

Influence of Recreational Activities on the Wellness and Level of Participation among Middle Class Income Earners in Osogbo

Olukemi O. Osadare and Clement B. Omiwale

Department of Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Management, Federal Polytechnic, Ede, Osun State
akinwumi07@gmail.com

Abstract - This research work examined the influence of recreational activities on the wellness and level of participation among the middle class income in Osogbo. Various research techniques were implemented in collecting data for this research work which include field survey, site observation, personal communications, survey questionnaire and collection of secondary data. Five recreation centers were purposely selected from Osogbo, Osun state, using simple random technique. A total of fifty (50) respondents were sampled and questionnaire was used to elicit information from them. Data collected was presented using tables and graphs, and described using frequently counts and percentages. The findings showed that middle class income in Osogbo metropolis participates actively in recreational activities, although mostly on weekly basis. The participants expressed their preference for mental benefits as the highest perceived benefits from engaging in recreational activities, this is because it reduces stress and depression associated with today’s working environment. This study thus recommends that government should put in place policies that will favors private investors in recreational business. The employers should ensure flexible working condition, so workers can enjoy their leisure. However, the employees should avoid overworking themselves, and spend leisure time for recreation activities only in order to enjoy the full benefits associated with it.

Keywords: Level of Participation, Mental Health Benefits; Middle Class Income; Recreational Activities; Wellness.

1 INTRODUCTION

Every individual at some stage in their lives will participate in some recreational activities, be it active or passive recreation. Participation must be by choice in order to be considered recreation. Recreation is like experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual and community well being.

Louis London (2011), in his blog, stated that average individual is recommended to divide his day into three: 8 hours of work, 8 hours of recreation and 8 hours of sleep in order to reach better balancing in life, get energy to work and be able to concentrate better.

The individual that engages in recreational activities and sleep well makes better decision during working hours (Louis, 2011, cited in Osadare, 2017).

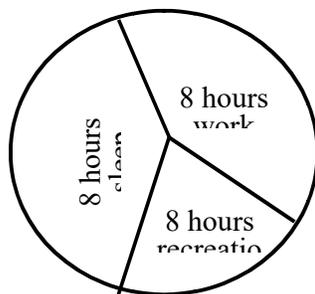


Figure 1: Ideal Average Day Management

1.1 Definitions of Recreation from the Literature

Recreation is considered as activities through which leisure may be experienced and enjoyed, but it is also seen as a social institution, sociality organized for social purposes (Grant and Allan, 1990).

George (1986), viewed recreation as personal experience (what it does to a person), as activities (the form it takes) or as an institution (the structure in which it is made available to the community). Taken yet another way, recreation can be viewed as a process (what happens to an individual) and as a structure (the framework in which recreation is practice).

John in his own definition considered recreation to be an activity voluntarily undertaken, primarily for pleasure and satisfaction, during leisure time (John, 1983).

Leisure is a block of unoccupied time, spare time or free time, when we are free to do as we choose. It is discretionary time when our feeling of compulsion should be minimal (Veal, 1992).

1.2 Leisure and Recreation

Leisure and recreation are not synonymous. Leisure is time element, one’s free time, while recreation refers to activities in which one engages during leisure. Without leisure, recreation may not be feasible as leisure provides time element for recreational activities (Osadare and Adeyemi, 2017).

1.3 Elements of Tourism

- Recreation activities are engaged during leisure that is one's free time
- Recreation is concerned with activities human beings find pleasurable and satisfying, the reward is immediate satisfaction, no monetary reward.
- Recreation is voluntary, no coercion by someone else or forceful participation.
- Recreation is not anti-social, any activity that is not socially acceptable is not recreation. Such as gambling, wrestling to kill and so on are not regarded as recreation.

1.4 Forms of Recreation

- **Active Recreation:** involves using a lot of energy and allow you to move around a lot. One is subject of the activity. Examples of active recreation are: Hiking, Jogging, Aerobics, Sport, and water based activities.
- **Passive Recreation:** this involves little exertion, but it is generally sustained. Examples of passive recreation are reading, fishing, listening to music, watching T.V.

1.5 Statement of Problem and Objectives

Pressure at work place is unavoidable due to the demands of the contemporary work environment. Increasing demands on the individual in the workplace reach out into homes and social lives of employees. Long, uncertain or unsocial hours, high level of responsibility, taking work home, job insecurity and lots more may affect level of participation in recreational activities of working class individuals. Lack of recreation is likely to undermine a good and relaxing quality of life outside work. Thus, this research work will examine the level of participation in recreational activities by middle class in Osogbo metropolis and benefits of active recreation to total wellness.

1.6 Justification

The Influence of recreational activities on human wellness cannot be over emphasized. Participating in recreational activities helps manage stress, taking time to nurture oneself provides a sense of balance and self-esteem. Oladeji and Adedapo, (2014) affirmed that both anxiety and extensive stress are as a result of overwork and they have been identified as indications of depression. They further explained that depression disrupts relationship and interferes with work and daily activities and must be avoided.

Critcher, Bramham & Jomlinson, (2001) recalled that the result of increased leisure that is not properly utilized can manifest in various societal problems, ranging from illness, depression, violence, drug abuse and other related uses.

2.0 BENEFITS OF RECREATION

Recreation is as old as man and everybody needs it. It plays important role in physical, economic and socio-cultural development of mankind (Okoli, 2001).

In Nigeria however, it has been observed that culture of participating in recreation activities consciously is relatively low. This may not be unconnected with economic circumstance prevalent in the country.

2.1 The Physical Health Benefits

Recreational parks, trails and historical sites are excellent inducements to physical activity. These varied recreational opportunities make physical activity interesting, enjoyable and encourage life-long fitness habits.

- **It reduces obesity:** exercising activities can help curb obesity. Obesity is associated with increased risk for disease, mortality, chronic medical conditions.
- **Recreational activities diminishes risk of chronic disease** like diabetes, cancer, heart disease e.t.c. The correlation between recreation activity and health was highlighted naturally in a report from health and human services (HHS, 2001). Regular moderate activity like brisk walking for 30min to 60mins reduces the incidence of cardiovascular disease (Hannel and Lemore, 2002). People who exercise have a lower incidence of colon cancer than their sedentary counterpart (Lee, 1995).
- **It boosts immune system:** physically fit person is less prone to illness. Researches show that positive changes in the immune system occurs during moderate exercise (Nieman, 2001). Participating regularly in recreation activities help maintain bone and joint health (Gorman, 2002).
- **It increases life expectancy:** Regular physical activity reduces the risk of developing or dying from some of the leading causes of illness and death in the united state. On the average, every hour you spend exercising increases your life expectancy by two hours (ARC, 2000).

2.2 The Mental Health Benefits

Mental health disorders pose a significant public health burden and are a major cause of hospitalization disability.

- **It Reduces Depression:** recreation and leisure activities can help alleviate depression. Recreation also reduces alienation, loneliness and isolation. The more time participants spent on hobby, swing, visiting with friends, the more their depression decreased (Siegenthaler, 1997).
- **It relieves Stress:** the human body has built-in stress relievers that can be triggered through recreation activity. Revitalization through

recreation activity is essential to managing stress in today’s busy and demanding world.

- **It improves the quality of life:** recreational activities helps in changing self-image, self esteem, personal and spiritual growth and life satisfaction. Consistent recreation activity increase self esteem, according to a substantial number of studies (Frank and Gustafson, 2001).

2.3 The Social Benefits

Recreational opportunities can have positive impacts on our society. Survey opinions and crime statistics support of link between open spaces recreation and reduced crime (SCRA, 2005)

- **It strengthens communities:** park and recreation opportunities are essential for strengthening and maintaining a healthy community.
- **It reduces crime:** well maintained parks facilities help reduce crime in a community.
- **It promotes social bonds:** between individuals, families and communities building cultural tolerance.
- **It Unites families:** families that recreate together tend to be closer and more cohesive. By participating together family members elicit feeling of loyalty trust, harmony, team work and good will.
- **It builds cultural diversity and harmony:** the strength of a community is increased through recreation activities that allow people to share their cultural and ethnic difference, provides means for social interaction that can help to break down the barriers of unfamiliarity, fear and isolation.
- **It develops youth:** recreation assists in overall youth empowerment. it also help decision-making skills, cooperative behaviors, positive relationships and empowerment
- **It enhances education:** park lands and outdoor recreation facilities in country, city and state parks provide exceptional learning opportunities for students, directly impacting school performance
- **It deters negative behaviours:** recreation programs can provide safe, developmental opportunities for latch key children. The programs provide childcare in a stimulating setting, keeping children from being bored and keeping them out of trouble.

3 METHODOLOGY

Osogbo is the capital city of Osun state. Osun state was created on 27th August 1991, carved out from Old Oyo state. Traditionally, the people in Osogbo engaged in agriculture and produce, sufficient food for domestic consumption and as input for agro allied industry for

export. Workers in Osogbo comprise mostly of civil servants, employees of private parastatals, and Bankers. Many residents of osogbo are into small and medium scale enterprises.

Osogbo being a state capital has number of recreational centers for public use. Among the highly patronized centers are: Delightful hotel and park, Osun Osogbo Grove, GMT recreational park, Ripples fun center, Ideal nest, mercy tree pub, Osogbo sport stadium.

3.1 Method

The target population for this study is all middle class income workers in Osogbo metropolis. Middle class patronage to five recreation centers in Osogbo was selected as sample. These five recreation centers were purposively selected because they are highly patronized majorly by middle class income group. Data for this research work was collected using primary and secondary methods of data collection. A total of fifty respondents were sampled and questionnaire was used to solicit information from them using simple random technique.

Site observation: involves visiting recreational facilities in Osogbo (the study area) over a period of time to access and make systematic observations of the phenomenon.

The secondary data were collected from existing literature such as journal, textbook and academic magazine.

3.2 Research Instrument

The instrument used was questionnaire. The questionnaire had four main sections that collected information on: (1) Demographic characteristics of the respondents; (2) Major recreation facility that motivate the respondent; (3)How often the respondent engage in recreational activities; (4) Perception of influence of recreational activities on wellness of the respondents. The questionnaires were administered on weekend based on Knudson’s (1984) opinion that recreational activities are mostly done on weekends, coupled with the fact that the population of this research is working class of the study area.-

Table 1: Distribution showing sampling procedure and size.

Recreation center	Questionnaire distributed	Question returned	Percentage of returned
Osun Osogbo grove	10	8	90.0
Delightful hotel and park	10	9	90.0
Osogbo sport stadium	10	10	100.0
Mercy tree pub	10	10	100.0
GMT part	10	8	80.0
Total	50	45	90.00

Source: field survey, 2018

4 ANALYSIS, RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data collected was presented using tables and graphs and described using frequency counts and percentages.

Table 2: Major facilities and Services of Recreational Centers

Recent Centers	Facilities
Delightsome Hotel and Park	Accommodation Swimming pool Mini zoo Game center Gymnasium
GMT Recreation Park	Accommodation Swimming pool Gymnasium Clubbing
Osogbo Sport Stadium	Indoor game Outdoor sport
Osogbo Grove	National scenery Vibrating bridge Osun river
Under the Mercy Tree Pub	Sales of Alcoholic beverages Sales of light meal Football Viewing center Live band entertainment

This indicates that the study area Osogbo has efficient firm recreational facilities for her residents

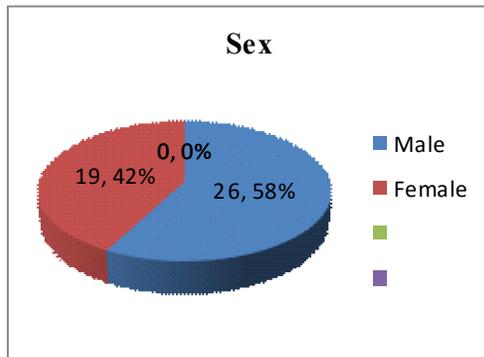


Figure 2: Distribution by Gender

The above chart shows that majority of middle class engaging in recreational activities are male (57.78%), while 42.22% of the respondent are female. This is an indication that more men engage in recreational activities than their female counterpart. The plausible reason for this could be that women have lesser leisure time than men, this is because the societal expectations of traditional role of a woman as a home maker tend to over burden them with dual and multiple responsibilities. This is consistent with the work of Delina and Raya, (2013), that confirmed that the ever increasing working pressure is taking a toll on women leaving them with less time for themselves or leisure.

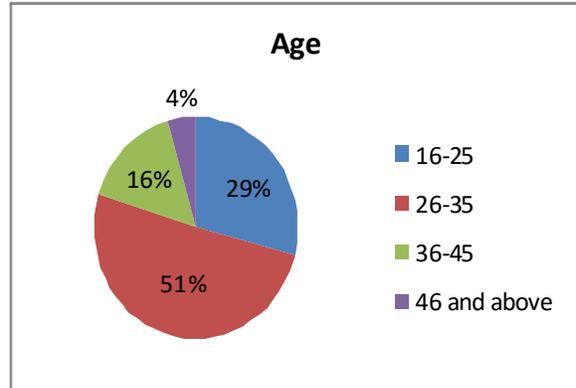


Figure 3: distribution based on age of the respondents

The chart above shows that 51.1% of the total respondents fell between age 26 and 35year, 28.89% fell between 16 and 25 years, while 4.44% of respondent are 46 years and above. The data revealed that a larger percentage was within age bracket of 26 and 35 years with 51.1% of total respondents. This implies that more youth participate in leisure activities.

Figure 4 reveals that 11.11% of the total respondents had at least secondary school certificate, 28.9% had ND/NCE; 53.33% had first degree, while only 6.9% had post graduate degree.

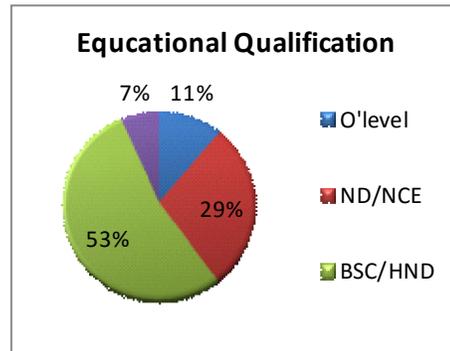


Figure 4: Distribution by Educational Qualification

Figure 5 shows that 64.44% of total respondent is single, 24.44% is married while 11.1% of total respondents is separated.

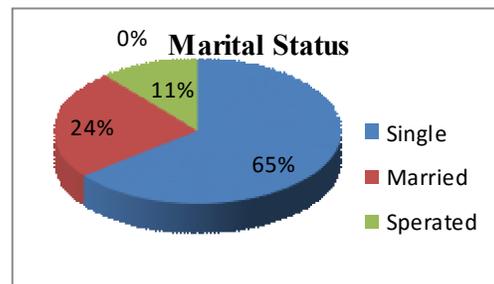


Figure 5: Distribution by Marital Status

This indicates that more singles utilize leisure and engage in recreational activities. This could be as a result of more free time because of absence of family commitment or work family conflict (WFC). In Figure 6, 13.33% of the respondents spends between 4 and 6 hours at work daily, 62.22% spends between 7 and 8 hour daily at work, while 24.44% spend more than 8 hours at work on daily basis.

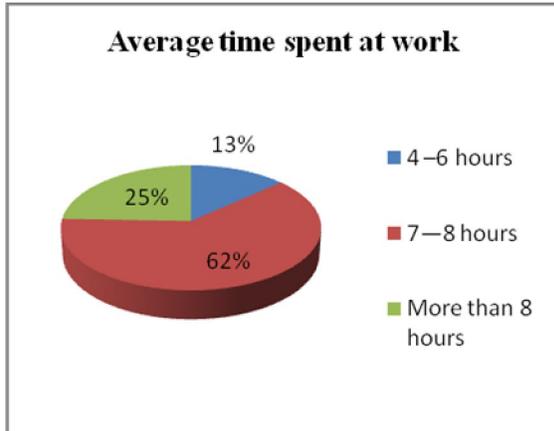


Figure 6: Distribution by Time spent at work

The above information implies that majority of the respondent spend normal working hours 7 to 8 hours at work, while 13.33% spend lesser hours . This indicates that there is ample time for leisure and recreational activities for middle class in Osogbo metropolis.

Figure 7 shows that 22.22% of the total respondents participated in gymnasium activities, 15.55 engaged in each in swimming, outdoor sports and football viewing. 13.33% visit pub. this implies that middle class in study area engages in active recreational activities.

Major Attraction that motivated the respondents.

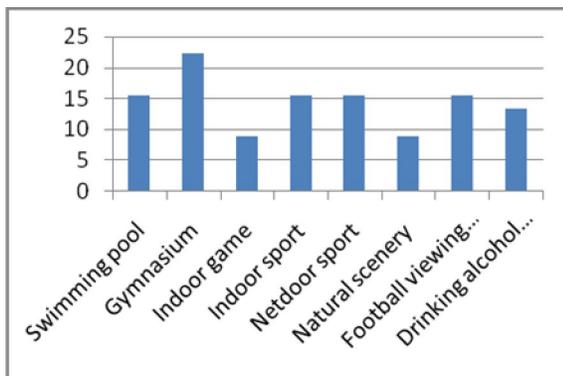


Figure 7: Distribution by Attractions that Motivates the Respondents

Figure 8 reveals that 62.22% of total respondents engages in recreational activities on weekly basis, followed by respondents that engage bi-weekly and bi-monthly at 15.55% each, only 6.70% of total respondents participate

monthly in recreational activities.

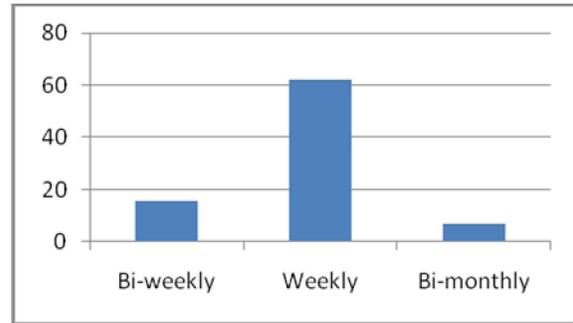


Figure 8: Distribution by how often respondents engage in recreational activities

This implies that middle class in Osogbo metropolis participate only on weekend in active recreational activities. This is consistency with the research of Knudson’s (1984), which confirmed that recreation activities are mostly done on weekends. From figure 9, majority of the respondents (48.9%) perceive mental health benefits from participating in recreational activities; 40% of total respondent enjoy physical health benefits, while 11.11% of the respondents receive social benefits from recreational activities participation.

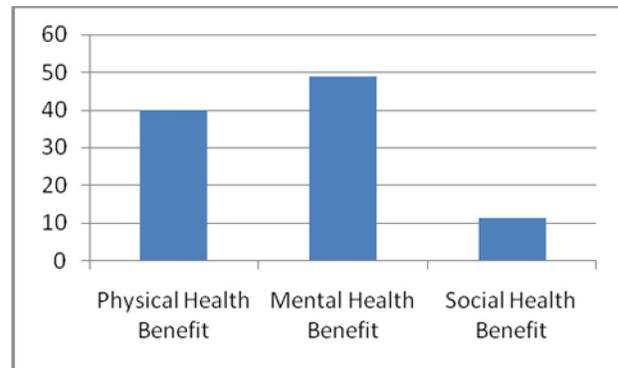


Figure 9: Distribution based on Perceived Benefits of Recreational Activities

Information in Figure 9 implies that engaging in recreation activities reduces depression, relieves stress and improve quality of lives of larger number of middles class in the study area.

4.2 Discussion

past researches show that stress is included with depression and anxiety as the second most common causes of occupational illness in statistics compiled by the United Kingdom Health and Safety Executive(HSE) causing the loss of 13.5 million employees in the working days of year 2007/2008 (Hall E.M. (1994); cited in Michie, 2002). It is also deduced from the findings of this work that pressure at workplace is unavoidable due to the demands of contemporary work environment; increasing demands on

individual in the workplace reach out into homes and social lives of employees. Participating in recreational activities helps manage the pressure, provide self esteem and improve quality of life. Sedentary lifestyle can result in lot of health problems.

The study area, osogbo metropolis has number of recreation centers that can serve all ages and interests. However, more male of the middle class participates more in recreational activities than their female counterpart; more single than married and more youth than adult. Seventy five percent of total respondents spend 8 hours or less at work daily, which means middle class, have ample time as leisure to explore recreational centers.

The major attraction that motivated respondents and how often the respondents engage in leisure activities were also investigated. The study revealed that middle class in study area mostly engage in recreational activities weekly and the major attraction that motivated the respondents varied. When asked about benefits derived from participating in leisure activity, majority consented that mental health was highest benefit perceived, followed by physical health benefit and few identified social interaction as the benefit derived from recreational activities.

4.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study examined the influence of recreational activities on the wellness and level of participation among middle class income in Osogbo

Osogbo metropolis endowed with recreational resources that are of health, social and economic importance to the host communities. Briand, Sauve and Frechette, (2011), affirmed that recreation has a value for individuals and groups and also constitutes a means of improving the functioning of societies. The respondents expressed their willingness to visit recreation centers after work daily but for economic situating that do not avail them the spending towards leisure on daily basis.

This study thus recommends that government should put in place policies that will favors private investors in recreational business. The employers should ensure flexible working condition, so workers can enjoy their leisure. However, the employees should avoid overworking themselves, and spend leisure time for recreation activities only in order to enjoy the full benefits associated with it.

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