

16

The Influence of Leisure and Recreation Activities on the Health and Wellness of Clergy Men and Women

Setonji, N.A, PhD, Adande, A.D. & Fasan, C.O. , PhD

ABSTRACT

Leisure and recreation activities play an important role in health and wellness of individuals. However, much is not known of the influence of leisure and recreation activities on the physical and psychological wellbeing of clergy men and women. The study therefore, examined the influence of leisure and recreation activities on the health and wellness of clergymen and women in Badagry local government area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was used in the study. Leisure and Recreation Activities Influence on Health and Wellness Questionnaire (LRAIHWQ) structured and developed by the researchers was used for data collection. The study involved sixty (60) clergy men and women (42 men and 18 women) drawn from ten different Christian religious church denominations in Badagry Local Government Areas of Lagos State. A pilot study was carried out with the use of 5 Clergy men selected from Celestial Church of Christ, Ojo Parish 1 in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State and reliability of the instrument was established with Cronbach's alpha and test-retest after an interval of two weeks. The reliability coefficient based on Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was LRAIHWQ (0.78). The data collected was entered into Microsoft Excel 2007 Software and later exported to SPSS 18.0 statistical packages for data analysis. Simple frequencies of responses in % were used in analyzing demographic data, while chi-square (X^2) statistical analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Results of the study revealed that leisure and recreation activities have significant influence on physical wellness $X^2=59.562$, $p<0.05$ and psychological wellness $X^2=31.317$, $p<0.05$ of clergy men and women. Findings of the study implied that leisure and recreation are indispensable in the general activities of clergymen and women. The study recommends among others that clergy men and women should endeavour to find time to engage in recreation activities and Christian religious churches through the support of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) should provide recreational facilities within churches' premises for use by the clergymen and women and the community.

Keywords: *leisure, recreation, clergymen and women, physical health, psychological wellness*

INTRODUCTION

Leisure and recreation is crucial to maintaining a healthy, active lifestyle. Participation in regular physical activity is part of the solutions to addressing chronic illness and improving mental health. Community facilities provided by the government such as leisure and recreation centres are keys to improving general health and quality of life and enhancing social support through connecting communities (Wang, Wu & Wu, 2013). Participation in leisure and recreational activities can have many benefits for both the individual and community. Undoubtedly, leisure and recreational activities are enjoyable and effective ways of improving health and wellness; they can relieve stress, increase fitness, improve physical and mental health, and prevent the development of chronic diseases such as heart diseases. Also, physical and social skills are some of the skills that can be developed through participation in leisure and recreational activities (WHO, 2010).

Leisure refers to the free time that people can spend away from their everyday responsibilities (e.g. work and domestic tasks) to rest, relax and enjoy life. It is during leisure time that people participate in recreation and sporting activities. Similarly, recreation refers to all those activities that people choose to do to refresh their bodies and minds and make their leisure time more interesting and enjoyable. Examples of recreational activities are walking, swimming, meditation, reading, playing games and dancing. Kelly and Freysinger (2009) opine that work, family, and leisure and recreation represent the three pillars of life which all demand a balanced portion of our time. Nonetheless, these three dimensions of life do not act independently; rather, each and every one reciprocally affects the other in

creating self, community and culture. The time allocated for work or school, family, and leisure and recreation correlate and complement each other, attempting to create synergy, which is a cooperative action of all three elements (Kelly & Preysinger, 2009).

Leisure and recreational activities play an important role in communities as well. Their many benefits include improving the health and well-being of individuals, contributing to the empowerment of individuals, and promoting the development of inclusive communities. Recreation, leisure and sporting activities may involve individuals, small groups, teams or whole communities and are relevant to people of all different ages, abilities and levels of skill. The types of recreation, leisure and sporting activities people participate in vary greatly, depending on local context, and tend to reflect the social systems and cultural values (Khasnabis, et al. 2010).

The social and psychological benefits of participation in leisure and recreational activities cannot be underestimated. For women and girls, leisure activity provides opportunities for self-expression, improved self-esteem, body confidence, socializing and community identity. Sports and active recreation participation facilitates good feelings about oneself, opportunities to be with friends and the development and maintenance of and good appearance (Ponic & Frisby, 2010). Participation in recreational activities has also been shown to reduce depression, anxiety, psychological distress and emotional disturbance among women and girls.

Setonji, Lyoka and Ijeoma (2016), assert that participation in recreational activities can be influenced by factors such as availability of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, (public parks, and games village), organization (community recreation planning and programming, effective service delivery to clientele, caring and empathy, attention to detail, innovation and team work), individual's attitude among others. Other factors that can influence participation in leisure and recreation activities are age, gender, exposure, health status, and economic status of an individual limitations, family preferences and coping, motivation, environmental resources and supports (Shikako-Thomas, Majnemer, Law & Lach, 2008); educational attainment, participation frequency, health-motivated interest, and appearance-motivated interest (Chen et al., 2017); lack of time for recreation sport activities, inadequate facilities and equipment for recreation activities, insufficient funds for recreation sport programmes affect participation in recreation and leisure activities (Udokanma, Akpu & Onwunaka, 2016).

In our society today, the lifestyle and work nature of majority of clergymen and women is largely sedentary, and this does not give them the opportunity to engage in healthy physical activity. Their job routine has always been to minister on the altar and sit many hours in their offices, attending to members of congregation and visitors. Even when at home, all they do is not far from being sedentary. Organizing and participating in leisure and recreational activities may be one of the few opportunities by which clergymen and women have to engage in with the community for the sake of evangelism. An example is The Association of Church Sports and Recreation Ministers (CSRSM) (2022) in the US whose vision is to equip local churches to change lives through sports. The mission of CSRSM is to train, equip and resource local church staff and volunteers, mobilizing them to build bridges in their communities, using sport, recreation and leisure activities for the purpose of leading people into a personal relationship with Christ (CSRSM, 2022). Many churches in Nigeria have also tuned to the adoption of recreation and sports as a means of strengthening congregational bond and reach out to more people in the community. Studies in this area are not many; hence scarcity in the literatures of the study. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the influence of leisure and recreation on health and wellness of clergymen and women in Badagry Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria.

HYPOTHESES

- i. There is no significant influence of leisure and recreation on the physical wellness of clergymen and women.
- ii. There is no significant influence of leisure and recreation on the psychological wellness of clergymen and women.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study involved 60 participants; comprising 42 male and 18 female clergymen and women. Simple random technique was used for selection of the volunteering clergymen and women participants, drawn from 10 different Christian denominations in Badagry Local Government Area of Lagos State. Quantitative approach was used for data collection. Leisure and Recreation Activities Influence on Health and Wellness Questionnaire (LRAIHWQ) structured and developed by the researchers was used for data collection. This instrument was designed to elicit information from the clergymen and women on the

influence of leisure and recreation activities on health and wellness. All volunteering, randomly selected clergymen and women completed the questionnaires. The instrument was based on a 4 point Likert's scale statements, which included Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Procedure

The pilot testing of the instrument provided the basis for adjusting the items and also for the development of the final version of the instrument. Face validity was established by the researchers and leisure and recreation sports management experts. Reliability of the instrument was established by test-re-test after an interval of two weeks. The reliability coefficient based on Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was LRAIHWQ ($r = 0.78$). The validated questionnaire was administered on the volunteered clergymen and women. The researchers, along with 10 trained research assistants administered the questionnaires. The questionnaire papers were administered on the volunteered participants after Sunday services. Before the field work, the researchers applied for ethical approval from the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Badagry Local Government branch. Consent forms were distributed to all the clergymen and women 5 days before the meeting to read and make their decision into participating in the study. On the day of data collection, a briefing was given to inform the clergymen and women the purpose of the study before administering the instrument. It took 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The clergy men and women were debriefed about the completed questionnaire and finally a vote of thanks was given by one of the researchers. It took 4 weeks to complete collection of data from the 10 different Christian denominations. The data collected was entered into Microsoft Excel 2010 Software and later exported to SPSS 18.0 statistical packages for data analysis. Analysis of information emanating from open-ended questions was completed using frequencies. Chi-square statistical analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Each hypothesis was pitched at 0.05 confidence level.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants

Characteristics	Frequency (f)	percentage (%)
Gender	1	1
Male	42	70.0
Female	18	30.0
Total	60	100.0
Age group	1	1
20 – 30 years	9	15.0
31 – 40 years	26	43.3
41 – 50 years	20	33.3
51 years and above	5	8.4
Total	60	100.0
Years of practice as a clergy	1	1
1 – 5 years	11	18.3
6 – 10 years	27	45.0
11 years and above	22	36.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Demographic data analysis in table 1 shows that out of 60 clergy persons to whom the questionnaires were administered, 42 respondents representing 70% were males while 18 representing 30% were females. This indicates that majority of the clergy persons who participated in the survey were males.

The age distribution shows that 15% of respondents fell within the age range of 20 and 30 years, 43% within 31 and 40 years, 33.3% within 41 and 50 years, while 8.4% of the respondents were above 51 years. This shows that the entire respondents were mature and could give adequate responses to the question items.

The clergy experience distribution shows that 36.7% of the clergy men and women have been practicing as clergy persons for more than above 11 years, 45% within 6 and 10 years, and 18.3% within

1 and 5 years. Generally, a larger percentage of the respondents have gathered considerable wealth of experience as members of the clergy.

ANALYSIS RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the leisure and recreational activities that clergymen and women engage in?

Table 1: Clergymen's leisure and recreational activities

S/N	Leisure/Recreation Activity	Frequency (percentage)	Rank
1.	Walking	39 (65)	4
2.	Jogging	14 (23.3)	10
3.	Reading books or daily papers	52 (86.7)	2
4.	Gardening	9 (15)	12
5.	Social media interaction e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.	26 (43.3)	7
6.	Restaurant visits	35 (58.3)	5
7.	Park and recreational centers visits	27 (45)	6
8.	Playing cards/Ludo	5 (8.3)	14
9.	Sport activities e.g. football, table tennis, etc.	12 (20)	11
10.	Cooking	22 (36.7)	8
11.	Cycling	6 (10)	13
12.	Musical activities	19 (31.7)	9
13.	Religious activities	48 (80)	3
14.	Hobby activities	55 (91.7)	1
15.	Painting	4 (6.7)	15

- ii. What is the influence of leisure and recreation on the physical wellness of clergymen and women?

Table 2: Result of the Likert-scale questionnaire (N=60 clergy)

S/N	Items	Agree (SA+A)	Disagree (SD+D)	Mean	Remark
1	Leisure and recreational activities positively affects my life quality	48 (80)	12 (20)	3.3	Agree
2	Leisure and recreational activities improve my physical health	55 (90)	15 (10)	3.3	Agree
3	Leisure and recreational activities help to boost my immune system	50 (83.3)	10 (16.7)	3.0	Agree
4	Leisure and recreational activities help to prevent me from developing chronic diseases	48 (80)	12 (20)	3.1	Agree
5	Leisure and recreational activities help me promote my body fitness	41 (68.3)	13 (21.7)	3.2	Agree
6	Leisure and recreational activities help me regulate my blood pressure	36 (60)	24 (40)	2.9	Agree
	Grand Total/Mean	278 (78.7)	86 (21.3)	3.1	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

- iii. What is the influence of leisure and recreation on the physical wellness of clergymen and women?

Table 3: Result of the Likert-scale questionnaire (N=60 clergy)

	Items	Agree (SA+A)	Disagree (SD+D)	Mean	Remark
1	Leisure and recreational activities help to improve my mental health	55 (91.7%)	5 (8.3%)	3.3	Agree
2	Engaging in leisure and recreational activities help me to conquer loneliness and boredom	53 (90%)	7 (10%)	3.4	Agree
3	Leisure and recreational activities help me to explore my inner spirit and sense of joy	55 (83.3%)	5 (16.7%)	3.3	Agree
4	Leisure and recreational activities help to keep my emotions under control	53 (80%)	7 (20%)	3.4	Agree
5	Leisure and recreational activities makes me to be more lively	52 (86.7%)	8 (13.3%)	3.1	Agree
	Grand Total/Mean	295 (89.3%)	32 (10.7%)	3.3	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

Hypothesis one: There is no significant influence of leisure and recreation on the physical wellness of clergymen and women.

Table 3: Chi-square results of influence of leisure and recreation on the physical wellness of clergymen and women

Variables	Df	L.S	X ² Calc	X ² Crit	Remark	Decision
Leisure and recreation	15	0.05	59.562	25.0	Sig	Ho1
Physical wellness of clergymen and women						Rejected

(Calc. $X^2=59.562 > \text{Crit. } X^2=25.0$, $df=9$, $P < 0.05$)

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of leisure and recreation on the psychological wellness of clergymen and women.

Table 4: Chi-square results of influence of leisure and recreation on the psychological wellness of clergymen and women

Variables	Df	L.S	X ² Calc	X ² Crit	Remark	Decision
Leisure and recreation	12	0.05	31.317	21.026	Sig	Ho1
Psychological wellness of clergymen and women						Rejected

(Calc. $X^2=31.317 > \text{Crit. } X^2=21.026$, $df=12$, $P < 0.05$)

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Data analysis in table 1 shows the percentage of respondents who engaged in one leisure and recreational activity or the other. The table also presents the rank of each of the leisure and recreational activities that the clergymen and women engage in. The results indicated that clergy men and women participated mostly in hobby activities (91.7%), reading of books or daily papers (86.7%); religious activities (80%); walking (65%); and restaurant visits (58.3%). However, they partake less in activities like gardening (15%); cycling (10%); playing cards/Ludo (8.3%) and; painting (6.7%).

The results in table 2 indicated that all the respondents agreed to the question items as the mean

scores were all above the 2.5 minimum mean score. The grand mean score (3.1) which was above the set benchmark of 2.5 implied that leisure and recreational activities influenced the physical wellness of clergymen and women.

Similarly, the results in table 3 indicated that all the respondents agreed to the question items as the mean scores were all above the 2.5 minimum mean score. The grand mean score (3.3) which was above the set benchmark of 2.5 implied that leisure and recreation activities influenced the psychological wellness of clergymen and women

Furthermore, findings from the test of hypothesis one shows that X^2 Cal (59.562) is greater than X^2 Tab (25.0) given 15 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant influence of leisure and recreation activities on the physical wellness of clergymen and women" is hereby rejected. This further implied that there is significant influence of leisure and recreation on the physical wellness of clergymen and women.

Also, findings from the test of hypothesis two shows that X^2 Cal (31.317) is greater than X^2 Tab (21.026) given 12 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant influence of leisure and recreation activities on the psychological wellness of clergymen and women" is rejected. Therefore, there is significant influence of leisure and recreation activities on the psychological wellness of clergymen and women.

Findings of this study is in tandem with that of Cletus and Alozie (2019) which examined the role of leisure and recreation at improving the quality of life of workers in tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria. The study revealed that the major leisure and recreation activities engaged in by workers in tertiary institutions are religious activities, restaurant visits, hobby activities, cooking, and sport activities. The respondents agreed that leisure and recreational activities improve their physical wellness and quality of life. The study then recommended that workers should see leisure and recreation as an important and vital tool in organizational settings to be embarked upon, as it plays important role in boosting quality of life.

Similarly, Baldwin & Norris (1999) found positive effect of leisure on the human psychological wellbeing while Phillips & Fairley (2014) found that leisure and recreation brings about a sense of meaning and social connectedness. Leisure and recreation was also found to contribute to increase in life satisfaction and improved health (Kim et al., 2011, 2015).

Kellya, Strauss and Stride (2020) investigated whether investing extra time into leisure will have a positive or negative impact on career sustainability by either generating or depleting resources. Specifically, they examined the effects of time spent on leisure on the career-related resources of resilience and self-efficacy, using data on within-person changes over the course of 7 monthly surveys. They proposed that the effects of leisure on resources depend on the interplay between (a) the approach individuals take to their leisure activity, in particular the level of "seriousness" of a leisure activity (i.e., the extent to which individuals identify with, and persevere in, their activity), and (b) the similarity between work and leisure (i.e., the extent to which work and leisure involve similar demands and skills). They found that time spent on leisure over and above an individual's average was positively related to work-related self-efficacy.

Essentially, leisure and recreation not only improve physical and psychological wellbeing of an individual but also improve their activeness in their work and career. Thus, this study advances the opinion that clergymen and women will perform their clergy activities well if they engage in leisure and recreational activities regularly.

CONCLUSION

The study found that leisure and recreational activities play an important role in the physical health and psychological wellbeing of clergy men and women. Undoubtedly, there are many benefits to derive by engaging in leisure and recreational activities. Leisure and recreational activities may play an educational role; it can influence international and community development, promote health, socialize individuals, community's cohesiveness and also, stimulate economy. Leisure and recreation influences physical and mental well-being and enriches the quality of life as a whole. Therefore, clergymen and women should see leisure and recreation as important activities that should be given utmost priority in order to enhance their good health, vitality, and emotional stability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends the following:

- i. Clergymen and women must carve out time out of their busy schedules to engage in recreation activities for soundness of their health and wellbeing.
- ii. Church premises through meaningful interventions from the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) should be provided with recreational facilities to promote participation among the clergymen and the community.
- iii. Leisure and recreational activities should be seen as a means through which the budding clergymen and women can be empowered by positively influencing their self-confidence and self-esteem.

REFERENCES

- Baldwin, C. K., & Norris, P. A. (1999). Exploring the dimensions of serious leisure: "Love me—Love my dog!" *Journal of Leisure Research*, 31(1): 1–17.
- Baysal, S. (1991). The effects of participating in recreational activities on quality of life and job satisfaction. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(6): 1051-1058.
- Chen, C.F., Tsai, L.T., Lin C.F., Huang C.C., Chang Y.T., Chen R.Y., Lyu, S.Y. (2017). Factors influencing interest in recreational sports participation and its rural-urban disparity. *PLoS ONE*. 2017;12:0178052. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0178052.
- Cletus, O.O. & Alozie, E.N. (2019). Role of Leisure and Recreation at Improving Quality of Life of Workers in Tertiary Institutions, *International Journal of Development Strategies in Humanities, Management and Social Sciences*, 9(3): 16-34.
- Kelly, J. R. & Freysinger, V. (2000). *leisure identities and interactions-leisure and recreation studies*. London: George Allen
- Kim, J., Heo, J., Lee, I.H., & Kim, J. (2015). Predicting personal growth and happiness by using serious leisure model. *Social Indicators Research*, 122(1): 147–157.
- Khasnabis, C. Heinicke, M.K, Achu, K. (2010). *Community-based rehabilitation: cbr guidelines*, Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Kissock, C. (1981). *Curriculum planning for social studies teaching*, Chichester: John Wiley and Sons.
- Ponic, P. Frisby, W. (2010). Unpacking Assumptions about inclusion in community-based health promotion: Perspectives of women living in poverty. *QHR* 2010;20:1519-1531.
- Phillips, P., & Fairley, S. (2014). Umpiring: A serious leisure choice. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 46: 184–202.
- Setonji, N.A., Lyoka, P.A., Ijeoma, E.C. & Odeyemi, A.S. (2016). Analysis of Effective Policy interventions and Access to Recreation Activities in Urban City of Lagos, Nigeria, *Educational Perspective*, 11(1): 119-132.
- The Association of Church Sports and Recreation Ministries (2022). *Amazing Athletes Educational Sports Programs in Columbus*. www.amazingathletes.com/columbus.
- Udokanma, E.E., Akpu, E.E. & Onwunaka, C.C. (2016). Factors Affecting participation in Recreational Sports Activities among Secondary School Students in Awka-South LGA of Anambra State. *Unizik Journal of Education Graduates*, 3(1): 68-88.
- Wang, W.C., Wu, C.C. & Wu, C.Y. (2013). Early-life outdoor experiences and involvement in outdoor recreational activities in adulthood: A case study of visitors in Da-Keng, Taiwan, *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism*, 14(1-2): 66-8