

Knowledge and Attitude as Correlates of Participation in Recreational Activities among the Staff of a Tertiary Institution in South-West Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities among members of staff of Ekiti State University (EKSU). The descriptive survey research design was adopted. Two hundred and one (201) members of staff of EKSU, selected through convenience sampling technique, from 8 faculties in EKSU, participated in the study. Data was collected with the aid of self-developed and validated questionnaire and relationships among variables were determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis while differences were determined using t-test. Significance was set at $P < 0.05$. The findings of this study revealed that 82.6%, 83.1% and 66.7% of the respondents had good knowledge of, positive attitude to, and moderate level of participation in recreational activities. Female respondents performed better in knowledge and participation in recreational activities. Also, respondents within the age range of 35-44 years had better attitude and participation in recreational activities. Knowledge had a significant positive relationship with attitude ($r = 0.365$, $P < 0.05$) and attitude also had a positive relationship with participation in recreational activities. ($r = 0.147$, $P < 0.05$). There was no significant difference between academic and non-academic staff in the knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities. The findings of this study is an indication that having knowledge and a positive attitude are associated with a higher level of participation in recreational activities. Efforts should therefore be made to enhance the knowledge of members of tertiary institutions on the benefits of recreation so as to improve their attitude and participation in recreational activities.

Keywords: Recreation, Knowledge, Attitude, Participation, Tertiary Institution

INTRODUCTION

The human body is viewed as a complex machine which is constantly being in use (Giger, 2018). Thus, there is a need for renewing, revitalizing and re-freshening the body so to avoid a partial or total breakdown (Mahri, Maya & Kulliyega (2020). One of the ways to revitalize the human body is by engaging in recreational activities. Recreational activities are organized activities in which individuals actively participate during their free time (Studocu, 2023). These activities can be enjoyed either in the company of other people or as an individual experience. These activities may also be physically demanding or maybe primarily intellectual. Recreational activities shift one's mind away from the daily routine and secular activities, refresh the body and mind, and make leisure time more interesting and enjoyable (World Health Organization, (WHO) 2010). Recreational activities include sports and games like playing football, social activities like attending parties and conferences, outdoor activities like brisk walking, musical activities, art and craft among others (Metin, Kathrci, Yuce, & Sarican 2017)

The contributions of recreational activities to the general wellbeing of man is enormous and inexhaustible (Schwarzenegger, Chrisman and Coleman 2005). These include: reducing obesity and chronic diseases and strengthening the immune and the skeletal structure of the body (Schwarzenegger et al, 2005). Regular participation in recreational activities also relieves individuals of stress and reduces the feeling of

loneliness, isolation, and alienation. Recreation also enhances self-esteem and helps individuals to better cope with the challenges of their daily lives. Apart from the personal benefits, participation in recreational activities also has communal benefits. These include: strengthening and maintaining healthy communities, creating a lively community atmosphere, reducing crime and improving family ties.

Despite the enormous benefits of recreation, many people do not harness this opportunity to revitalize themselves and as such, resulting in many adverse effects on human health. Many studies reported the factors associated with non-participation in recreation among various categories of people. These factors include lack of interest, financial and time constraints (Agnieszka Wartecka-Wazynska, 2013; Pasli & Harbalio?lu, 2014), lack of knowledge of the importance of participating in recreational activities (Pasli & Harbalio?lu 2014), lack of facilities, and individual attitude (Kabaday?, Eski, Bayram, Y?lmaz & Mayda 2017).

Knowledge and attitude are essential factors that influence behavior. Knowledge is the understanding of a phenomenon that often determines attitude which in turn determines behaviour. Ul Haq, Hassali, Shafie and Aljadhey (2012) speculated that having a better knowledge of something could lead to a positive attitude toward that thing and subsequently good practices.

Previous studies have reported that although many staffs of Nigerian universities are aware of what recreation is, not many of them participate in it. Bakare (2013) found low participation in recreation activities among university lecturers and stated that the low participation might be due to a low level of knowledge of leisure activities. Adegboyega (2015) also reported a low level of participation in physical activity and exercise among university staff and recommended that these people need education on the benefits of physical activities and exercise. Suleiman (2016), stated that many Nigerians do not understand what recreation means and that many Nigerians partake in leisure activities without knowing what they are or the scientific health benefits derived from them.

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of knowledge and attitude with participation in recreational activities among members of staff of Ekiti State University (EKSU), Ado-Ekiti.

METHODS

The research design adopted in this study is the descriptive research design. The study *involved* a total number of 201 members of staff (103 academics and 98 non-academics) of Ekiti State University (EKSU), Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. These participants were selected using convenience sampling method from 8 faculties within the institution.

This study adopted the paper and pencil type of survey research using a self-structured, validated questionnaire as a means of data collection. The questionnaire consisted of 9 items having a 4 point rating scale of 'Never', 'occasionally', 'sometimes', and 'often' to assess the frequency of participation in recreational activities. The recreational activities considered include: outdoor sporting activities, indoor games, attending social activities, attending academic /non-academic conferences, leisure-time reading, listening to news/watching television, arts & craft activities, attending camping programmes and leisure-time gardening. The instrument also contains a section for measuring the knowledge of recreational activities of participants. Initially, this section of the instrument had 17 items having a Yes or No' response format. However after subjecting the items to reliability analysis, 4 of the items had corrected item-total correlation value of less than 0.2 which is an indication that those items did not discriminate well with the others (Pope, 2009) hence they were expunged. Therefore the final version of this section of the instrument had 13 items with each of the items having a corrected item-total correlation of between 0.35 and 0.86 and a reliability coefficient of 0.92. Also the instrument had a section which contains items to assess the attitude of the participants to recreation. This section had 7 items having a 4 point Likert-type response format. The

result of the reliability analysis shows that all the items in this section of the questionnaire, discriminate well with one another hence they were all retained in the final draft of the questionnaire. The items had a reliability coefficient of 0.86 and item-total correlation for each of items was between 0.37 and 0.91 to assess respondents' attitude to recreation. The knowledge construct assessed in this study include: the meaning of recreation, the types of activities that can be engaged in for recreation, and the benefits of recreation. The attitude constructs include: disposition of participants to recreation based on: body weight, availability of time for recreation, and personal opinion about recreational activities. The instrument was administered on the participants with the assistance of four trained research assistants.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data collected in this study were analysed using SPSS (version 23.0, IBM, Armonk, NY, 2015). All the hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the relationship between the independent variables (knowledge and attitude to recreational activities) and outcome variable (Participation in recreational activities). All inferences were made at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The analysis of the demographic characteristics of respondents showed that the study consisted of 103 (51.2%) academic staff and 98 (48.8%) non-academic staff. The results showed that 52.7% of the respondents were males and many of them (46.3%) were 45 years and above. Also, 48.8% of the respondents had working experience of 10 years and above.

Regarding the level of knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities, results showed that majority of the respondents 82.6%, 83.1% and 66.7% have high knowledge, positive attitude and moderate level of participation in recreational activities respectively (Table 1).

Statistical analysis of the differences in respondents' knowledge of recreational activities based on sex, age and working experience, revealed that females had significantly higher knowledge of recreational activities than the male respondents ($M=30.60$, $SD=4.9$ vs $M=27.65$, $SD=7.3$). Also respondents between ages above 44 years and those who had less than 5 years working experience had significantly higher knowledge of recreational activities than others

Findings on differences in attitude to recreational activities showed that male respondents had significantly positive attitude than their female counterparts ($M=21.02$, $SD=5.1$ vs $M=19.8$, $SD=7.0$). Respondents between the ages 35 and 44 years and those with working experience of 10 years and above had significantly more positive attitude to recreational activities than others

The differences in participation in recreational activities among respondents showed that more female ($M=20.31$, $SD=4.0$) participated in recreational activities than the male respondents. Respondents between ages 35 and 44 years participated more in recreational activities and those with less than 5 years working experience participated more in recreational activities than others. The findings of this study also showed that knowledge contributed 2.2% of the total variation in participation in recreational activities while attitude contributed 13.9%.

Regarding the differences in knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities between academic and non-academic staff, the findings revealed no significant difference in knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities between academic and non-academic staff. However, the non-academic staff had higher knowledge (mean= 29.61 , $SD=6.3$ vs mean= 28.50 , $SD=6.6$) and more positive attitude (mean= 20.90 , $SD=6.1$ vs mean= 20.00 , $SD=6.0$) to recreation than the academic staff. Interestingly,

the findings showed that the academic staff participated more in recreational activities than their non-academic counterparts (mean=19.69, SD=4.0 vs mean=19.20, SD=3.9). Further analysis showed that the academic staff engaged more in sporting activities, social activities, art & craft, camping programs and leisure-time gardening. The non-academic staff engaged more in conference attendance, leisure-time reading, and listening to news during their leisure.

Determining the relationship between the independent and outcome variables in this study, findings revealed that the knowledge of respondents on recreation has a significant positive correlation with their attitude. Also attitude to recreation had a significant positive correlation with participation in recreational activities but knowledge of recreation does not have a significant correlation with participation in recreational activities (Table 2)

Table 1. Level of knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities (n=201)

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percent
Knowledge	Low	7	3.5
	Moderate	28	13.9
	High	166	82.6
Attitude	Negative	34	16.9
	Positive	167	83.1
Participation	Low	35	17.4
	Moderate	134	66.7
	High	32	15.9

Table 2. Differences in respondents' knowledge and attitude to recreation based on sex

	Sex	N	Mean	SD	t	P
Knowledge	Male	106	27.6509	7.37182	-3.293	0.000
	Female	95	30.6000	4.93662		
Attitude	Male	106	21.0283	5.12223	1.429	0.015
	Female	95	19.8000	7.00395		
Participation	Male	106	18.6981	3.85983	-2.927	0.0855
	Female	95	20.3158	3.96866		

Table 3. Age difference in knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities

Variable	Age (Years)	N	Mean	P
Knowledge	25-34	47	26.66	0.007
	35-44	61	29.00	
	≥45	93	30.28	
Attitude	25-34	47	17.68	0.002
	35-44	61	21.36	
	≥45	93	21.25	
Participation	25-34	47	18.64	0.053
	35-44	61	20.43	
	≥45	93	19.25	

Table 4. Relationship between knowledge, attitude and participation in recreation

Variable	Mean	SD	r	P-value
Knowledge	29.04	6.5	.365	.000
Attitude	20.45	6.0		
Knowledge	29.04	6.5	.072	.307
Participation	19.46	4.0		
Attitude	20.45	6.0	.147	.038
Participation	19.46	4.0		

Table 5. Relative contribution of knowledge and attitude to participation in recreation

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	17.223	1.384		12.447	.000
knowledge	.013	.046	.022	.289	.773
attitude	.091	.049	.139	1.835	.068

Dependent variable: participation in recreational activities

DISCUSSION

This study was carried out to determine the relationship between knowledge, attitude and participation in recreational activities among members of staff of EKSU. Findings of this study on the levels of knowledge, showed that a large percentage of the respondents have good knowledge of recreation. This however contrasts the findings of Akitayo (2017) who reported low level of awareness of the importance of recreation among staff of a tertiary institution in Nigeria. This was attributed to the low level of participation in recreational activities among the participants. The probable reason why the findings of this study favour good knowledge of recreational activities, contrary to previous studies is because it seems individuals are becoming more aware of the nexus between recreation and health.

In this study, majority of the respondents had positive attitude to recreational activities. This is an indication that majority of the respondents have good disposition to recreational activities. This is likely influenced by the high level of knowledge of recreational activities observed among these respondents.

Findings of this study revealed a moderate level of participation in recreational activities among majority of the respondents. This contrasts Akitayo (2017) and Agbabiaka et al (2020) who reported low level of participation in recreational activities among staff of a tertiary institution. It is worthy of note that despite the high level of knowledge and positive attitude to recreation reported in this study, the respondents could only attain a moderate level of participation. This finding corroborates the fact that high level of knowledge and positive attitude alone may not be the only determining factors of participation in recreational activities.

The differences in the pattern of participation in recreational activities observed between the academic staff and the non-academic staff is consistent with the findings of Babalola and Alayode (2012) who reported that academic staff engaged more in sporting activities and art work than the non-academic staff. This is likely due to personal interest, preference and possession of skills required to engage in such activities.

The findings on the relationship between knowledge of recreation and the attitude to recreation contradicts Murad, Rahman, Rahman and Haque (2016) who reported no significant association between knowledge and attitude to engage in exercise. The knowledge of participants on the benefits of recreation favourably influenced their attitude to recreation. This corroborates the fact that knowledge is power and it improves the disposition of individuals to issues about life.

In this study, attitude was observed to be positively related to the practice of recreational activities. The more positive the attitude of respondents to recreational activity, the more they are likely to participate in recreational activities. Attitude of respondents contributed 13.9% of the total variation in participation in recreational activities. This corroborates the fact that having a favourable disposition is likely to influence individuals positively to engage in such lifestyle.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that knowledge had a positive influence on the attitude to participation in recreational activities and this in turn had a positive influence on participation in recreational activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended that:

1. effort should be made by the health education professionals to educate both the academic and non-academic staff of tertiary institutions about the importance of recreation to health so as to improve their attitude to and participation in recreation activities.
2. management of tertiary institutions should provide opportunities and facilities for participation in recreational activities within the campus environment
3. management of tertiary institutions should provide opportunities of leisure, in form of leave for their staff members
4. future research should consider investigating the determinants of participation in recreational activities among staff members of tertiary institutions

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