



Barrier to Participation in Physical Activities by Persons with Disability in South-Western Nigeria

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Abstract This study was on barriers to participation in physical activities by persons with disability in South Western Nigeria. The sample for the study consisted of 300 persons with disability who were selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The sample included 290 male and 110 female participants. The research instrument was self designed questionnaire which was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was carried out at Ikere-Ekiti through one short test and the result subjected to Cronbach alpha statistics and an “r” of 0.80 was obtained. The data collected was done on the spot by the researchers and research assistants in schools for persons with disability and rehabilitation centres in Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Osogbo, Ile-Ife and Ado-Ekiti. The result showed that parental influence, possession of equipment and fear of injury are all significant barriers to participation in physical activities among persons with disability in South Western Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that parents of persons with disability should be educated on the importance of physical activities so that they would encourage their children to participate in physical activities. Schools should always provide equipment for physical activities in order to encourage participation in physical activities, while persons with disability should be taught safety rules of participating in physical activities.

Keywords physical fitness, Olympic race, longevity, sedentary living, paraplegic, tetralegic

1. Introduction

A person with disability is an individual who is handicapped or disabled. The handicapped or disabled is an individual who has lost part of his body and cannot make use of that part of the body when the need arises. They are individuals that are incapacitated and thereby deprived of the use of any part of the body. Rider (2009) and Weiss (2010) opined that the term is used to refer to individual functioning including physical impairments, cognitive impairments, intellectual impairments, mental illness and various type of chronic diseases [1-2]. Daniels and Davies in Lafinhan (2002) posited that an individual with disability is a person who is restricted in executing some skills, doing specific jobs or tasks or performing certain activities, due to one kind of impairment or the other [3]. These impairments according to Oziyi (2012) can be termed as disability if the person is unable to perform normal daily activities. At times these set of people, may need the help of another person or use of equipment to function appropriately. This condition should not be used to segregate or disallow such individuals from participating in physical activities [4]. In fact, Okunrotifa (1995) opined that sport is not exclusively the prerogative of non disabled or the abled-bodied, persons with disability can also become athletes if given the opportunities [5].



Physical activity has been discovered to be a vital component of maintaining a healthy living and an antidote to longevity and prevention of ill health. It is also a means of preventing early ageing and a way of making an individual to be physically fit. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2010) [6] physical activity is defined as a form of bodily movement produced by the skeletal bodies and the bones and the muscles that expends calories energy. That is the activities must be effectively and actively done regularly through the use of locomotor activities such as walking, running, jogging, dancing, galloping, marching, and others to list a few. Vuori (1995) and Jones, Answorth and Croft (1998) stated that regular physical activity remains an important behaviour for promoting health, postponing or preventing prevalent neuromuscular disorders such as mechanical low back pain, neck and shoulder pain and the risk of developing coronary heart diseases, hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity and colon cancers. Generally, physical activities should be done regularly and adequately to promote physical fitness level of participants either by the abled-bodied or persons with disability [7-8]. According to Adegun (2005) [9] physical activities occur naturally in both male and female and this is done to the demands of everyday living in terms of occupation as well as to keep the soul and the mind together. He stressed further that the biological an social nature of human being make it mandatory for mankind to engage in one form of physical activity or the other from birth to death. In fact participating in physical activities go beyond birth but actually started at conception when one cannot determine whether the zygote formed is disabled or not. Ajisafe (1991) [10] posited that:

“Sport participation started at cellular level at the moment of conception when about 200 million spermatozoa had to run the greatest Olympic race ever organized by nature in order to fertilize an egg whose shape resembles the gold medal awarded to outstanding athletes today. We are here today because each of us won the race at birth, the race of life, which was divinely supervised by the Almighty Referee” (p6).

The importance of physical activities in the life of an individual either the able bodied or persons with disability cannot be overemphasized. Torabi and Luegers (2010) [11] pointed out that physical activity can help to produce endorphins in the brain which can promote feeling of well being. They observed further that individuals who regularly take part in exercise can experience reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. This is very common among persons with disability who at times sit ideally in one position. Due to poor knowledge of the importance of physical activities to persons with disability, many parents of the persons with disability disallow them from participating in physical activities. Also many parents of persons with disability over protect them and prevent them from participating in sporting activities [12].

On the other hand, few persons with disability who are interested in participating in physical activities are handicapped by lack of equipment. Many persons with disability have no equipment needed for participation in physical activities. According to Bromann in Oyeniya (2009) [12] the common struggle for persons with disability consist of obtaining equipment and facilities required in athletic programme, which corresponds to the level of rest of sports world. Apart from this, major problem of persons with disability is getting means of transportation to venue of participation. It has been observed that many persons with disability engage in sedentary living by staying indoor to prevent injury through participation in physical activities. They also do this to prevent falls, which may occur as a result of participation in physical activities [12].

The study therefore was designed to investigate the barriers to participation in physical activities by persons with disability with special reference to the variables of parental influence, possession of equipment, and fear of injury.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

- to investigate parental influence on the barriers to physical activities by persons with disability;
- to find out the availability of equipment for physical activities by persons with disability;
- to determine if fear of injury is a barrier to physical activities by persons with disability.

1.3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:



- Parental influence is not a significant barrier to physical activities by persons with disability.
- Possession of equipment is not a significant barrier to physical activities by persons with disability.
- Fear of injury equipment is no a significant barrier to physical activities by persons with disability.

2. Methodology

The descriptive research design of survey type was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all persons with disability in South-Western Nigeria. The sample consisted of 300 persons with disability non sport participants. Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents who were female and male tetralegic and paraplegic individuals.

Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was carried out in Ikere-Ekiti through one shot test and the result subjected to Cronbach alpha statistics and an "r" of 0.80 was obtained. The validated instrument was used to collect necessary data from the respondents at the rehabilitation centres and schools for persons with disability by the researchers and research assistants. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, mean score, percentage and inferential statistics of Chi-Square to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Barriers to Physical Activities by Persons with Disability

S/N	Items	Responses						χ^2
		Yes	%	Not Sure	%	No	%	
1	My parent don not allow me to participate in physical activities.	136	45.33	68	22.67	96	32	33.86*
2	Fear of injury makes my parent to disallow me from participating in physical activities.	108	36	56	18.67	136	45.33	
3	My parent always beat me whenever I participate in physical activities.	173	57.67	55	18.33	72	24	
	Mean	139	46.33	57	19	104	37.67	
	Possession of Equipment							
4	Sports equipment are available for me to participate in physical activities.	82	27.33	64	21.33	154	51.33	21.84*
5	I have access to physical activities equipment.	78	26	70	23.33	152	50.67	
6	Availability of equipment encourage participation in physical activities.	206	68.67	52	17.33	42	14	
	Mean	122	40.67	62	20.67	116	33.66	
	Fear of Injury							
7	The fear of injury makes me to run away from physical activities.	102	34	60	20	138	46	26.78*
8	Physical activity is injury phone.	182	60.67	64	21.33	54	18	
9	My nature of disability can easily make me have injury.	121	40.33	62	20.67	117	39	
	Mean	135	45	62	20.67	103	34.33	

* P<0.05

From the result, the mean score on parental influence showed that yes had 139 (46.33%) while not sure had 57 (19%) and no had 104 (34.67%). The calculated Chi-square for the parental influence is 33.86 which is greater than the table value of 5.99 at 0.05 level of significance at 2df. The null hypothesis that parental influence is not



a significant barrier to participating in physical activities by persons with disability was rejected. This shows that parental influence is a significant barrier to participating in physical activities by persons with disability. According to Oyeniya (2009) [12] many parents of persons with disability over protect them and prevent them from participating in sporting activities.

On availability of equipment, the mean score showed that yes had 122 (40.67%), not sure had 62 (20.67%) and no had 116 (38.66%). The calculated chi-square for the possession of equipment is 21.84 which is greater than the table value of 5.99 at 0.05 level of significance at 2df. The null hypothesis that possession of equipment is not a significant barrier to participating in physical activities by persons with disability was rejected. That is possession of equipment is a significant barrier to participating in physical activities by persons with disability. Bromann in Oyeniya (2009) [12] posited that the common struggle for persons with disability consist of obtaining equipment and facilities required to establish an athletic programme which corresponds to the level of the rest of sports world.

On fear of injury, the mean score showed that yes had 135 (45%), not sure had 62 (20.67%) and no had 103 (34.33%). The calculated Chi-square of 27.78 was obtained which is greater than the table value of 5.99 at 0.05 level of significance at 2df. Therefore, the null hypothesis that fear of injury is not a significant barrier to participating in physical activities by persons with disability was rejected. That is fear of injury is a significant barrier to participating in physical activities by persons with disability. It has been discovered that many persons with disability engage in sedentary living by staying indoor to prevent injury that may result from physical activities [12]. The result shows that the parents are not aware of the importance of physical activities which remains an important behaviour of promoting health, postponing or preventing prevalent of neuromuscular disorders such as mechanical, low back pain, neck and shoulder pain and the risk of developing coronary heart diseases, hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity and colon cancer [7].

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that parental influence, possession of equipment and fear of injury are all significant barriers to participating in physical activities by persons with disability in South-Western Nigeria.

Recommendations

It was therefore recommended that:

1. Parents should be enlightened about the importance of physical activities to every individual and therefore should allow their children and wards who are persons with disability to participate in physical activities.
2. Special schools for persons with disability should always provide equipment that will encourage persons with disability to participate in physical activities.
3. Physical education specialists should always teach persons with disability the safety rules of sports participation.
4. Counselors should always be available to boost the morale of persons with disability so that they could be encouraged to participate in physical activities with other people.

Counseling Implication

It is worthy to note that deprivation of persons with disability from participating in physical activities can make them become more socioeconomic liability other than promoting nation's economy through their participation sporting activities.

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