

PERCEPTION AND INVOLVEMENT IN LEISURE BY MEN AND WOMEN IN CROSS RIVER STATE

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study compared the level of perception and involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State. The population of this study comprised all men and women in Cross River State. The study adopted Expost-Facto research design while stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents. The instrument for data collection which was tagged “leisure involvement questionnaire (LIQ) was administered to the respondents used for the study. The instrument was vetted by expert in home economy and test and measurement before the reliability test was conducted with 40 men and women. The test produced the reliability coefficient of 0.92 proving the instrument to be reliable for the study. Data collected were analyzed using independent t-test analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. From the results of the data analysis, it was observed that there is significant difference in the extent of men and women perception and involvement in leisure in Cross River State. It was also observed that there is significant relationship between level of involvement in leisure and health status of the people in Cross River State. The conclusion was that in Cross River State men are more involved in leisure than women. It was therefore recommended that men and women should create more time for leisure in order to affect their lives positively. It was also recommended that government should make it compulsory for civil servants to take active part in monthly exercise while increasing the number of days for the exercise in each month.

Introduction

Leisure is defined as free or unobligated time that does not involve work or performing other life sustaining functions. Again, leisure or free time is time spent away from business, work, job hunting, domestic chores and education. It also excludes time spent on necessary activities such as eating and sleeping. However, leisure has become a product of social and economic dynamics all through the historical change. Since the second half of the 20th century, the research on this field increased steadily and leisure has initiated a new life style. According to Riesman “Any activity may become leisure”. In other words, leisure patterns tend to infiltrate all other activities; leisure may initiate a life style; its contribute to changing the quality of life (Dumanzedier, 1974:68).

The distinction between leisure and unavoidable activities is not a rigidly defined one example people sometimes do work-oriented tasks for pleasure as well as for long-term utility. A distinction may also be drawn between free time and leisure for example, Substantial research reveals that in leisure, a privileged and underprivileged gender schema exists. Deem (1986) discusses that the history of culture is characterized by male domination of women, indicating that women are repressed in where they are allowed to go and what they are permitted to do in leisure, and are required to do the work that makes family leisure possible. The leisure of women has always had a 'domestic flavor' and corresponds with the role of women as the 'caregiver' and 'supporter'.

Most studies have concentrated on examining women leisure alone, with a view that female gender is disadvantaged in leisure (Hanson, 2009). Two significant issues related to women's leisure are identified as important, i.e. the concept of 'Ethic of Care' (Gilligan, 1982). The view on 'Ethic of Care', states that women have an inborn characteristic of being caring, concerned, loving and bound to the maternal instinct (Shaw, 1994). This ethic indirectly becomes a constraint as it disposes women to a primary and willing duty of devotion to take care of the family, leading to ignoring their own personal desires and leisure.

Statement of problem

Leisure has a remarkable role in one's long span of life. This is as a result of the fact that the people that take leisure spent free time away from business, work and every other task that can be identified with stress. Most times men spend more time for leisure than women, especially after work. They create time for eating, watching movies and other recreational activities. Some time women are also identified with this life style of leisure though they hardly match men. It is also pathetic to know that many people do not appreciate the need for leisure time. They do not link it to health status and so do not see the need to take active Part in leisure. Even our researchers have not really convinced people of the implication of living without pleasure time and as a result a big gap has been created. Hence, in this study is carried out fill up the long existing gap by examining the difference in the extent of involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State and by finding out the relationship between leisure and health status of the people involved.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to determine the level of involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Find out the difference in the extent of involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State.
2. To find out the relationship between leisure and health status of the people involved themselves in leisure in Cross River State.

Research hypotheses

The following research hypotheses will be tested:

1. There is no significant difference in the extent of involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State.

2. There is no significant relationship between leisure and health status of the people that involve themselves in leisure in Cross River State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Importance of leisure

It is a fact that “all works without play makes jacks a dull boy”. It is also true that leisure is significant in many ways as stated by Apostolopoulos, & Sonmez, (2001) below.

➤ **Leisure lowers stress and depression**

Mental wellness is an important part of your overall health and can impact part of physical well-being. Participating in leisure activities can help in better management of stress and reduce depression. Leisure provides you the chance to find balance in your life. It also puts you in control of how you are spending your time, which is an important consideration because you may feel overwhelmed by obligations. Taking part in leisure activities as a family is also beneficial for kids because you are modeling healthy ways to handle stress and emotions.

➤ **Leisure improves your quality of life**

Finding balance is also a reason why leisure can enhance your quality of life. In addition you are more likely to feel satisfied about your life when you regularly take part in leisure activities. This has a significant implication for your mental health and in turn, your physical health.

➤ **Physical well-being**

Taking part in leisure activities particularly outdoors, can improve your physical wellness. In fact, people who frequently take advantage of pack activities have fewer doctor visits, lower body mass indexes and lower systolic blood pressure than those who don't.

- It gives an opportunity to examine personal values, to focus on what is important to you, it gives you the balance you need to deal with your non-leisure activities.
- Relief from stress and boredom. It can promote not only better emotional health but physical health as well.
- Enhance communication skills and self-esteem even to the shy or introvert people who are said to benefit immensely as well.

Types of leisure activities

Below are stated by Apostolopoulos, & Sonmez, (2001) to be types of leisure activities:

- **Social:** Activities done with other people
- **Creative:** Activities, where a person makes or creates something
- **Physical:** Activities that require body movement
- **Cognitive:** Activities that require a person to think
- **Relaxation:** Activities, where a person does to feel calm
- **Spiritual:** Activities, where a person submits to a higher power

Benefit of leisure

- Improved health

- Improved social relationships
- Improved physical fitness
- Improved mental health
- Increased life satisfaction and enjoyment (and)
- Personal development and growth

The factor affecting leisure participation

Social Factors: While explaining these factors, it is necessary to deal with the relationship between society and individual. Man is motivated by norms and values transmitted by mass media and peer groups. Because of the change in social structure, basically the family was affected and became more tolerated and less authoritative.

- Culture Social structure: Culture and individual closely interact with each other. In most of the research investigating culture and personality, it is emphasized that a person's behavior is organized by his social and physical environment and that the socialization process is a period of learning the experiences of past generations and preparing for future (Vine, 2010). During the socialization period, an individual is affected by his natural environment. His personality is shaped not only by the agencies of socialization which are called basic social institutions but also by norms and values of his family, his gender, customs, traditions, language, religion and laws. The other agencies having importance in shaping his personality may be ranked as relationship with peer groups or the characteristics of educational setting and also leisure. In other words, an individual's personality develops by being interacted directly or indirectly with cultural settings he lives in (Köknel, 1979, p.22).

Social Class

Another factor affecting the individual's leisure behavior is the social class he is in. The norms and values he owns are the products of his social class. Most of the studies state that there is a parallel connection between his socialization and his social class (Bishop and Ikeda 1970, p.191; Kelly, 1974, p.192). Social learning during childhood is considered to be a reflection of social relationships he has, and of his subculture (Dinkmeyer, 1967, p.170). According to Dumazedier (1967, p.63), social class doesn't only reflect the qualitative differences in wages, salaries or income, but also the differences in the ways they are spent. So, when a society's characteristics are observed, it is apparent that certain population groups use social and economic institutions differently. Moreover, the differences in having leisure are not only a matter of choice but the class obligation as well. In his study, Bergier (1981, p.153) explains that there might be some social pressure within class that forces the individual to comply with the expectations of his class. In other words, an individual might feel obligated to participate in activities which are typical of his social class and feel awkward in participating in activities which are typical of some other class.

Interaction Groups These groups are one of the most important social agencies affecting individual's leisure behavior.

A study on this field found that the higher an individual's occupational level, the more likely he is to participate in public recreation programmes (Morris et al., 1972, p.25). In another research, the writers state that education is highly correlated with occupation prestige, and its

independent effects are not surprising. Income is also highly correlated with occupation but doesn't have independent effects on leisure (White, 1975, p.194). However especially lower income groups are affected by the cost of the leisure opportunities (Felix, 2005).

Age and Gender in the research on leisure behavior, it is reported that individual's age stages have effects on his preference of leisure patterns. Between the ages of 12-18, sports activities; between the ages of 18-24 social and cultural activities are more interesting for the individual. In other words while there is a negative correlation between age and active sports; a positive correlation occurs between age and sports as spectators (Ünver et al., 1986, p.237). However, in the middle ages, interest for the sports activities reappears, and also social club activities reach the highest level. Another factor that affects an individual's leisure behavior is gender. His family not only determines his status in his birth, but also by his gender. In daily routine, his behaviour, interests and choices will fit his gender.

Residence

The residence or the area where the individual lives in has an impact on his leisure preference and leisure behavior with its social and physical conditions. According to the research, the childhood residence doesn't have influence on leisure behavior or choices in adulthood. But it has effect on leisure when the individual is between youth and adulthood (Yoesting and Burkhead, 1973, p.30; Sofranko and Nolan, 1972, pp.15-16). Rehabilitation services appear to facilitate knowledge of available adapted programs in the community and may enhance competence and confidence in leisure activity participation

Gender and people involvement in leisure

Gender issues have emerged in every facet of our life, primarily concentrating on gender equality in areas like education, status, awareness, and availing of socio-economic opportunities. The domain of Leisure too, has not remained free of gender concerns. It is seen that leisure has for long been divided on the lines of gender, creating a privileged and underprivileged class where women are relegated the disadvantaged status in availing leisure opportunities. It is believed that since long women's' leisure has been constrained, as it is intricately woven with family resources, time, obligations, childcare, men's power and control. However, with times the status of genders has undergone a change leading to a blurring of stereotypical gender identities and women empowerment is elevating the status of women. In today's context, it can be said that though overall, in comparison to men, women remain relatively more constrained by familial responsibilities that hinder their freedom for leisure travel, (Khan, 2011).

If gender differences are to be treated as the basis for research, the theoretical conceptualization of leisure needs to be re-evaluated. What is considered to be leisure may depend on how men and women were socialized and the extent to which they subscribe to the role assigned to them in the society. Women are assumed to have a higher level of agreement with the roles that are traditionally allocated to women, such as the role of homemaker and caregivers. Several studies have indicated that the adoption of such roles present limitations in the ability of freely experienced leisure (Colley 1984; Henderson, 1991; Shank 1986). These limitations may assume different forms for example, to the extent the women accept traditional

female roles, they are bound to regard their leisure as being closely tied to the leisure of their partners and children (woodward and Green 1988).

In men it is predicted that they will have fewer constraint with regards to their ability to experience leisure. The adoption of male roles decrease the degree of responsibility towards house work and child care for instance and increases the degree of independence they can enjoy. For men leisure is experienced with relative freedom to choose leisure locations, companions and activities; leisure may experience independently from the needs and demand of others. It is predicted that in male, the perception of leisure is more closely tied to its freedom component.

Male and women tend to accept what is traditionally expected in the society and consequently, they may have limited opportunities to express themselves, given their adherence to more traditional roles. As a result of the way the societal evaluation permit the leisure experience of men and women it can be defined as a function of self-expression, given their limited ability to express themselves. Again, Gender is closely related to power dynamics and brings with it privileges or restrictions. Till now, in all spheres of life it has been understood that men have always enjoyed better position and privileges in society, as compared to women. Kingsley, (2004), mentions in her study that as quoted by Monday, (2001), all men are equal but men are more equal than women'. While males are associated with power, females are identified as the 'fairer or weaker sex.' Gender then seems to be a hierarchical structure of opportunity and oppression (Luke, 2012).

METHOD

Research Design

A comparative design was used for this study. In this type of design the researcher is comparing the extent of leisure's perception and involvement by the men and women of the study area.

Area of the Study

The research area for this study was Cross River State.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all men and wome in Cross River State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The respondents in the study consisted of 240 men and women. They were obtained through the stratified random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

The researchers developed one instrument tagged "LEISURE INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (LIQ). The questionnaire was made up of two sections such as sections A and B. Section A is made up of the personal data of the respondents while section B is made up the main variables of the objectives of the study such as level of involvement in leisure and health status of the participants.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument passed through face and content validation with the assistance of experts in test and measurement.

Reliability of the Instrument:

Crombach Alpha technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument (LIQ), using 40 respondents who did not form part of the main study. They were randomly selected and the instrument administered on them. Data collected from the respondents were subjected to reliability test and it produced the reliability coefficients of 0.92, making the instrument reliable enough for use in the research.

Procedure for Collecting Data

A letter of introduction and permission was presented to the heads of each village council and family visited for data collection. This was done accordingly and there was cooperation from both village councils and the families contacted for the administration and retrieval of questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to appropriate statistical techniques such as independent t-test analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

Results and discussion

Hypothesis one

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the extent of involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State. In order to test the hypothesis independent t-test analysis was used to analyze the data, (see table 1).

TABLE 1

Independent t-test analysis of the difference in the extent of involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State.

SEX	N	X	SD	t
Male	168	16.70	1.44	15.99*
Female	72	13.85	.71	

***Significant at 0.05 level; df = 238 ; N= 240 ; critical t-value 1.96**

The above Table 1 presents the obtained t-test-value (15.99). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical t-value (1.96) at 0.05 level with 238 degree of freedom The obtained t-value (15.99) was greater than the critical t-value (1.96). Hence, the result was significant. The result means that there is significant difference in the extent of

involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State. The result agrees with the findings of Khan, (2011) who stated that though overall, in comparison to men, women remain relatively more constrained by familial responsibilities that hinder their freedom for leisure travel. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was upheld.

Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between leisure and health status of the people that involve themselves in leisure in Cross River State. In order to test the hypothesis Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used to analyze the data, (See Table 2).

TABLE 2

Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between involvement in leisures and health status of the people involved.

Variable	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	r
	$\sum y$	$\sum y^2$		
Liesure (X)	3802	61020	53882	0.91*
Health status of the people (Y)	3357	47707		

*** Significant at 0.05 level; df = 238; N = 240; Critical r-value = 0.139**

The table presents the obtained r-value of (0.91). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical r-value (0.139) at 0.05 level with 238 degree of freedom. The obtained r-value (0.91) was greater than the critical r –value (0.139). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant relationship between leisure and health status of the people that involve themselves in leisure in Cross River State. The result agrees with the findings of Apostolopoulos & Sonmez, (2001) who stated that being that mental wellness is an important part of one’s overall health which can impact part of physical well-being, it is worthy of note that participating in leisure activities can help in better management of stress and reduce depression and that leisure provides one the chance to find balance in one’s life. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was upheld.

Conclusion

From the results of the findings it can be concluded that men and women in Cross River are not really into much of leisure activities. Besides, there is significant difference in the extent of involvement in leisure between men and women in Cross River State and there is significant relationship between leisure and health status of the people that involve themselves in leisure in Cross River State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are deemed necessary:

1. Because men and women have different levels of physical activity and the variables associated with activity levels are not consistent across the genders, interventions and strategies for promotion of physical activity should take these differences into account.
2. Men and women should create more time for leisure in order to affect their lives positively.
3. Government should make compulsory for civil servants to take active part in monthly sport while increasing the number of days for the exercise in each month.

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