pennsylvania: An Exploration Venture Publishing Inc.
- [7]. Illious, A., Andersen, R. & Jakici, J. (2008), Lifestyle Physical Activity Interventions; history short – and Long-Term Effects, and Recommendations. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 15 (4), 398-412.
- [8]. Mcole, A. & Must A. (2012), Physical Activities and Sedentary Behaviour J. Obes, 29 Suppl 584-496.
- [9]. Rebecca, J. Donatelle (2012). Assess to Health. International Edition. Pearson Educational CA 94111 International Publisher.