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PREDICTIVE VARIABLES AS CORRELATE OF ACTIVE SPORTS PARTICIPATION AMONG PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED INDIVIDUALS IN LAGOS COMMUNITIES

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Abstract
This study focused on the predictors of active sports participation among physically challenged individuals in Lagos communities. The sample used for the study was one hundred (100) respondents. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the participants. The descriptive survey research method was adopted and a self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The construct validity was also established. Data collected was analyzed using percentages for demographic variables and Pearson Moment Correlation statistics for the testing of hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The five postulated hypotheses were all significant. The findings of the study revealed that individuals' functional ability, family participation, family income, supportive relationships and parents' perception of environmental barriers had significant influence on active participation of physically challenged individuals in sports in Lagos communities. Based on these findings, it was concluded and recommended families should encourage their participation in sports and recreation, friends and teachers of the physically challenged individuals should promote sports participation by providing supportive relationships and feeling of togetherness for them and that environmental barriers should not be reasons for neglect and inactiveness in sports participation as long as the resources are put in place.

Keywords: *Disable, Family Participation, Physically Challenged, Physical, Predictors, Activities, Sports, Sports Participation, Supportive Relationships.*

Introduction

There is a growing awareness among Nigerians towards active participation in different forms of sports programmes because of the immense values of sports participation to youths, children, adults and the special people. The need for physical, social, emotional and mental wellness derived from sporting activities creates the need in individuals to actively engage in these games. The peer group influence, parental support, societal acceptance and international recognition of sports participation as a status changer encourages the physically challenged to actively take part in sports. The introduction of special sports for the physically challenged creates a forum through which potentials in them can be harnessed and showcased. Records have shown that the physically challenged individuals in Nigeria has won more laurels than the able-bodied athletes in international competitions. The Paralympics Competition in London in 2012 confirms this statement. Participation in active sports programmes is on the increase as adapted sports have encouraged professionalism in this area of sports such as wheelchair basketball, athletics, power lifting, swimming, football 5-aside etc. It is therefore necessary to ascertain variables that will

predict active sports participation among the physically challenged despite barriers faced in Nigeria's context.

In the world today, sports participation amongst individuals has increased tremendously as there is a massive interest regarding reasons why people participate in sports. Sports is presumed to bring about peace, unity and understanding among people of all races and culture, considering its ethical values. Sports is highly significant in national development through leisure and recreation as it enhances a high degree of productivity and healthful living, and healthy living includes participation in activities that brings fulfillment. Participation is the nature and extent of a person's involvement in life situations and this includes activities of self-care, mobility, socialization, education and community life. It is believed that active participation in sports involves body movements, lots of vigour and strength. The interest for active sports participation seems to have already concluded that one must not be deformed or disabled in any body part so as to enjoy full sports participation thus believing that the physically challenged ones does not have the chance of engaging and enjoying active sports participation.

According to Okundare (2009), sports participation is not meant for the able-bodied persons only, the disabled individuals equally have the right to participate in sports considering the importance and relevance of the positive contributions of sports participation to human development, achievement of optimum status for both able and disabled individuals.

A physically challenged person is one having a physical disability or impairment, especially one that limits mobility (Wikipedia, 2014):Any impairment which limits the physical function of limbs, bones, or gross motor ability is a physical impairment, not necessarily physical disability. The social model of disability defines physical disability as manifest when impairment meets a non-universal design or programme, for example, a person who cannot climb stairs may have physical impairment of the knees when putting stress on them from an elevated position such as with climbing or descending stairs.

Participation in sports is important for the physical and emotional health of physically challenged individual. Sports can improve strength, endurance and cardiopulmonary fitness while providing companionship, a sense of achievement and a heightened self-esteem. With interest in such participation increasing, it is necessary for physicians, therapists and families of individuals with special needs to understand the pre-participation evaluation, athletic options, specialized equipment and sport-specific risks. Recommendations that provide guidelines for safe, effective participation in sports are currently available for common congenital and developmental disabilities such as Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, myelodysplasia, haemophilia, congenital amputations, and arthritic disorders.

Ibraheem and Jimoh (2010) quoting Awosika's (1999) submits that, there should be serious disagreement with the policy of excusing the special people from participating in physical activities and sports, saying that the policy is based on the mistake or misconception that such individuals are being protected. But in reality, the disabled students are being deprived the right to achieve the fullest possible development of which they are capable. Physically challenged individuals have the same basic needs and similar desires as any other individual. Physical activity is just as necessary, if not more so, for the physically challenged individual. It builds strength and endurance, develops coordination and control and helps control weight, boosts self-esteem and helps teach coping skills necessary to conquer shortcomings.

The primary goals for increasing physical activities in individuals with disabilities are to reverse deconditioning secondary to impaired mobility, optimize physical functioning and enhance overall wellbeing. Regular physical activity is essential for the maintenance of normal muscle strength, flexibility, joint structure and function and may slow the functional decline often associated with disabling conditions.

Sports participation enhances the psychological well-being of individuals with disabilities through the provision of opportunities to form friendships, express creativity, develop self-identity

and foster meaning and purpose in life. Special Olympics participants show heightened self-esteem, perceived physical competence and peer acceptance when compared to non-participants.

The focus of this study therefore is to determine predictive variables as correlate of active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.

Statement of the Problem

Parents find it difficult to agree that physically challenged children should actively take part in sports. They assume that involvement in sports will cause more physical harm than good to the disabled child. Sports have been shown as one that brings people together in unity because of its ethical values as a result of individuals participation. Although sports are generally assumed to be engaged in by the able person, the physically challenged have seemed to be left out of participating in sports as a result of their conditions certain disabilities. The inability of the disabled person to fit into the normal life of people that are not challenged poses a lot of problem. Awosika (1999) posited that there should be serious disagreement with the policy of excusing the special people from participating in physical activities and sports, saying that the policy is based on the mistake or misconception that such individuals are being protected. But in reality, the disabled students are being deprived the right to achieve the fullest possible development of which they are capable. Physically challenged individuals have the same basic needs and similar desires as any other individual.

The level of support by family members to encourage the physically challenged individuals to be involved in active sports participation is on the decline. The needed talents to replace the aging athletes in paralympics is fast diminishing. The environmental barriers created around the physically challenged individuals in the communities' poses threat to the survival of special athletes in special sports.

Thus, the researcher therefore intends to focus on how individual's functional ability, family participation, family income, supportive relationship and parents perception of environment barriers have any correlation with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals. In the study, the following research questions were answered:

1. Will individuals' functional ability have any relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals?
2. Will family participation have any relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals?
3. Will family income have any relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals?
4. Will supportive relationships for the physically challenged individuals have any relationship with active participation in sports?
5. Will parents' perception of environmental barriers have any correlation with active participation in sports among physically challenged individuals?

Research Hypotheses

These stated hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. Individuals' functional ability will have no significant relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.
2. Family participation will have no significant relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.
3. Family income will have no significant relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.
4. Supportive relationships for the physically challenged individual will have no significant relationship with active sports participation.

5. Parents' perception of environmental barriers will have no significant correlation with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals?

Research Methodology

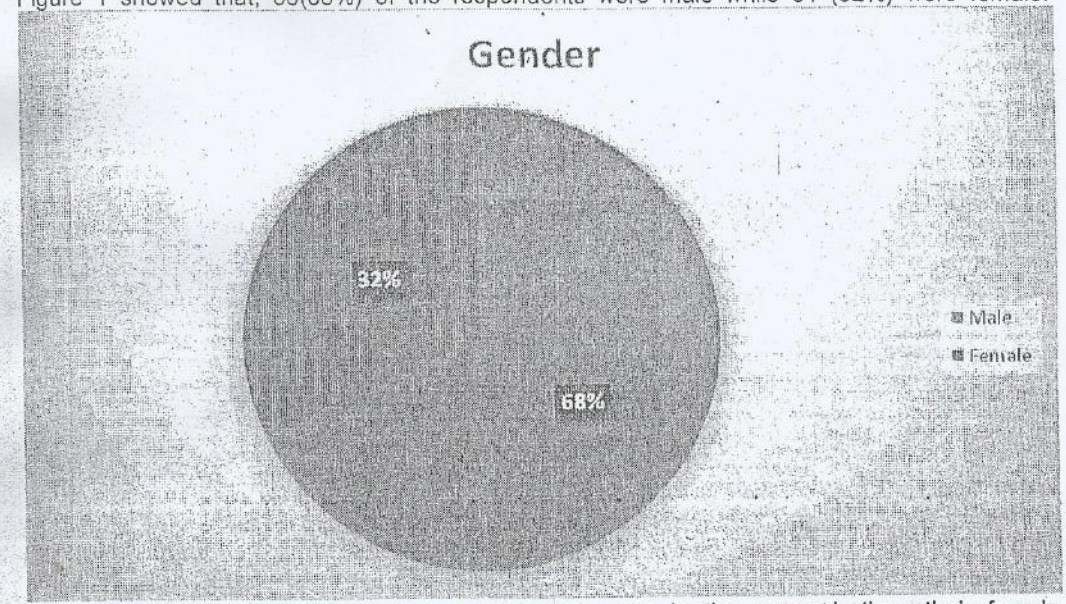
The population studied comprised male and female physically challenged individuals in Lagos State. The study was delimited to athletes that train regularly at the National Stadium, Surulere, Lagos. The sample of the population used for the study was one hundred (100) respondents. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in the selection of respondents for the study. The survey research method was used for the study. The researcher used a self-developed and validated questionnaire titled Predictive Variables of Active Sports Participation Among Physically Challenged Individuals. (PVSPPCQ). The self-developed questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection indicating predictive variables such as functional ability, family participation, family income, supportive relationship and parents' perception of environmental barriers. The content and face validity of the instrument was ascertained while the test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument at 0.89 which was highly reliable. The instrument was personally administered to the sampled respondents at their training venue in the stadium, with the support of four trained research assistants. The questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents after completion. The data generated were coded and subjected to analysis using the Pearson (r) statistical tool, while the simple percentage and pie chart was used to explain the demographic information.

Results

Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Figure 1. Distribution of respondents according to gender.

Figure 1 showed that, 66(68%) of the respondents were male while 31 (32%) were female.



This showed that, male respondents participated more in the research than their female counterpart.

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents according to marital status

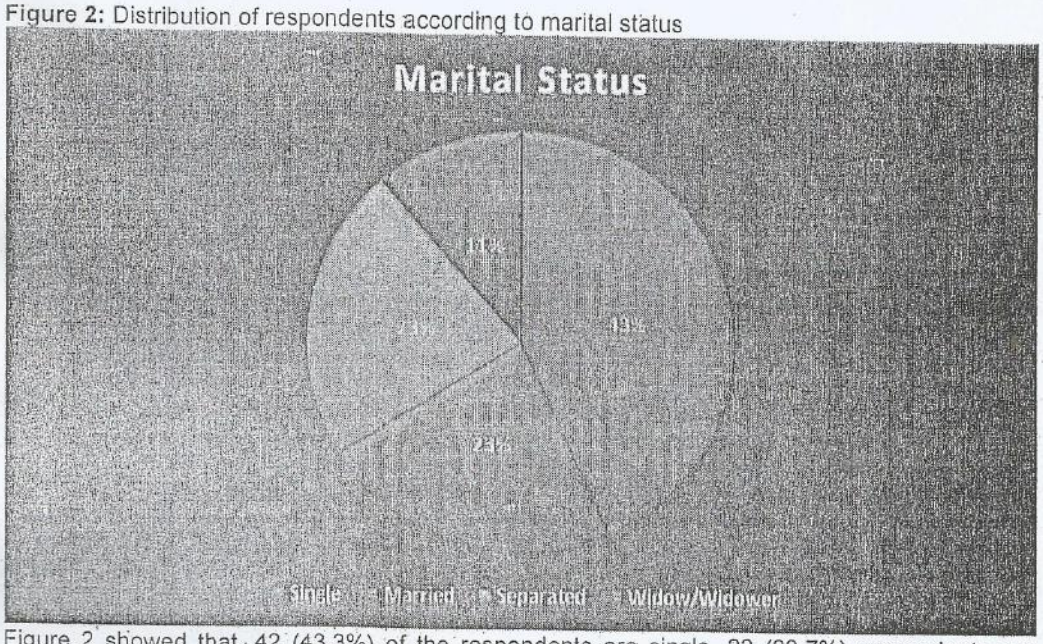


Figure 2 showed that, 42 (43.3%) of the respondents are single, 22 (22.7%) respondents are married and another 22(22.7%) respondents are separated while, 11(11.3%) respondents are either widows or widowers. This implies that there are more young people in the organization.

Figure 3: Distribution of respondents according to age

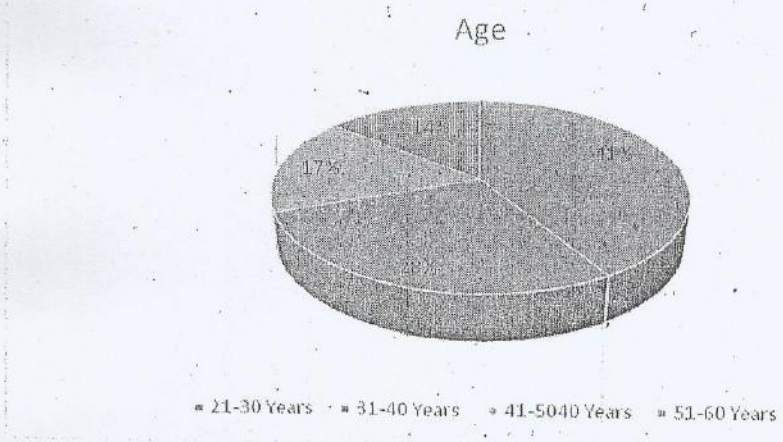


Figure 3 showed that, 40(41.2%) respondents are between 21-30yrs; 27 (27.8%) respondents are in the 31-40yrs age range, 16 (16.5%) respondent are from 41-50yrs, while 14 (14.4%) respondents are between 51-50yrs.

Figure 4: Distribution of respondents according to educational background

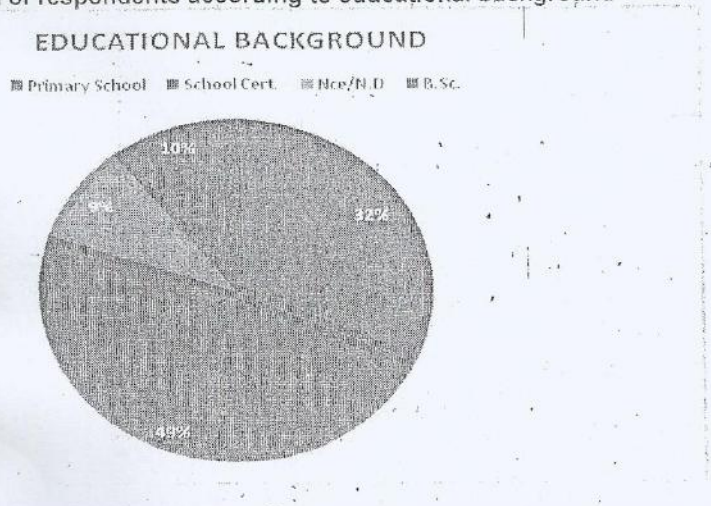


Figure 4 showed that, 31 (32%) of the respondents had Primary school education, 47 (49%) of the respondents had secondary School certificate (SSCE), 9 (9%) of the respondents had N.C.E. and 10 (10%) had B.Sc. education.

Hypotheses 1 states that individuals' functional ability will have no significant relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals. In testing this hypothesis, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), Pearson r' was used at 0.01 level of significance. The result is presented in Table1.

Table 1: Relationship between Individual's Functional Ability and Physically Challenged Individuals in Active Sports Participation.

		Individuals' functional ability	Physically challenged individuals
Individuals' functional Ability	Pearson Correlation	1	.850**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	97	97
Physically Challenged Individuals	Pearson Correlation	.850**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	97	97

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)***

The Pearson correlation coefficient above reveals that, there is a positive and significant relationship between individuals' functional ability and physically challenged individuals. This is shown by the Pearson correlation of 0.835** tested at 0.01 level of significance. Also, the correlation shows a gap of 0.150. A change in one variable is strongly correlated with change in

the second variable. For this reason, it can be concluded that individuals' functional ability h significant influence on active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.

Hypothesis 2 states that, family participation will have no significant relationship with acti sports participation among physically challenged individuals. In testing this hypothesis, t Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), Pearson r' was used, at 0.01 level significance. The result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Relationship Between Family Participation and Physically Challenged Individual in Active Sports Participation

		Family participation	Physically challenged individuals
Family participation	Pearson Correlation	1	.814*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00(
	N	97	9
physically challenged individuals	Pearson Correlation	.814**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	97	9

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)***

The Pearson correlation coefficient above reveals that, there is a positive and significa relationship between Family participation and physically challenged individuals. This is shown b the Pearson correlation of 0.835** tested at 0.01 level of significance. Also, the correlation shov a gap of 0.186. A change in one variable is strongly correlated with change in the secor variable. For this reason, it can be concluded that family participation have significant influenc on active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.

Hypothesis 3 states that, family income will have no significant relationship with active spor participation among physically challenged individuals. In testing this hypothesis, the Pearsc Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), Pearson r' was used at 0.01 level significance. The result is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between Family Income and Physically Challenged Individual Active Participation in Sports

		Family Income	Physically challenged individuals
Family Income	Pearson Correlation	1	.924**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	97	97
physically challenged individuals	Pearson Correlation	.924**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	97	97

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)***

The Pearson correlation coefficient above reveals that, there is a positive and significant relationship between Family income and physically challenged individuals. This is shown by the Pearson correlation of 0.924** tested at 0.01 level of significance. Also the correlation shows a gap of 0.076. A change in one variable is strongly correlated with change in the second variable. For this reason, it can be concluded that family income have significant relationship on active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.

Hypothesis 4 states that, supportive relationships for the physically challenged individual will have no significant relationship with active sports participation. In testing this hypothesis, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), Pearson r' was used at 0.01 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Relationship Between Supportive Relationship and Physically Challenged Individuals Participation in Active Sports

		Supportive Relationships	Supportive Relationship
Supportive Relationships	Pearson Correlation	1	.835**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	97	97
physically challenged individuals	Pearson Correlation	.835**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	97	97

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)***

The Pearson correlation coefficient above reveals that, there is a positive and significant relationship between supportive relationship and physically challenged individuals. This is shown by the Pearson correlation of 0.835** tested at 0.01 level of significance. Also the correlation shows a gap of 0.165. A change in one variable is strongly correlated with change in the second variable. For this reason, it can be concluded that supportive relationships for the individual have significant relationship with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.

Hypothesis 5 states that, parents' perception of environmental barriers will have no significant correlation with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals. In testing this hypothesis, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), Pearson r' was used, at 0.01 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation Between Parents Perception and Physically Challenged Individuals Participation in Active Sports

		Parents Perception	Physically challenged individuals
Parents Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.741**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	97	97
Physically challenged individuals	Pearson Correlation	.741**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	97	97

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)***

The Pearson correlation coefficient above reveals that, there is a positive and significant relationship between parents' perception and physically challenged individuals. This is shown by the Pearson correlation of 0.741** tested at 0.01 level of significance. Also, the correlation shows a gap of 0.259. A change in one variable is strongly correlated with change in the second variable. For this reason, it can be concluded that parent's perception for environmental barriers have significant correlation on active sports participation among physically challenged individuals.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one result showed that, there is a positive and significant relationship between individuals' functional ability and physically challenged individual's active participation in sports. One of the most influential internal barriers addressed in the literature is the attitude and motivation of people with disability, particularly self- consciousness and low level confidence (Arthur and Finch, 1999). This lack of confidence and self- esteem has been reported to manifest feeling different from majority of the population, feeling unable to fit in at a sporting facility and self- consciousness or lack of confidence in asking for help and assistance in a sporting environment. A fear of failure on the part of the person with the disability can present another type of internal barrier particularly in the case of people who have been newly struck with disability and with low self- esteem.

Hypothesis two result revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Family participation and physically challenged individual's active participation in sports. Not having someone to go with to the gym or sporting facility is another barrier (DePauw and Gavron, 1995). According to Arthur and Finch (1999), this poses a greater problem for those people with disability who need some kind of physical or oral help with communicating or visual assistance or moral support. The physically disabled that have family members that encourage and help them out, to participate in sports actively.

Hypothesis three result showed that, there is a positive and significant relationship between Family income and physically challenged individual's active participation in sports. This finding is in line with Arthur and Finch (1999) who found that while financial status was not a major deterrent to taking part in physical activity, choice of activity and frequency of participation were restricted because of cost but most individual athletes with enough family income recreate and participate actively in sports leading to representing the country in competitions.

Hypothesis four result showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between supportive relationship and physically challenged individual's active participation in sports. The influence of family and friends in terms of providing practical assistance and moral support has been shown to affect the confidence and self- esteem of people with disability. Arthur and Finch (1999) in their study reported that, even the presence of a family dog could increase confidence levels. Disability sports groups have been highlighted as an influence on confidence, in terms of their ability to offer accessible facilities and to instill a sense of identity. Relations that support their children end up having individuals interest strengthened in sports.

Hypothesis five results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between parents' perception of environmental barriers and physically challenged individuals active participation in sports. This study supports the finding of Carver, Timperio and Crawford (2008) who pointed out that, parental perception of sidewalk and street safety was the strongest predictor of active participation in sports by the physically challenged while the dimension of fear of strangers, crime and traffic safety was not a significant contributor. Numerous studies have shown that restrictions on physically challenged individuals are mostly due to parental concern about road safety and about strangers and social dangers. Though when confidence level of the physically challenge grows he participates actively in sports.

Conclusion

In view of the findings, the following conclusions were made:
Individuals' functional ability, family participation, family income and supportive relationships correlated with active sports participation among physically challenged individuals in Lagos communities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions from this research finding, the following recommendations were made:

1. that families play a vital role in enhancing level of participation in sports among the physically challenged individuals.
2. that parents should encourage their physically challenged children to engage in sports by also making time to participate with them.
3. that families of physically challenged individuals should engage in more recreation and sports activities to serve as a moral booster to them.
4. that families should also encourage sports participation by funding their wards in situations where they have to buy certain sports kits or go to sporting arena to engage in sports e.g. stadiums
5. that friends and teachers of the physically challenged should also provide and encourage supportive relationships, and a feeling of togetherness that are linked to individual preferences for activities.
6. The environment provided should be adequate and friendly for the normal and physically challenge individuals. During constriction of facilities they should be considered.

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