



Appraisal of recreation as a psycho-social intervention for improving vagrant youths in Lagos State

Apalara, F.A., Taiwo, A.B., Adande, A.D., & Setonji, N.A.

Department of Human Kinetics, Sports and Education, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos – Nigeria

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CORRESPONDING EMAIL ADDRESS:

fatai.apalara@lasu.edu.ng

ORCID NUMBER:

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to evaluate the influence of recreation as a psycho-social intervention for improving vagrant youths in Lagos State. The population of the study include all vagrant youths in the five administrative divisions in Lagos State. 200 vagrant youths were randomly selected from the five administrative divisions of Lagos State to form the sample size. Four research questions and four research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study and the population of the study included all vagrant youths in the five administrative divisions of Lagos State. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the participants of the study. Data were collected using Recreation As A Psycho-Social Intervention For Vagrant Youth (RAPIVY) Questionnaire. The validity of the instrument was ensured by two specialists in the field of recreation and tourism and the reliability of the instrument was computed using Cronbach alpha method and reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentage for demographic data and inferential statistics of chi square was used to test all hypotheses. Results of the study reveals that personal interest and availability of recreational facilities have significant influence on participation of vagrant youths in recreational activities. Also, participation in recreational activities has significant influence on anti-social behaviour among vagrant youths in Lagos State. Also, participation in recreational activities has significant influence on social development among vagrant youths in Lagos State as evident in the results; ($X^2=53.470$; $P<0.05$, $X^2=94.00$; $P=.012$, $X^2=57.60$; $P=.023$, $X^2=144.558$; $P=.036$) respectively. It was therefore recommended among others that efforts should be made by the communities and government to provide and maintain recreational facilities in all the administrative divisions in Lagos State.

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Introduction

Young people under the age of 40 comprise more than 70 percent of Nigeria's population, with projections that this figure will continue to grow over the next few decades (National Bureau of Statistic, 2021). Given the significant number of youths in Nigeria according to figures from National Bureau of Statistic, researchers have suggested that the future progress of Nigeria is based upon the extent to which young people are educated, skilled, healthy, and gainfully employed. Unfortunately, the poor economic situation of the country has made many of these youth to be jobless and rendered homeless. This has pushed many of them into crime and other anti-social behaviours for survival. According to Doreo Partners (2013), unemployment rate in Nigeria is growing at the rate of 16% per year with the youth impacted the most and accounting for three times the general unemployment.

Nigeria's spiraling youth unemployment can be said to have significantly contributed to the dramatic rise in social unrest and crime such as ritual killing, cyber-crime, insurgency and kidnapping which put the future of the country at risk. Many psychosocial interventions have been proposed and implemented in the past but these interventions have not succeeded in reversing the rate of crime in the country. Psychosocial interventions include all of the interventions in which counseling or behavior management is used to solve societal problems. This intervention is the combination of psychological and social factors. Psychosocial support is a process of facilitating resilience within individuals, families and communities, enabling families to bounce back from the impact of crises and helping them to deal with such events in the future (The Psychosocial Framework, 2017). By respecting the independence, dignity and coping mechanisms of individuals and communities, psychosocial support promotes the restoration of social cohesion and infrastructure.

The potency of recreation as a psycho-social intervention for diverting youths from anti-social behaviours is embedded in its ability to reform the mind.

Recreation encompasses relaxation and recuperation; as it rejuvenates and replenishes the individual to continue to perform on the job without undue stress. It is concerned with the re-creative, that is activity that will bring about a renewal of spirit and the body; activities that have the potentialities for enrichment of life through the development of the intellect. It is opposed to activities that are harmful to a person or to the society, physically, socially and otherwise (Bucher and Bucher, 1974 & Kraus, 1966).

The aim of recreation is to rest and rejuvenate, and rebuild the body up from a breakdown situation. The rebuilding up process through leisure-time activities does not end with the physical body but extends to the mental component of the individual, thereby enabling him to achieve a balanced life. It is a common knowledge that a greater percentage of the Nigerian population lacks recreation habit/tourism culture.

Suleiman (2014), also opined that recreation is something quite more than mere body exercise; he consider it as a forum for man to recreate himself and an opportunity for participation in civic affairs, partaking in aesthetic experience for developing skills, and for the enjoyment of nature, while McCullick and Georgex (1999), see recreation is an endeavor concerned with those socially acceptable, valued, and worthwhile activities in which a person voluntarily participates during leisure hours. It comprises an engagement that people are committed to during leisure time. It is an activity that is voluntarily undertaken and practically motivated to leisure and satisfaction (Hall & Page, 2014).

Recreation promotes psychological and social well-being, and improve and rehabilitate the quality of life for humans (Olusola & Ogundipe, 2016; South Africa Department of Sport and



Recreation, 2018). It is a positive change from the stereotypical lifestyle and involves an active participation in some entertaining physical activities (Oak, 2010). From the foregoing, if the youths are exposed to worthwhile recreational activities in the correct ways, they will imbibe virtues such as respect, responsibility and hard-work which are the basis of strong personal character. Therefore, the need, to build positive recreational experiences and maximize the availability of facilities to meet the playing needs of the increasing number of youth participants to reduce youth's vagrancy in the Nigeria cannot be over emphasized

Youth vagrant is a social problem in Nigeria and solving this problem calls for immediate and sustainable intervention. The rate at which youth are enmeshed in crime, and series of indecent lifestyle is becoming alarming. These negative behaviours have caused the country so much in the area of insecurity, high rate inflation among others. Therefore, all effort must be geared toward sustainable intervention to arrest the situation. It is well documented that recreation has significant impact in effecting changes in the social lives of people but there is paucity of empirical data on the efficacy of recreation as a psycho-social intervention for improving vagrant youths in Lagos State. Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the influence of recreation as a psycho-social intervention for improving vagrant youths in Lagos State.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. This involved using a structured questionnaire to collect data from the target respondents. The choice of this design is to enable the researcher in observing and measuring certain characteristics among the participants without manipulating the variables.

The population for this study will be all vagrant youths in Lagos State. A multi-stage sampling

technique was adopted for the selection of the participants.

Stage 1: Simple random sampling technique was used to select Five (5) Local Government Areas from the 20 Local Government Areas in the State. The Local Governments Areas were selected from the five administrative divisions of Lagos State.

Stage 2: The purposive sampling technique was used to randomly select forty (40) vagrant youth in each of the selected areas in the state.

Instrumentation

The instrument for this study was a self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised two sections; A and B. Section A, focused on the demographic information of respondents, while section B contained items that provided answers to the stated research questions.

The validity of the instrument was carried out by giving copy of the instrument to two other experts in recreation and tourism for content and construct validity. The reliability of the instrument was done with test-retest method. The method involved administering the questionnaire to ten vagrant youths that are not part of the sample twice at two weeks interval. Cronbach alpha method was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire at $r=0.86$. The questionnaires were administered with the help of two (2) research assistants and collected on the spot to prevent loss or damage of the instrument.

The data collected were analyzed with the use of statistical tools of simple percentage, mean and standard deviation for the demographic data while inferential statistics of chi-square used to test the stated hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data analysis were carried out using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23

Research Questions

- i. Will personal interest of vagrant youths have influence on their participation in recreational activities in Lagos State?

- ii. Will availability of recreational facilities have influence on the participation of vagrant youths in recreational activities in Lagos State?
- iii. Will participation in recreational activities have influence on diverting vagrant youths from anti-social behaviours in Lagos State?
- iv. Will participation in recreational activities have influence on the social development of vagrant youths in Lagos State?
- ii. Availability of recreational facilities will have no significant influence on the participation of vagrant youths in recreational activities in Lagos State.
- iii. Participation in recreational activities will have no significant influence on diverting vagrant youths from anti-social behaviours in Lagos State.
- iv. Participation in recreational activities will have no significant influence on social development of vagrant youths in Lagos State.

Research Hypotheses

- i. Personal interest of vagrant youths will have no significant influence on their

Data presentation

Table 1: Gender Distribution of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	129	64.5
Female	71	35.5
Total	200	100.0

Gender distribution of the respondents is presented in table 1, from the table it could be observed that 129 representing 64.5% of the respondents were male and 71 representing 35.5% were female. This

shows that there are more male respondents than female respondents in the study

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age (years)	Frequency	Percent
Less than 18 years	28	14
19-25years	79	39.5
26-30years	47	23.5
31-35	34	17
Above 35	12	6
Total	200	100.0

Table 2 shows that 28 representing 14% of the respondents were less than 18 years, 79 representing 39.5% were between 19-25 years of age, 47 representing 23.5% of the respondents were

between 26-30 years, 34 representing 17% were between 31-35 years of age while 12 representing 6% of the respondents were above 35 years of age.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
No Formal Education	49	24.5
Primary School Level	69	34.5
Secondary School Level	77	38.5
Graduate	36	18
Total	200	100

Table 3 present information on the education level of the respondents. From the table, it could be observed that 49 representing 24.5% of the respondents do not have formal education, 69

representing 35.5% had primary school education, 77 representing 38.5% had secondary school education while 36 representing 18% attended higher institution.

Table 4: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	96	48
Married	70	35
Divorced	26	13
Widowed	6	3
Total	200	100.0

Table 4 presents information on the marital status of the respondents. From the table, it could be observed that 96 representing 48% of the respondents were not married, 70 representing 35% were married, 26 representing 13% of the respondents previously married, while 6 representing 3% were widowed.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One

Personal interest of vagrant youths will have no significant influence on their participation in recreational activities in Lagos State.

Table 5: Chi-square result of influence of Personal Interest on Vagrant Youth Participation in recreational activities

Variables	Mean	df	X ²	P-value	Decision
Influence of personal interest on vagrant youth participation in recreational activities	2.86	20	53.470	0.011	Rejected

From table 5 it could be observed that a significant chi-square ($X^2=53.470$; $P<0.05$) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. The result shows that personal interest have significant influence on the

vagrant youth participation in recreational activities. Hence, hypothesis one as stated is hereby rejected



Hypothesis Two

Availability of recreational facilities will have no significant influence on the participation of vagrant youths in recreational activities in Lagos State.

Table 6: Chi-square result of influence of Availability of Recreational Facilities on Vagrant Youth Participation in recreational activities

Variables	Mean	df	X ²	P-value	Decision
Influence of availability of recreational facilities on participation of vagrant youth in recreational activities	2.985	20	94.00	0.012	Rejected

From table 6 it could be observed that a significant chi-square ($X^2=94.00$; $P=.012$) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. The result implies that availability of recreational facilities has significant influence on the vagrant youth participation in recreational activities. Therefore, hypothesis two has stated is rejected.

Hypothesis Three

Participation in recreational activities will have no significant influence on diverting vagrant youths from anti-social behaviours in Lagos State.

Table 7: Chi-square result of influence of participation in recreational activities on Vagrant Youth antisocial behaviours

Variables	Mean	df	X ²	P-value	Decision
Recreational activities participation and Vagrant Youth anti-social behaviour	2.776	20	57.60	0.023	Rejected

From table 7 presents the influence of participation in recreational activities on anti-social behaviour among vagrant youths. From the table, it could be observed that a significant chi-square ($X^2=57.60$; $P=.023$) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. The result implies that participation in recreational activities has significant influence on anti-social

behaviour among vagrant youths in Lagos State. Hence, hypothesis three has stated is rejected.

Hypothesis Four

Participation in recreational activities will have no significant influence on social development of vagrant youths in Lagos State.

Table 8: Chi-square result of influence of participation in recreational activities on Vagrant Youth social development

Variables	Mean	df	X ²	P-value	Decision
Recreational activities participation and Vagrant Youth social development	2.659	20	144.558	.036	Rejected

From table 8 presents the influence of participation in recreational activities on vagrant youths social



development. From the table, it could be observed that a significant chi-square ($X^2=144.558$; $P=.036$) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. The result implies that participation in recreational activities has significant influence on social development among vagrant youths in Lagos State. Hence, hypothesis four has stated is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Result of this study revealed that personal interest has significant influence on the vagrant youth participation in recreational activities. Personal interest determines if an action will be performed or not. The decisions that people make about their participation in recreational activities will be strongly influenced by their personal interest and preferences. Similarly, availability of recreational facilities was found to significantly influence vagrant youth participation in recreational activities. When recreational facilities are available and affordable it will motivate youths to participate in recreation activities. The result of this study is consistence with previous reports. For instance, Mackenbach et al., (2018), asserted that availability of recreation facilities has influence on participation in recreational activities. Dike (2005) reported that facilities and equipment constitutes factors that encourage participation in recreational programmes. He concluded that when such facilities and equipment needed for recreational sports programmes are available, they would provide for growth in physical skill, in imaginations, in team work and in coordination.

Also, Churcher (2001) asserted that sports facilities and equipment should not only be provided but must be adequate too. This is so that opportunities can be offered to all who may wish to partake in any activity of his/her choice. Onifade & Okuneye (1993), facilities and equipment are grossly inadequate in schools and as a result, participation in recreational sports programmes by majority of students is hindered

Results also reveal that participation in recreational activities has significant influence on anti-social behaviour among vagrant youths in Lagos State. Recreational activities is a veritable tool for diverting vagrant youth from anti-social behaviours. It creates less time for youth to think of or engage in criminal activities, youth participating actively in recreational activities are likely to shun negative behaviours such as fighting, sexual harassment, substance abuse among others. Recreational activities promote bonding, improve socialization, interpersonal relation among youths. Schwarzenegger, Chrisman and Coleman (2005) on social benefits of recreation, recreation strengthens communities by reducing crime, encouraging volunteerism and promoting stewardship, promotes social bonds by uniting families, building cultural diversity and harmony, supporting individuals with disabilities and supporting seniors and more importantly, supports youth by developing youth, enhancing education, deterring negative behaviors, decreases drug and alcohol use and early sexual activity and crime prevention.

Results reveal that participation in recreational activities has significant influence on social development among vagrant youths in Lagos State. Participation in recreational activities help youths to develop many of the social skills they will need for life, it promotes team work and corporation, creates sense of belonging, boost self-esteem and improve social and mental wellbeing of vagrant youths. This result agrees with Hoofer (2011), which reported that participation in recreational activities support social wellbeing of youths.

Summary and Conclusion

The study was conducted to evaluate the influence of recreation as a psycho-social intervention for improving vagrant youths in Lagos State. The population of the study include all vagrant youths in the five administrative divisions in Lagos State. 200 vagrant youths were randomly selected from



the five administrative divisions of Lagos State to form the sample size. Four research questions and four research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study and the population of the study included all vagrant youths in the five administrative divisions of Lagos State. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the participants of the study. Data were collected using Recreation As A Psycho-Social Intervention For Vagrant Youth (RAPIVY) Questionnaire. The validity of the instrument was ensured by two specialists in the field of recreation and tourism and the reliability of the instrument was computed using Cronbach alpha method and reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentage for demographic data and inferential statistics of chi square was used to test all hypotheses. Results of the study reveals that personal interest and availability of recreational facilities have significant influence on participation of vagrant youths in recreational activities. Also, participation in recreational activities has significant influence on anti-social behaviour among vagrant youths in Lagos State. Also, participation in recreational activities has significant influence on social development among vagrant youths in Lagos State.

Conclusion

Participation in recreational activities is one of the approaches to engage vagrant youths in Lagos State in order to reduce rate of anti-social behaviour such as robbery, sexual harassment among others. It is evident from the results of this study that engaging vagrant youths in a worthwhile recreation programme will occupy them meaningfully and help them to develop positive attitudes. Meaningful recreational activities can only take place where the right facilities are available and accessible.

Recommendation

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

1. Efforts should be made by the communities and government to provide and maintain recreational facilities in all the administrative divisions in Lagos State.
2. The communities and government should develop recreation programmes that meet the needs of the youths, and faithfully execute such programmes with the service of experts in the field of recreation and tourism.
3. The recreation facilities and equipment should be effectively supervised to ensure that only desirable activities are carried out on them.
4. Recreation experts should be employed in the administrative divisions for effective management of the programmes and facilities.
5. Government should create enabling environment for the youths to gain employment through recreation.

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