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## **Reappraisal of Recreational Sports in Secondary School in Anambra, Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The level of recreational sport participation in our secondary schools is major concern that needs to be investigated and reappraised. Technology is not only known for its usefulness globally but also its abilities to influence negative changes on youths, secondary school student now prefer to spend their leisure time watching television or browsing on the phone and this has resulted in huge negligence in the importance of recreation. Recreation in Africa has being into existence long before the invasion of the white over lords why then should we neglect what has being into existence even before the year of technological boom, this is an error that needs to be corrected knowing full well recreational sports and its health and academic importance. This paper will be concentrated on three major (gender, psychological, and social factors) factor which happen to influence recreation sport participation and it rounds up with conclusion and recommendation.

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### **Introduction**

There are no written records to show when Nigerians started to recreational activities. (Suleiman 2016) stated that recreational activity has being as old as man, even before the white invasion. However the concept of recreational sport activities were not being understood by Nigerians as of then, without knowing the health importance. (Suleiman 2016) Nigerians mostly partake in leisure activities in African traditional ways, before the coming of colonial masters to Nigeria, through celebration of agricultural seasons, harvesting of crops, crowning of traditional rulers, Obas, Chiefs and emirs. Before the invasion of Nigeria by the colonial masters, activities such as local wrestling, hunting, masquerade dance, Fulani festival activities, naming and marriage ceremonies, archery, swimming contests, horse racing, fishing, acrobatic displays and many movement activities were in place, and since then recreation has evolved in various forms.

Throughout the 20th century, working time and leisure time became a commodity which should be rationally managed (Denek as cited by Agnieszka, 2013). Leisure or recreational time is an important factor in life quality. The amount of leisure time and the way of spending this time determines good mood and health of a human (Zalewska, 2011). Recreation and sports plays an important role in communities. Their many benefits includes improving the health and well being of individual, contributing to Empowerment of individuals and promoting the development of inclusive communities. Active engagement in recreational sports and physical activities has numerous health benefits such as health, psychological, cognitive and social development. Engaging in sports leads to development in social skills, leadership skills, self-esteem and academic achievement (Barnett & weber, 2008). Recreation represents an element of physical activity, is an active form of spending leisure time by young people and adults (Agnieszka, 2013). Ogu, Agbanusi & Umeasiegbo (2008) referred to recreation as something that one does for amusement or fun, to help someone direct ones attention and to refresh oneself (recreate oneself). From these definitions it can also be said that recreation are physical activities that are carried out for fun, enjoyment and satisfaction. Recreation relates to what people choose to do in their free time; time that is not otherwise used for work, school, or other activities like appointments and chores. Recreational activities can be sedentary in nature, like knitting, chess, playing musical instruments, or social networking in person or on the computer. It can also be active and Enhance physical fitness and wellbeing. Examples of active recreation include walking, skiing, Dancing, bowling, hiking, rock-climbing, boating, bicycling, weightlifting, and goal ball. Students need systematic and purposeful instruction beyond the general education curricula to gain the skills necessary to be independent, productive, educated members of society. Recreation sports activities are some of the instructional areas that need to be addressed. Knowledge of recreation, fitness, and leisure provides critical support to a wide range of student capacities in the areas of social Interaction, orientation and mobility, independent living, and self-determination. Developing recreation, fitness, and leisure skills can have far-reaching positive effects on the lives of people. Research has shown that recreation is an important factor in quality of life for everyone, including people with disabilities. People who engage in recreational activities will likely benefit by having improved cardiovascular function, better ability to sleep, improved self-esteem, increased stamina, and decreased stress levels, all of which not only improve quality of life but also have positive benefits for other activities. Beyond the health and wellness benefits of physical fitness touted in the media, when one's body is more accustomed to the different types of physical movements inherent in recreation and fitness activities, that person generally has better flexibility, strength, and stamina. With improved physical fitness, independent living skills are easier to perform and less stressful on the body. In addition, recreation is a highly social phenomenon organized around friendships or family groups, and these social interactions buffer the effects of stress on health. With this in mind, recreational activity that increases physical activity and improves fitness should be encouraged. Physical activity as a recreational activity gains importance for individuals at all age groups. Because physical activity is an important determinant of

health (WHO 2017; Hallalet al.2012), it is important to evaluate the leisure-time physical activity (Pardo et. al. 2014). But the importance of planning physical activity programs and making certain that people experience benefits from their participation cannot be stressed enough (Berg et al. 2015). It is important therefore to determine the physical activity in young adults and to understand some factors that may be associated with physical activity levels. The promotions of recreational activities through sports among children, adolescents and Adults have become a public health objective. In recent years around the world, there has been serious concern over declining physical activity levels among these segments of the population. Physical fitness is an essential requirement not only for optimal health, but also for better Performance and quality of life (Venkateswarlu, 2010). The importance of students engaging in recreational activity should never be over looked or ignored in any way. A robust body of campus recreation literature provides credible evidence documenting the value of participating in recreation programs (Forrester, 2015). Some of these benefits include stress reduction (Forrester, 2015), physical development (Lower, Turner & Petersen, 2013), and academic success (Forrester, 2015). Coakley (2011) noted that, sports play a significant role in socializing individuals in the society; these are various ways in which the society's dominant values, attributes, and beliefs are passing down from generations to generation. Coackley also observed that a sport is the unification of people; it can bring people together by giving them a sense of personal identity as well as feelings of group membership and social identity.

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### Gender factor

In sport and physical activities gender has various ways of influence student's decisions. According to Ramos (2008) children are oriented to play games related to their gender Roles. Naturally the society has conditioned boys to play complex games which require strength and strategy. Girls on the other hand are discouraged from competitive activities, Historical reviews of sports demonstrate that several societies had substantial feminine participation as an example, in ancient times, women trained and competed in many sports, as well as running and wrestling (Golden, 2008). Notwithstanding, it seems that males are typically a lot more involved than females as per historical societies (Potter, 2012). Cross-cultural anthropology studies of sports in small-scale societies have conjointly documented unambiguous proof of feminine sports participation. Studies in larger modern societies conjointly support the claim of a uniform, probably universal, sex distinction in sports participation (Deaner & Smith, 2013). These studies systematically report that males play sports a lot of times than females, usually a minimum of double the maximum amount in terms of period or frequency. The primary multicounty study of sports participation standardized surveys was recently conducted, and it found that men participated over girls in all thirty seven countries (Apostolou, 2014) Sports participation varies by gender, as way fewer feminine than male students report having been recruited to participate in sports (Eitzen, 2009). Pearson, Crissey and Riegle Crumb (2009) recommended that girls' participation in sports benefits more boys since sports give them a chance to develop behaviors or characteristics that were historically deemed unwomanly like strength and contest. They found out that sports participation improves girls' social psychological and educational outcomes. Though cultural attitudes concerning ladies participation in sports have shifted over time, sports stay as a field of displaying masculinity. These structural and cultural forces impact girls' choices to participate in high school sports as well as their motivation for engaging in sports (Cooky, 2009). Sabri, Alper and Ali (2015) suggest that experience is an important factor which enables youth to participate in sport activities.

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### Social factors

Social factors delineates factors connected with the society setting and peoples life style which can either be church, community, family and rest of others. These social factors include family, friends, teachers or any other people who may influence an individual. Social relationship and socialization situations provided by schools, community and churches as being responsible in changing students perceptions about physical activity and sports (Goncalves, Silva, Cruz, Torregrosa & Cumming, 2010). According to Bulinda (2007) parents, peers, coaches and teachers are important individuals who are used as source of information by children and adolescents in the sports environment for judging ability and making decisions about future participatory behaviors. Students also get motivation to participate in sports from teachers, peers and games teachers apart from their parents. It is therefore very imperative for people to understand and appreciate the significance and roles that these wholesome activities play in the total development of an individual. Mwihai (2002) identified that the level of interest in swimming amongst students are based on factors like funding, friends and facilities. Further findings showed that peer group posed a negative influence because did not encourage in the participation of swimming. It can be said that peer group has an influence in student participation in sport and recreational activities. One of the most obvious social agents is the coach. A growing body of research has explored factors related to coaches that influence youth sport experiences. Researches by (Babatunde, 2016) on Socio-cultural determinants of sports participation has shown that that culture and tradition, age, gender, economic status and parents are significant social factors which influence participation in sports. The family being the first point of a child's socialization largely influences the entire experience of the child determining his/her early perception about life. Parents play a principal role in their children's sport and physical activity participation due to the influence of modeling, financial and psychological supports. Availability of sporting activities and preference of sports among students play a key role in students' participation in sports. In this case, a student would prefer to participate in sports whose facilities are available and functional. Preference of sports among students may improve the intensity and frequency of sports participation by students. Most schools do not have their own sport facilities and equipment; even if any are available, they are often inadequate, substandard or poorly maintained (Barghchi & Omar, 2014).

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### Psychological factors

Psychological barriers to a student's participation in sport exist. These include role conflict, low self-esteem and body image or absence of role models and fear of injury. Mental preparation is defined as those cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies athletes and teams use to arrive at an ideal performance state or condition that is related to optimal psychological states and peak performance for Either competition or practice. Most Sport research has examined self-confidence in relation to actual sport performance in terms of skill rather than in terms of the motivational behavior actually

specified by the theories, such as persistence or mastery attempts, choice of activities or skills, and effort expended. Some students see themselves as not having the skills; as such they do not have the courage to participate in sport. Sport participation has been shown to be associated with many psychological and social benefits, beyond that derived from physical activity, including improvements to self-control and emotional regulation (Eime et al., 2013). These distinct benefits are perhaps due to unique characteristics of sport participation, compared with other forms of physical activity (Watson et al., 2019). Variables such as gender, age, time available to participate and motivational factors such as fun, slimness, fitness and competition have shown to increase participation (Lera-López, & Rapún-Gárate, 2011). (Jayabharathi, 2017) observed that low income, lack of parental support, Lack of confidence, Peer influence, worry, biological problems, Body image, and facilities from the educational institutions and absence of physical education teachers may influence. It is commonly known that some of the skills required to overcome these psychological barriers can be developed and mastered during adolescent years where schooling has a fundamental effect on children. Teachers and peers have been very crucial to providing support towards developing individuals' talents. The influence that performance experiences/familiarity have on perceived success depends on the perceived difficulty of the task, the effort expended, the amount of physical guidance received, and the temporal patterns of success and failure. Task familiarity can also be obtained through observing or imagining others engaging in a task that observers themselves have never performed. Their influence on self-efficacy can be enhanced by a number of factors.

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## Conclusion

Apart from technological influences some other factors like gender, social and psychological has a hand in determining students participation in recreational sports. There is no doubt that by looking at these factors will help improve students participation in recreational sports.

## Recommendation

The following recommendations were made by the researcher:

1. Specialist sports coach should be employed by the school management
2. The sport personnel should put demographic factor into consideration whenever planning a recreational sports program for the students
3. The government should endeavor to provide and maintain sport facilities in the schools
4. The school authorities should educate the students on the importance of recreational sports participation.
5. The school authorities should come up with appropriate rewards to be given to winners at the end of the recreational sports.
6. The games master should ensure that all the students participate in the recreational sports

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