

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN AN INCLUSIVE SETTING IN BAUCHI STATE

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the recreational activities of students with visual impairment in an inclusive setting in Bauchi state. The study was carried out through the use of an elaborated structured questionnaire and personal observation in ascertaining factors like equipment, facilities, personnel, time allotment in affecting recreational activities in three schools. The population for the study were twenty staff from special education centre Bauchi, Government Technical College Gumau and Government secondary school Toro which served as sample. The data was analysed and discussed through the use of table and percentages. The result revealed that the following hampered the provision of recreational activities at the three schools: inadequate facilities, inadequate specialist physical education teachers, inadequate equipment, limited variety of activities provided and non utilization of allotted period fully for the teaching of recreational skills. Based on the information of the study and researcher's personal observation, it could be concluded that recreation has not assumed its rightful position in the educational programme of the children with visual impairment in Bauchi state. It is therefore, suggested that Bauchi state government should send specialist physical education teachers to those three schools, budget enough money for recreational programmes at these schools.

Introduction

Recreation is an aspect of the total education of the individual that is yet to be given its due attention in our educational system.

Recreation, to most people, is either intellectual or physical, or a combination of both. For some, recreation is reading or discussing things that have been read. For others movie-going. Play-cards to others recreation means the whole range of conversation and people may be watching television or attending one or another type of sports event, then there is the recreation type of sport event then, there is the recreation that calls for more physical effort.

In Nigeria, the first major indication of the federal government's intention to be involved actively in the provision of education for special need, was given in 1974 by the then head of state, General Yakubu Gowon in his independence anniversary broadcast

to the Nation. To that effect special education unit of the Federal Ministry of Education was established in the same year and it quickly carried out seven months survey of special education facilities in Nigeria (Ogbue, 1975).

Bucher (1979), Nothing the importance of recreation activities for every one, stated that all individual should experience the joy that comes from engaging in recreational activities that fit their needs, interest and desire.

Recreational activities is essential in providing children with visual impairment opportunities for adjusting to the demands of their environment only through the senses of feeling, movement and hearing can these students learn about their physical world.

Conceptual Background of Recreational Activities

Since, children with visual impairment have been subjected to the multiple and repetitive trauma of blindness, they have a special need of the new life afforded by real recreation, and to restore this to them is one of the importance aspect of those responsible for their welfare should take good care of.

We need to be clear as to what we mean by recreation: not a series of activities designed to fill every movement of leisure time- the modern feeling that people need to be doing something "every moment is a frightening phenomenon, but activities that allow room for true leisure and contemplation and send the person backed refreshed to his living and working life.

Gray (1972), also spoke of recreation as an emotion within an individual human being that flows from a feeling of well-being and self satisfaction.

Recreation may also be viewed as a feeling of well being that comes through experiences in which an invidual receives a pleasurable and gratifying response to the use of his /her mental physical or creative powers at his leisure time.

Furthermore, an activity which is recreational to one person may not be to another, and that which recreates at one time may have a different effect at one another time depending on his /her needs. When a person is physically fatigued, he has little need for vigorous physical recreation when emotionally or mentally fatigued, he is not attracted to activities that requires heavy concentration to activities that requires concentration. Recreation usually takes the form of diversion and helps to bring one's life to balance. To some the park is a place to play, while, to others it is for beauty meditation and study of nature.

Jensen (1976), stated that the development of skills and interest in wholesome activites is fundamental to the well rounded development of the individual and to the good life. He further said that several research studies supported the claimed that people use their leisure time in the skills and interest developed early in life. Recreational teachers and learner's have strong obligation's to be teacher's of skills at a level of excellence to both youths and adults cultivating in them taste of beauty in art, music, dance and literature and helping them to achieve excellence in sport and games and to enjoy the beauty of nature while, maintaining a high livable environment.

From the aforementioned various opinion on what constitute recreation, its importance and that of a methodological planning programme one has to acknowledge completely, the benefit's of recreational activities to life and education of an individual of a nation and more so, to the special need individual.

Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to find out recreational activities of the students with visual impairment in an inclusive education in some selected schools in Bauchi state. Specifically, the study aimed at finding answers to the following questions.

- a. Does facilities constitute problem to recreational activities of students with visual impairment in an inclusive school?
- b. Does personnel constitute problem to recreational activities of students with visual impairment in an inclusive school?
- c. Does equipment constitute problem to recreational activities of students with visual impairment in an inclusive school?
- d. Does time allotment constitute problem to recreational activities of students with visual impairment in an inclusive school?

Significance of the Study

The outcome of the study may benefit the administrators in an inclusive school, the various communities and educational planners generally responsible for the education of normal and students with visual impairment in Bauchi state.

The recommendation of this study may enable the teachers in educational institutions that educate sighted students and students with visual impairment individual to appreciate the need of recreational activities of the sighted and students with visual impairment. Use of their physical education periods to impart recreational skills of the various schools under study.

Research Design

The design for this study was the descriptive survey research. It was chosen because it helped to describe the situation the researcher studied.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was made up of teachers, Game masters and principals in the 3 Schools thus were 1. Special Education centre Bauchi, Govt. Technical Collge Gumau and Govt. Secondary School Toro (former Toro Teacher's College) The whole population also served as the sample.

Population of staff /Teachers Game masters and The 3 Principals of the schools.

School	Staff	Percentage
i. Special Education Center Bauchi	7	35
ii. Govt. Technical College Gumel	7	35
iii. Govt. Secondary School Toro	6	30
Total	20	100%

Research Instruments

The major instrument for the study was an elaborated structured questionnaire as well as personal observation of the three schools used by the researcher.

The structured questionnaire used was developed by the researcher with the necessary corrections and guidance from specialist in the area of recreation activities. The questionnaire sought information on factors affecting recreation activities of student with visual impairment and sighted students in some selected inclusive setting in Bauch State.

It was sub-divided into these categories

- a. Personal data (with 8 items)
- b. Facilities data (with 4 items)
- c. Equipment data (with 5 items)
- d. Personnel data (with 4 items)
- e. Time allotment data (with 3 items)

These were all “fixed alternatives” or limited stated alternatives to questionnaire item depicting three degree of approval Agree, Disagree and I can’t say f. General (with 2 items) These were designed to permit a free responses from the respondents rather than one limited to stated alternatives.

Description of Data Analysis

For the purpose of data analysis the various answers given by the respondents to the different questionnaire questions were analysed using tables and percentage (%) the questionnaire items that did not require percentage were given through explanation while, results of general observations of the investigator considered these approaches appropriate in solving the problem at hand

General (1)

The researcher stated under General items (1) that the respondents should state any other factors constituting problems to recreational activities programmes in the three schools They gave a lot of factors which the respondents viewed as other factors which were constituting problems to recreational activities

- a. Some of the respondents claimed that lack of fund also constituted problem
- b. Some viewed lack of encouragement from the state government was another problem to the 3 schools.

- c. Some of the respondents stated that lack of seriousness from the students, lack of devotion to duty on part of the teachers, the school authority negative attitude towards sports and recreational activities.
- d. Some of the respondents were of the opinion that parental attitudes towards recreational activities is another factors because, some parents doesn't allowed their children to participate in recreational activities programme.

General (II)

Under the general item (ii) the researcher stated that the respondents should state any other ways) of solving the problems affecting recreational activities programme of the three schools.

- (i) Some of the respondents were of the opinion that raising fund through launching to support the recreational activities programme
- (ii) Some were of the opinion that the authority concern like state government should provide enough financial support, encouragement and adequate facilities to the school.
- (iii) Some of the respondents stated that maintenance of facilities and equipment may solve many problems

General Observation

In addition to responses to structured questionnaire distributed to the respondents to collect necessary information, personal observation in respect to the factors affecting recreational activities of the students with visual impairment and sighted students in an inclusive setting in some selected schools in Bauchi state. It was glaring that existing facilities and equipment were grossly inadequate. Oranuogo (1986), reported similar findings in his study on the problems facing teachers and students in teacher's training College Anambra state. For the special need students to benefit from recreational activities they need not only be provided with adequate facilities equipment but, modified ones to suit them. It was evident that two of the schools did not have specialist physical educator. The effect of this can best be imagined bearing in mind that the visually impaired not only need teachers of recreational activities, they are better equipped with different approaches to handle the recreational needs of the special need. The place of recreation as a social forces for well –being in modern life is well established so, the exceptional individuals both need and can benefit from recreational like any one else. This can only be achieved if the visually impaired are provided with specialist physical educators.

It was discovered that only one school held games competition once in a year, this situation could be attributed to the fact there were no specialist teachers who should know the importance of competitive activities to both the sighted and the visually impaired. Furst (1986) when trying to improve the physical characteristics of a group of multiple special need students was able to report that by means of competitive activities

the interest of the student was stimulated, cooperation was improved and there was an increased desire to win. He noted that members of the group began to interact and to express greater interest in each other. Also Furst (1992) stated in life, it is essential to be a good loser as well as good winner and principles such as these are most easily taught through competitive stage.

The researcher found out that time allotment was not a major problem but, the utilization of the period allotted. The researcher in the course of his observation found that some teachers of special education centre Bauchi could not tell without reference to the time table, the period they were supposed to have recreational activities. This situation could not have arisen, if they had been utilizing the periods for teaching recreational skills. By so doing, they were depriving their students of early acquisition of the skills that they will require later in life. Also, Cratty (1985), noted that teaching specific sport skills and recreational activities can often lead to competences which in turn may help the students to formulate an improved self concept and otherwise to deal more effectively with himself and with others.

Suggestions and Recommendations

In view of this therefore, the researcher makes the following suggestions and recommendations that will be of great benefit in solving the problems

- (i) In most of the problems of the three schools hinge on finance, the Govt should budget enough money for the provision of recreational facilities and equipment especially, in this decade for the special need.
- (ii) The administration of the three schools should also see that the existing facilities and equipment are preserved and made maximum use of
- (iii) The school had no qualified teachers for recreational activities, the administrators of these school should appeal to the Bauchi state Government to provide specialist physical education teachers as a matter of urgency.
- (iv) There should also be Bauchi state Government sponsored seminars and symposia to enable the non specialist teachers handling these students to perform better with regards to the provision of recreation activities to these students
- (v) The Bauchi State Ministry of Education should supervise the recreational programme of these schools regularly.
- (vi) The principal(s) of these schools should supervised more closely the utilization of the period allotted for the teaching of recreational skills.
- (vii) The individuals and community at large should come to the aid of these schools in terms of finance materials and morale boosting. Non Governmental Organisation should also help these schools.

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