

Original Article

Investigation into Gender Differences among Undergraduate Students Participation in Sporting Activities in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma

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Abstract: This study investigated gender differences among undergraduate students participation in sporting activities in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma, Nigeria. The study used descriptive design. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 250 subjects from 10 departments. Self-developed structured and validated like-type questionnaire was used to collect the data. The data were analysed with inferential statistics. The results showed that most female students do not participate in sporting activities regularly and adequately. The contributing factors include facilities and equipment being inadequate, lack of incentives and co-operation from lectures, lack of qualified and adequate personnel and time factor greatly affected the participation level of students in sporting activities in the university. The results were discussed; conclusion drawn and recommendations that will assist in encouraging students enhanced participation level in sporting activities were preferred.

Keywords: Sporting Activities, Gender Difference, Undergraduates.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ambrose Ali University (A.A.U) Ekpoma like any other higher institution of learning is a community of its own composed of academic, non-academic and students of various grades. The students are the bulk of the total population in the university community. This group is made up of diploma undergraduate and post graduate students with the undergraduates consisting the bulk. They are within the age range of 19 and 30 years plus of both male and female gender full of energy and wisdom. These crops of students are very prepared to use the energy in various areas like sports and other social activities apart from their academics.

The study therefore is focused on the undergraduate's participation in sporting activities. Sports and physical education activities in general are developing and expanding with high participation boom in most tertiary educational institutions. There is therefore the need for greater efficiency and excellence from the school authority in this direction. Omoruan (1996), in his write up, indicated the human body is the habitat of the soul and mind supporting the popular saying that a "sound mind is found in a sound body". In other to make the soul and body sound through sporting activities, one of the policies in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma, Nigeria is that in every new session there are charges for sports as part of the students school fees for the purpose of providing sporting facilities and equipment to enable high level participation of students and other community members in the recreational activities of their choices.

Also, to improve and develop the individual student's skills in various fields to select athletes to represent the school during the Nigeria Universities Games, the school authority declares every Wednesday lecture free as from 12noon compulsorily to pave way for active participation in sporting activities. This move supports the adage which says "all work and no play make Jack a dull boy", which implies that academic activities should be interjected with sporting activities.

According to Igbanugo (2003), sports is an institutionalized competitive activity that involves various physical exertions or the use of relatively complex physical skills by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of intrinsic satisfaction associated with the activity itself and the external rewards earned through participation. Often sports are thought to be a set of specific competitive physical activities based on elements of play games and contest. From this perspective sports can be formally defined as structured, goal oriented, competitive, contest-based and lucid physical activities. However, for mass participation of students in sporting activities, such activities should be more of recreational in nature. Numerous authors and organizations have cited the potential benefits of participation in sports and physical activity programmes recreational or



competitive (Seefeldt Vogel, 1986, American Academy of paediatrics, 2001; Siedentop, 2001; Darst & Panarazi, 2002). A representative list of such benefits developed by World Health Organisation (1998) includes: improvement in physical and social growth and maturation as well as for socialization, self-esteem, self-perception and psychological well-being. It also guarantees the establishment of a basis for a healthy lifestyle and lifelong commitment to physical activity.

In view of this, Universities establish sports councils in order to meet the sporting needs of the students. Personnel, such as coaches and administrative officers, are also employed and a chairman appointed by school authority to oversee the activities of the Sports Council. Such a body recommends and makes all necessary demands from the school authority on sports matters. These laid down structure and organizational chart are geared toward improving and developing efficient participation and performance of students in sports competitions and recreational activities. However, there are several factor which exert considerable amount of influence on the degree of students participation and effectiveness in the university sports activities. Some of such factors hinge on: facilities, equipment, personnel, training schedule, instructional, explicit and implicit sport policies and instructional climate which could be in favour or against students' participation in sports (Udoh, 1986, Odejide, 1992).

Sports participation at the university equips the individual students with skill and engages many to eschew evil acts or vices. However friends and acquaintance are made through sports socialization. It is against this backdrop that the researcher decided to investigate into students' participation level in sporting activities in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma.

A. Statement of the Problem

It is obvious that participation of students in sporting and other recreational activities involves adequate provision of sports facilities and equipment, personnel, finance and incentives (accommodation, transportation, etc) as well as lecturers' co-operation to meet the intra and extra-mural needs of the students. More often than not the expected level of students' active participation in sporting and recreational activities is thwarted by such factorial requirements that are either provided inadequately or not at all. This state of neglect poses a threat to students' active participation in sporting and recreational activities. It is on this basis that the need to investigate students' level of participation in sporting and recreational activities becomes necessary. Hence, this informed the researcher to embark on the present study.

B. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- Do male and female students of Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma differ in participation in sports actively?
- Does the university authority provide enough sports facilities and equipment to enable male and female students participate differently in sports actively?
- Does the university authority give differential incentives male and female student athletes of Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma?
- Are there enough qualified sports personnel in Ambrose Ali University to effectively organise sports programmes differently for male and female students?
- Does lecturers' co-operation with students on their sports participation in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma differently influence male and female level of participation?

C. Hypotheses

The hypotheses tested in this study are:

- ❖ Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma male and female students do not significantly differ in their participation in sports.
- ❖ Provision of facilities and equipment will not significantly affect participation level of Ambrose Ali University male and female students in sporting activities.
- ❖ Provision of incentives to Ambrose Ali University male and female students will not significantly differ in the participation level in sporting activities.
- ❖ Lecturers' co-operation will not have any significant on Ambrose Ali University male and female students' participation in sporting activities.
- ❖ Provision of qualified and adequate sports personnel will not significantly differ in influencing Ambrose Ali University male and female students' level of participation in sporting activities.

II. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive design was employed in carrying out this study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 250 subjects from a population of 1500 undergraduate students of Ambrose Ali University from the following departments; Physical and Health Education, Sociology, Mathematics, Modern Language, Microbiology, Economics Civil Engineering, Agricultural Science, Law and Vocational/Technical.

A. Instrumentation

The instrument used for collection was a self-developed, structure and Linked type questionnaire. The four point rating scale of strongly agree, disagree, and strongly disagree was used. The questionnaire was made up of 15 questions for the respondents to answer. Out of the 250 (100 percent) questionnaire forms, 242 (94.67 percent) were correctly filled and returned accordingly. 8(5.33 percent) out of 250 (100 percent) of the questionnaire forms were not returned. However, the 242 (94.67 percent) out of 250 (100 percent) sampled proved high. The instrument has a reliability index of $r=0.70$. The instruments were self-administered with help of the Director of Sports in the Department. The inferential statistics were used to analyse the data collected.

III. RESULT

The results are represented in tables 1-5.

A. Hypothesis I:

Table 1: Ambrose Ali University Ekpoma Male and Female Students Do Not Significantly Differ In Their Level in Sporting Activities

Sex	Yes	No	No of Responses	Total
Male	37(8.45)	64 (27.46)	1 (0.70)	102
Female	46 (14.79)	92 (47.18)	2 (1.44)	140
Total	83	156	3	242

From the table, a total of 83 (23.24) percent of the 242 subject agreed with the researcher and 156 (76.64 percent) of the subject 242 disagreed with the hypothesis which says that Ambrose Ali University students participate in sporting activities. While 3 (2.14 percent) which is insignificant did not respond. From the result, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. Meaning that the students of Ambrose Ali University Ekpoma do not participate in sporting activities.

B. Hypothesis II

Table 2: Provision of Facilities and Equipment Will Not Significantly Affect Participation Level of Male and Female Students in Sports

Sex	Yes	No	No of Responses	Total
Male	38 (9.15)	52 (19.01)	12 (8.45)	102
Female	55 (21.13)	81 (39.44)	4 (2.82)	140
Total	93	133	16	242

From the result got in the table above, 133 (58.45 percent) responded negatively 93 (30.28) percent of the total number of 242 responds positively while 16 (11.27 percent) of the respondents did not respond but just being neutral. By this finding, therefore, the hypothesis which stated that facilities and equipment will not have significant effect on students' participation in sporting activities in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma is rejected as majority of 133 (58.45 percent) of the 242 subject disagree with it. This means that facilities and equipment had significant effect to students' participation in sporting activities.

C. Hypothesis III:

Table 3: Provision of Incentives to Ambrose Ali University Male and Female Students Will Not Significantly Differ In Their Participation Level

Sex	Yes	No	No of responds	Total
Male	13 (9.15)	79 (20.42)	10 (7.04)	102
Female	29 (20.42)	105 (38.73)	6 (4.23)	140
Total	42	194	16	242

The table indicated the result for the hypothesis there which says that incentives will not have a significant effect on students' participation in sporting activities. From the findings, 194 (59.15percent) of the 242 respondent said no to the

hypothesis. And only 42(29.58percent) of the total number agreed with the hypothesis while 16(11.27percent) of the population was neutral. With this result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. From this analysis, it is evident that provision of incentives will affect the participation level of Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma students in sports as viewed by physical education and sports administrators in the literature and sports administrators in the literature view.

D. Hypothesis IV:

Table 4: Lecturer's Co-Operation Will Not Have Any Significant Influence on Ambrose Ali University Male and Female Students' Participation in Sports Activities

Sex	Yes	No	No of Responds	Total
Male	33(9.15)	69(27.6)	-	102
Female	49(20.42)	90(42.25)	1(0.70)	140
Total	82	129	1	242

The table above shows that 99(69.72percent) of the total number of 142 respondent do not agree in being negative and 42(29.57 percent) responded positively to the hypothesis test while 1(0.70 percent) is indifferent to the test. The null hypothesis which said that the influence of co-operations of lecturers participation is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted as it does not to go contrary to what physical education have said in the related literature review.

E. Hypothesis V:

Table 5: Provision Qualified and Adequate Sports will Not Significantly Differ in Influencing Ambrose Ali University Students' Level of Participation in Sports Activities

Sex	Yes	No	No of respondent	Total
Male	39(13.38)	56(18.331)	7(4.93)	102
Female	60(28.17)	74(30.99)	6(4.22)	140
Total	99	130	13	242

From the table, 130(49.39%) responds negatively to the text and 99(41.55%) of the 242 respondents responds positively to the hypothesis text while 13(9.15%) are indifferent in their opinion. Well, from the findings, it was clear that the null hypothesis which started that the provision of qualified and adequate sports personnel will not significantly differ in influencing Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma students' level of participation in sporting activities is rejected. The alternative hypothesis should be accepted as it is in line with the review of physical educators and sports administrators in the literature review.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study was carried out to investigate into Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma students' participation level in sports activities. A total of 250 students were randomly sampled from a population of 1500 and only 242 sampled returned their questionnaire which was used in the study. The questionnaire was administered. Data collect and analyzed with inferential statistics. The questionnaire was drawn from the hypothesis of this study. It was discovered that facilities and equipment, incentives, influence of lecturers' co-operation and provision of qualified and adequate sports personnel in the field of sports have significant impact on Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma students' participation level in sports activities. This was in agreement with what the different authors said on the various variables that they enhance and encourage participation and performance of individuals.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study, based on the finding from the data analyzed, the following conclusions were drawn

- ❖ That most students do not participate in sporting activities.
- ❖ That the provision of facilities and equipment had significant impact on students' participation level in sporting activities.
- ❖ That provision of incentives had effect on students' participation Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma.
- ❖ The lecturers' co-operation had effect on Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma students' participation in sports activities.
- ❖ That provision of qualified and adequate sports personnel had significant effect on the students' participation in sporting activities.

From what has been found out and discussed so far in this study, the following recommendation has been made. The university authority should make Physical Education compulsory course for all newly admitted students of the school as general

studies. The department of physical and health education should be in charge. Facilities and equipment should be adequately provided for mass participation. Facilities and equipment occupy a very strategic position in sports participation. Such facilities and equipment should be of good quality and high standard. Big businesses or organizations and philanthropist should be approached and encouraged to donate good and quality sports facilities and equipment for the promotion and development of sports in the university.

To encourage participation, a good policy for award should be made. When awards or incentives are given, they should be seen as a symbol of achievement and not recognised as a prize. Transports should be provided for those students that are off campus as incentive. To adequately encourage students who participated actively in sport and performed excellently in their academics should be honoured by the school authority.

Lecturers should be properly informed or educated about the importance of sports to man through lectures organized by Physical and Health Education department of the University. The Wednesday lecture free as from 12noon should be enforced and any lecture found flaunting the order by the monitoring team should be disciplined. During sports competition, the sports council should write the names of students involved to their respective head of department for onwards transmission to the lecturers to take note to give make-up test to students who missed their test done during the competition. By doing so, they are helping in promoting and developing sports in the university.

The university authority should ensure that adequately qualified, trained and dedicated sports personnel are employed to handle areas of their discipline. Such personnel adapt in sporting talents. Coaches who cannot perform their duties should be shown the way out. The authority should also provide the necessary materials and incentives as awards for the coaches as a way of boosting their morale.

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