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**CHOICES AND THEIR FACTORS IN INTRAMURAL AND EXTRAMURAL SPORTS
OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OJO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF
LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

One of the goals of intramural and extramural sports in schools is to provide opportunity for students to participate in activities of their choice. Such sports should be of health and wellness benefits to participants and to assist the nation in sports development. This study investigated intramural and extramural sports choices and factors that inform the choice among public secondary school students in Ojo local government area of Lagos state Nigeria. 1000 senior secondary school students from ten schools participated in the study and a validated questionnaire with reliability of 0.67 was used for data collection. the data collected were analyzed using frequency, percentage and component bar chart. Findings revealed that soccer, track and field, basketball and table tennis were the major intramural and extramural sports of choice among the students. Major factors responsible for these choices include personal interest of the students, availability of facilities and equipment, popularity of the sports and public interest. It was concluded and recommended that since the major sports that the students are involved in are soccer, track, basketball and table tennis, government and other stakeholders should assist school to make available and improve on the available sports facilities and equipment, as this will arouse interest of students in various sports.

INTRODUCTION

Sports represent an integral part of educational programme that contributes to student's welfare and potential (Onifade, 1999). Intramural and Extramural sports programmes however are part of the school physical education programme that is tailored towards the ability and skills of the entire student body (Chilaka, 2001). They consist of voluntary participation in games and sports. Intramural sports are within a single school while extramural sports bring together participation from several institutions.

Omolawon (2003) mentions that the ultimate goal of Intramural sport programmes is to provide opportunity for all students to participate in activities of their choice; that the philosophy of any Intramural programme should be to provide students with useful activities to occupy their leisure hours profitably. Omolawon further mentions that an extramural sport which is an extension of intramural competitions will afford great opportunity for students who participate in them to meet new faces, make new friends and establish new friendly relationship among one another.

Similarly, Chilaka (2001) points out that Intramural and extramural sport help participants to develop various strategies and spirit of cooperation as well as building the much desired qualities of life through exposure to the basic elements of social life, human relationship and dynamics of living. Health and fitness benefits that students gain from involvement in these sports are of greater values. Salami (2003), asserts that with good physical education and sports programmes in schools, solid foundation could be laid for good sports development. Salami identifies some contributions of physical education as well as intramural and extramural sports to school sports and sports of a nation. These include:

1. Discovery of talents in various sports
2. Opportunity to choose sports of interest.
3. Learning of fundamental skills in sports

4. Awareness of rules and regulations and officiating in sports and games
5. Opportunity for mass participation in sports
6. Ability and opportunity to be in many sports
7. Knowledge of one's capability; and
8. Foundation for cooperation and good sportsmanship

With these enormous benefits it is obvious that no meaningful educational programme can take place without sound intramural and extramural sports programme. Omolawon (2003) therefore suggests that students need to be encouraged to identify themselves with sports which they will have to participate in on regular basis. The suggestion implies that intramural and extramural sports programmes must give opportunity to students to participate in various sports. From observations, however, attention is not evenly secured by all sports thus, there is always concentration on certain sports, while some others have been suffering neglect.

This study was to identify sports of choice in intramural and extramural sports among secondary school students in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State Nigeria, and factors that are responsible for these choices. Answers were sought for the following research questions:

1. What sports are the choices of students in schools intramural and extramural programmes?
2. What factors informed the choices of sports by students in schools intramural and extramural programmes?

METHODS

The population of this study includes all secondary school students in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. 1000 senior secondary school students were selected from 10

public schools at an average of 100 students per school, using simple random sampling technique. 568(56.8%) of participants were male students, while 432(43.2%) were female students. The ages of the students ranged from 12 and 18 years. The main instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire that had two sections, A and B. Section A dealt with demographic data of participants, and these included age, sex and class, while section B sought information on students' sports of choice in intramural and extramural programmes and the factors responsible for such choices. The questionnaire was developed on Yes and No option responses. It was served to three colleagues for validation and was further subjected to test-retest correlation reliability method that yielded a value of $r=0.67$.

The administration of study's instrument was carried out within the premises of the selected schools during school hours after seeking the consent of the school authorities and participants. Participants were allowed to respond to items on the questionnaire personally without interference from other students or external bodies. All administered copies of the questionnaire were retrieved immediately in the field.

The data collected, however were analyzed using simple percentages. These were further described using pictorial analytical tool of component bar charts.

**Results Table 1: Frequency and percentage analysis of data on students sports of choice.
(N=1000)**

Sports	Yes (%)	No (%)
Track and Field	762(76.2)	238(23.8)
Soccer	948(94.8)	052(5.2)
Volleyball	476(47.6)	524(52.4)
Basketball	682(68.2)	318(31.8)
Table tennis	601(60.1)	399(39.9)
Tennis	231(23.1)	769(76.9)
Swimming	157(15.7)	843(84.3)
Handball	113(11.3)	887(88.7)
Badminton	129(12.9)	871(87.1)
Hockey	058(5.8)	942(94.2)
Cricket	017(1.7)	983(98.3)
Combat Sports	312(31.2)	688(68.8)

Results presented in Table 1 show that soccer (94.8%) and track and field (76.2%) received greatest percentage of choice among the students. Basketball (68.2%) and table tennis (60.1%) also were chosen above average. The table further reveals that cricket received the least attention among the students (1.7%); and other sports of less attention were hockey (5.8%), handball (11.3%) badminton (12.9) and swimming (15.7%).

Table 2: Frequency and percentage analysis of data on factors of intramural and extramural sports choice.

Factors	Yes (%)	No (%)
Availability of facilities and equipment	966(96.6)	034(3.4)
Good understanding of skills in sports	938(93.8)	062(6.2)
Personal interest in the sports	911(91.1)	009(0.9)
Peer group influence	679(67.9)	321(32.1)
Regular organization of training/competition of the sports in schools	717(71.7)	283(28.3)
Popularity/public interest in the sports	835(83.5)	165(16.5)

Results presented in Table 2 shows that all factors identified to influence students choices of intramural and extramural sports scored far above average. Personal interest of the students recorded the highest percentage (99.1%). This was followed by availability of facilities and equipment (96.6%) and good understanding and skills in the sports (93.8%). Peer group influence (67.9%) although ranked lowest in the table, but was still above average.

DISCUSSION

Findings of this study revealed that soccer, track and field, basketball and table tennis have the greatest percentage of choice among the students for intramural and extramural sports while cricket, hockey, handball, badminton and swimming received the lowest attention (see table 1). This finding is similar to that of Adeogun and Setonji (2002) who reported that the most preferred activities for the primary school pupils was playing games like soccer, basketball and athletics (i.e. track and field). Ayodabo, Dansu and Uchegbu (2005) also reported similar

finding. This study further revealed that major among the factors that are responsible for the choices of the students were their personal interest in the sports (see table 2). Previous findings have shown that interest of children is a significant factor in sports preference and choice (Ayodabo, Dansu & Uchegbu; Adeogun & Setonji, 2002). Availability of sports facilities and equipment has also been mentioned as choice-factor in this study. According to Omidiran and Idou (1999) in good schools where facilities and equipment are adequate as much as 80% to 90% of students may be involved in intramural and extramural activities. Consequently, Omidiran and Idou pointed out that the serious lack of facilities in most Nigeria public schools discourages the organization and involvement of students in intramural and extramural sports. Consequently, the student's energy, exuberance and potentials skills are wasted and talents remain undiscovered and/or poorly developed. Some previous studies have also reported serious inadequacy of major sports facilities and equipment in Nigerian secondary schools (Okuneye & Dansu, 2005; Ayodabo, Idowu & Dansu, 2004).

This study further revealed that good understanding and good skills are also factors in the choice of sports among the students. Adeogun and Setonji (2002) mentioned that a child must have learned a skill before attempting that skill. This implies that it is what you understand and knows how to do that you will likely involve in. Popularity and public interest in specific sports are also revealed as major factors of intramural and extramural sports choice among the students. This is not a surprise; the sports that ranked high in this study are the most popular sports both locally and internationally.

Other factors that influence sports of choice of students, as revealed in this study include peer group influence and regular organization of training and competitions of specific sports in schools. According to Chilaka (2001), peer group influence have significant role to play in children's preference for sports. Omidiran and Idou (1999) are also of the opinion that there should be regular organization of intramural and extramural activities in various sports. Since participation is voluntary, the programme should be well organized to arouse interest of students and sustain their enthusiasms.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It can be concluded in this study that major sports such as soccer, track, basketball and table tennis are choices of secondary school students in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria as intramural and extramural sports. Other sports like cricket, hockey, handball, badminton and swimming received low attention of the students. Factors responsible for the choices of the students in sports include personal interest of the students in sport of choice, availability of facilities and equipment for playing the sports,, good understanding and skills in the sports, popularity and public interest, peer group influence, and regular organization of training and competitions of sports in schools.

Based on these conclusions, the researchers recommend that:

1. Government and other stakeholders should assist school to make available and improve on the available sports facilities and equipment, as this will arouse interest of students in various sports.
2. Practical physical education teaching should be intensified in schools, since it is one of the major avenues through which students learn fundamental skills in various sports.
3. Schools sports committee should endeavour to organize intramural and extramural sports on regular basis. Such organization should focus on many sports as possible, so as not to develop certain sports at the detriment of others.
4. Ministries of sports at both federal and states levels, and various sports associations should design strategies to arouse public interest in major sports that do not have or have less public acceptance. This will influence the choice and level of participation of students in such sports to a greater length.

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