

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AS DETERMINANTS OF LEISURE UTILIZATION AMONG RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

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Abstract

This study assessed the socio-economic factors as determinants of leisure utilization among residential students of University of Lagos. The study adopted the descriptive design while stratified random sampling was used to draw participants. A four -points modified Likert attitudinal scale was used to sample the opinion of the participants. This included 5 halls of residence, 20 participants from each hall. The stratified random sampling was used in selecting the participants using hall of residence and gender as basis for stratification. The data collected from the participant were analysed using the inferential statistics of Chi-square (X^2) at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that all the four hypotheses were rejected, which simply implies social class of parents, level of study, income level and age will significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students. The study hereby recommends that the University of Lagos students should also engage in leisure activities which suit or are convenient for their parental social class, their level of study, their age as well as their level of income.

Keywords: Socio-Economic Factors, Leisure Utilization, Residential Students.

Introduction

Leisure, otherwise known as free time, is the time spent away from business, work or domestic chores. It is also the periods of time before and after necessary activities such as eating, sleeping and where it is compulsory, education. The behaviour of people during the time when they are not engaged in work or survival activities has in the past received little scientific attention. It is only recently that the study of leisure behaviour has become a legitimate area of investigation (Illinois Parks and Recreation, 2003). Leisure is a state of mind which ordinarily is characterized by un-obligated time and willing optimism. It can involve extensive activity or no activity. The key ingredient is an attitude which fosters a peaceful and productive co-existence with the elements in one's environment. Leisure is considered primarily as a condition, sometimes referred to as a state of being, an attitude of mind or a quality of experience. It is

distinguished by the individual's perceived freedom to act and distinguished from conditions imposed by necessity. It is assumed to be pleasurable and, although it may appeal because of certain anticipated benefits, it is intrinsically motivated, it is an end in itself and valuable for its own sake (Grant & Allan, 2000).

A distinction between leisure and unavoidable activities is loosely applied. That is, people sometimes do work - oriented tasks for pleasure as well as for long term utility. Workaholics are those who work compulsively at the expense of other activities. They prefer to work rather than spend time socializing and engaging in other leisure activities. A distinction may also be drawn between free time and leisure. For example, free time is illusory and rarely free; economic and social forces appropriate free time from the individual and sell it back to them as the commodity known as leisure (Russell, 2009). Leisure has been viewed from different perspective also, such as the classical or traditional view, leisure viewed as transformation. It is also viewed as being casual or serious as well as the holistic view of leisure. One contrasting view is the classical or traditional view, or as discussed by Russell (2009), it is a "special attitude." In this definition, leisure is a highly desired state of mind or state of being that is realized through participation in intrinsically motivated activities. Implicit in this subjective view of leisure is the idea that leisure is highly valued and must involve a positive state of being to be considered leisure.

Leisure is also viewed as "transformation". This view shares some similarities with the social instrument view. According to Edginton and Chen (2008), leisure provides an optimal opportunity for seeking new experiences, gaining knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. It is a time for self-exploration to reinvent, refocus, renew, and change or be transformed. It is important to constantly seek new knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable the kind of positive transformation needed to cope with the fast-paced, ever-changing world in which we live.

Stebbins (2007) makes a distinction between two types of leisure, casual leisure and serious leisure. In his view, casual leisure involves activities that are immediately intrinsically rewarding, have short-lived benefits, and require little or no special training. In contrast, serious leisure activities require significant personal effort and even an occasional need to "persevere." Serious leisure activities have durable, lasting benefits. Participants identify strongly with the activity and can even find a "career" in it, meaning that they experience different stages of achievement/involvement in the activity during

their lifetime. The holistic view of leisure sees leisure and work as being so closely interrelated that the two cannot be separated (Jordan, DeGraaf, & Edginton, 2002). According to the holistic view, elements of leisure can be found in work, education, and other social spheres. Because leisure is so interrelated with work, a holistic explanation or definition of leisure also includes an analysis of the concepts of work and time.

Time for leisure varies from one society to the other, although anthropologists have found that hunter-gatherers tend to have significantly more leisure time than people in more complex societies (Farb & Peter 2001). Leisure or free time also has potential for youth development which is influenced by parental attitudes of interest and control, mediated by adolescents' motivational style. Actually, satisfaction attained in the leisure state is personal, intrinsic and an individual happening; one must discover for oneself in what situations these states of mind occur. Past researchers such as Kelly, Iso and Smith (2010) have generally defined leisure as time off work; and consequently, the study of leisure has focused on behaviour during non-work time and non-work activities. Leisure utilization refers to the various aspects of use of leisure time, either after working hours or during ordinary or annual holidays. They concern the cultural and artistic activities organized outside the place of work, as related to the environment in which it is carried out. This explains the diversity of choice employed (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNESCO, 2011). Leisure utilization is based on an individual's choice, motivation and perception of the activity he participates in, and its experience. Leisure utilization, conceptualized as an experience, is based on the analysis of the quality of the utilization activity, uncovering anticipated benefits associated with the leisure utilization activity such as self-expression, self enhancement, enjoyment of the development of social relationships and/or the joy of integrating mind and body in the activity. Leisure utilization can be determined by certain factors such as social class, education, income level, age, gender, and religion.

Social class as a factor can determine the differences in preferred leisure activities, and thus, influence leisure utilization. For example, in recreation and sports as a leisure time activity, only those of a high social class or occupational milieu can afford a luxury game as horse polo as a means of recreation. Another important socio-economic factor that determines leisure utilization is income. Income level leads to differences in leisure activities within strata, that as prestige increases, involvement in the variety of social activities also increases in a linear relationship and that individuals are more likely to engage in

activities perceived as consistent in their social standing (Gregory, 2001). People of high income have more money to spend on leisure, and in the course of their education they develop more interests that lead them to hobbies and vacations. Furthermore, people who earn less tend to participate in fewer leisure activities because of lower income, and longer working hours, and physical exhaustion. Religion as a factor also determines leisure utilization in that, there is a belief that God of the Bible laid the basis of the conceptualization of leisure. He both worked (created) and ceased from working (ceased creating), therefore, man is said to need not just leisure but its adequate utilization in order not to stunt his selfhood or starve his emotions and thus, produce optimum labour output.

Another socio-economic factor which determines leisure utilization is "Gender", it has become evident in recent leisure scholarship that differences do exist in the way females and males address leisure. For example, males prefer to partake in active sports or hunting as a recreation activity while females would rather sing, dance or engage in gardening (Gregory 2001). Education as a concept encompasses leisure and its adequate utilization in that it talks about the all-round development of an individual. Education also helps the students to learn ways and means for utilizing leisure time fruitfully while level of study refers to a phase or stage in an education program. Age as a factor is a major determinant when it comes to leisure and its adequate utilization. Age is said to be the length of time that one has existed, or the duration of life. Aging is unequivocally a universal and irreversible process, over the course of a lifetime; people may lose interest in some leisure activities and become more interested in others as a result of an increase in age. For example, children abandon simple pastimes such as playing tag and finger-painting when they become old enough to master more complex activities such as football, netball and computer games. When people marry and become parents, they tend to move away from spending leisure hours with friends and devote more free time to family outings. In view of all these, it is of great concern to the researchers to find out the significant socio-Economic determinants of leisure utilization among residential students in the University of Lagos. This study is designed to establish how social class of parents, level of study, income level and age serve as socio-economic influential factors to determine leisure utilization.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study

1. Social class of parents will not significantly influence leisure utilization

- among the University of Lagos students.
2. Student's level of study will not significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.
 3. Parent's income level will not significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.
 4. Student's age will not significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos student.

Methodology

The descriptive research design was adopted for this study. This design was considered appropriate because of its fact finding ability. The sample for the study comprised 100 participants from the entire residential students of university. This included 5 halls of residence, 20 participants from each hall. The stratified sampling technique was used in selecting participants using hall of resident and gender as basis for the stratification.

The instrument that was used is a self-structured questionnaire to collect information from the participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, A and B. Sections A elicits information relating to demographic characteristics of the participants. Section B was divided into sub-sections according to variables of this study. In this section, a number of statements under each variable for the respondents was provided to select the best of their choice. Four modified Likert scale ratings of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), and Disagree (D) were the format of the questionnaire. The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of sports administration and management who assisted in the content and construct validity. Their suggestions and corrections were used in appropriating the contents of the instrument before adoption for the study. Test-retest method was used for the reliability of the instrument where a correlation co-efficient value of 0.79 was obtained.

The researcher administered the questionnaire to the participants with the aid of a research assistant using on the spot method of administration to ensure a 100% collection of data. The inferential statistics of chi-square (χ^2) was used to test all hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Testing Stated Hypotheses

The Chi-square (χ^2) inferential statistics was used in testing all of the stated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One

Social class of parents will not significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Table 1

Influence of Social class of parents on leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students

Variables	Mean	S.D	N	df	X ² - Cal	X ² Tab	Remarks
Parent's Social Class Student's Leisure Utilization	3.42	0.841	100	12	69.33	21.03	Significant

$$P < 0.05$$

Information on table 1 indicates that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value of 69.33 is greater than the tabulated χ^2 value of 21.03; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the social class of parents significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Hypothesis Two

Student's level of study will not significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Table 2

Influence of Student's Level of study on leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students

Variables	Mean	S.D	N	df	X ² - Cal	X ² Tab	Remarks
Students' level of Study Student's Leisure Utilization	2.95	0.701	100	12	48.23	21.03	Significant

$$P < 0.05$$

Information on table 2 indicates that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value of 48.23 is greater than the tabulated χ^2 value of 21.03; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that student's level of study significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Hypothesis Three

Parent's income level will not significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Table 3

Influence of Parent's income level on leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students

Variables	Mean	S.D	N	df	X ² - Cal	X ² Tab	Remarks
Parent's Income level Student's Leisure Utilization	3.612	0.903	100	12	69.33	21.03	Significant

$$P < 0.05$$

Information on table 3 indicates that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value of 69.33 is greater than the tabulated χ^2 value of 21.03; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that student's income level significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Hypothesis Four

Student's age will not significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Table 4

Influence of Student's age on leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students

Variables	Mean	S.D	N	df	X ² - Cal	X ² Tab	Remarks
Students' Age Student's Leisure Utilization	2.764	0.632	100	12	30.94	21.03	Significant

$$P < 0.05$$

Information on table 4 indicates that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2) value of 30.94 is greater than the tabulated χ^2 value of 21.03; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that student's age significantly influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.

Discussion of Findings

This study found out that the social class of parents significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students. This finding correlates with the finding of Mathieu (2011) who examined behavioural changes among two groups of abused adolescent males residing in a residential treatment facility after participating in a therapeutic recreation programmes where one of the group underwent the therapeutic programmes and the other group did not undergo the therapeutic programmes. The researcher made use of the quasi-experimental research design to influence the effect of a ten-week, sixty-minute therapeutic recreation programmes focused on behaviour. Mathieu's experimental group indicated that there was no significance improvement in interpersonal and self-management skills.

The second finding of this study was that student's level of study significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students. This is in agreement with Yu and Berryman (2006) who took fifty-five youths who have been largely sedentary for at least four months prior to study. The researchers took these youths through a three-months' long recreation programmes. 95% of the participants did not perform favourably on the Bookboon self-confidence scale used for the study. Yu and Berryman cited that there was no improved skills, no acquired friends, no improved fitness and no breaking of psychological limits as the main reasons for the results.

The third finding of this study was that parent's income level significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students. This study agrees with the findings of Crayford (2006) who noted that regular recreation makes one's heart and bones stronger, keeps one's weight under regular recreation can have a positive effect on self-esteem; especially for those who suffer from low self-esteem and fitness and appearance improves.

The fourth finding of this study was that student's age significantly influenced leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students. This finding agrees with the finding of Landreau (2007) who conducted a research for North Michigan University. Landreau concluded that recreation positively impacts leadership skills because it provides exposure for individual despite the age by giving them exposure through recreational groups. He also noted that recreational activities promote exploration, discovery, group processes, curiosity and creativity.

Conclusion

The conclusion of findings is as follows:

- Engagement in leisure pursuit will influence leisure utilization among University of Lagos students.
- Problem confronting leisure utilization will influence leisure utilization among the university of Lagos students.
- Benefit of leisure utilization will influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.
- Social class of parents will influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students
- Student's level of study will influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.
- Student's age will influence leisure utilization among the University of Lagos students.
- Parent's income level will influence leisure utilization among the University of

Lagos students.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, it is recommended that solution such as adequate orientation be provided to the University of Lagos students on issues influencing their leisure time utilization in University of Lagos (such as the view of leisure utilization as a waste of time and view of leisure utilization as stress as well as their being prone to injury).

University of Lagos students should also engage in leisure activities which suit or are convenient for their parental social class, their level of study, their age as well as their level of income. They should also be gender sensitive in their leisure pursuit so as to utilize their leisure to its fullest.

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