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**Influence of Gender on Recreational Participation. A
Critical Literature Review**



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Influence of Gender on Recreational Participation. A Critical Literature Review

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Abstract

Purpose: Recreation is an intentional activity geared towards accomplishment of self and social gains including refurbishment and collective connectivity. The overall objective of this study was to examine influence of gender on recreational participation. A critical literature review

Methodology: The paper used a desk study review methodology where relevant empirical literature was reviewed to identify main themes and to extract knowledge gaps.

Findings: Music followed by singing and dancing while the least popular indoor recreational activity was aerobics and snooker/pool. The most popular outdoor recreational activity was walking while the least popular outdoor recreational activity for women was swimming and playing cards. Frequency of participation in both indoor and outdoor recreational activities by women was influenced by the age. Frequency of participation in both indoor and outdoor recreational activities was not influenced by the family size or the number of children. Frequency of participation in the indoor and outdoor recreational activities by women was not influenced by their monthly income. The family size was not a determining factor for participation in both indoor and outdoor recreational activities

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: This study recommended that the county government should set aside land for developing various recreational facilities within the informal settlement areas to be accessed by all residents to mitigate time constraints; for example, construction of swimming pools since swimming is reported as the least popular outdoor activity.

Keywords: *Influence, Gender, Recreational, Participation.*

INTRODUCTION

Bannman (2017), indicates that participation in varied recreational activities can promote continuous participation in arts and culture which can lead to growth in creativity, selfexpression which can later be a source of income due to acquisition of new skills. Participation in an interesting sport draws the mind off other undesirable activities and this cultivates positive thoughts. Leisure can provide the global population with opportunities to live a valuable and meaningful life, which can help improve quality of life (Iwasaki, 2016). That is why participation in recreational activities is crucial to everyone for it leads to one living a fuller life. A survey conducted in Canada by Lemaitre (2015) displayed the likelihood of heart attack by 50% among women who were past menopause and participated in minor physical exercises. Risk of stroke can be reduced by improving the level of participation in physical activities (Coloquiri, 2017).

Higher engagement in physical activity has extremely better impact on the management of diabetes and it seems to give forth prospective value in the primary prevention on Type II diabetes. According to the World Health Organization CDC, (2017), inadequate participation in physical activities has triggered many females to suffer from diseases that are associated with inactive lifestyle. Shannon and Shaw (2015) studied women with breast cancer and reported that importance of leisure was realized and became sufficient after full management of their illness. Studies by Hutchinson, Loy, Kleiber and Dattilo (2013); Iwasaki, Mactavish and Mackay (2015); Kleiber, Hutchinson and Williams (2002) and Klitzing (2004) reported that leisure is a therapy to the people with severe or chronic stress. For adults living with a chronic illness or acquired disability, leisure participation was found to be a source of hope, giving purpose and offering a sense of belonging or recognition, and preserve a sense of competence or independence (Hutchinson et al., 2013).

Through recreational activities, a state can minimize expenses on treatment of chronic diseases and this in turn would lead to a healthy nation which translates to an efficient economy. Constant participation in recreational activities with friends enables participants to improve on their relationship and consequently leading to a peaceful life. Interestingly, Bailey and McLaren (2015) concluded that simply performing activities with others was not associated with a sense of belonging or mental health. Kelly and Freysinger (2020) argue that participation in growth enhances personal goals of health and means of building relationships. Autry (2021) pronounced experiential leisure activities to be a source of enhancing teamwork and as a way of offering personal credit and morals for girls who were termed at risk. Therefore, leisure can be fulfilled through inclusion of others and working towards oneness to meet everyone's leisure expectations but it is important to understand the relevance of the leisure options women undertake as they fulfill their personal leisure thirst.

The use of sport in structuring social inclusion is an end product of its use in reducing social segregation (Flibbert, 2020). Participation in recreational activities enables the participants to create new friends and spend more time with them, therefore, helping them to let off the catharsis

built in bad experiences. Sport adds to Canada's economy and society by skills advancing, improving citizen's health and also by building social interconnection (Conference Board of Canada, 2015). This agrees with Canadians opinions that sport leads to groups' cohesiveness, like families and which later results to family relations (Gesselman, 2020). Dance and traditional games are also considered as ways or means of fighting hindrances and barricades to interaction between groups (Krinski, 2017).

Leisure activities is an opening to link with friends, family and others undergoing similar life experiences (Mutz 2016). Lallensack (2017) reviews the part played by sport in structuring and aiding collective, public inclusion and encompassing nationality. This is similar to Putnam's (2020) idea of „societal assets“. Societies with healthy communal investment have strong public links, natural belonging and oneness, reliance on one another and backing from the others. This implies that sports aid in community development (Coalter, 2015). Lallensack (2017) note that sport programme contribute to progress of both children and youth and their social fitness. Lallensack (2017) asserts that in model platforms those involved should feel harmless to their physical bodies, feel appreciated, have communal link, getting moral and economic support, have self and political power and optimistic about their tomorrow. A recreational programme that meets people's social, economic, political, spiritual, physical and moral fitness give rise to a total person who can fit well in the community and this would mean a full-grown and promising economy that guarantees its people bright future.

Statement of the Problem

Participating in recreational activities helps one to relieve pressure, therefore, promoting health, joy and healthy social relationships and attain a sense of wellbeing. But studies conducted on constraints to participation in sporting activities, have lack of time, lack of knowledge, overcrowding, long distance to activity areas, family problems and lack of money and companion specified as the most significant recreational constraints (Kara & Demirci, 2020; Scott & Mowen, 2020) while fear of assault, lack of facility, gender, race, high entrance fee, lack of care and broken equipment are among other dynamics affecting preferences and participation level of different categories of people in recreational activities (Mozafari 2015).

A report by Franklin (2016) also indicates that work commitments, lack of opportunity and time, price of recreational equipment and facilities, admission and user charges, lack of transport, unawareness of where to participate in the activity, level of education, gender, lack of role model and attitude are classified as some of the barriers to leisure and recreational participation. Women in the urban slums encounter distinctive challenges in the neighborhood as they grow (Shaw & Henderson, 2015). They are mainly left to carry out all the domestic roles, that is, being in charge of the family affairs: cooking, washing, shopping, child rearing, caring for their husbands and filling the breaches left by their spouses in their children's lives, this leaves them with very little obligated time to participate in recreation activities (Gerson, 2021). Structural constraints like low

income, poor access to recreational centers are reported to be common barriers to women's recreational participation.

Studies have been conducted on factors influencing participation in recreational activities, for instance, Murithi (2017) investigated the psychosocial factors affecting Kenyan women's performance in International track events, Mwisukha and Wanderi (2019) focused on the problem of time famine as a determinant to participation in leisure activities. Nyaupane and Andereck (2018) and Chung (2015) suggested that leisure constraints research should examine socio-demographic factors such as age and gender, a study by Rintaugu, Mwangi and Bailasha (2013) on Constraints to Sport Participation of University Soccer Players suggested that the future studies to address social demographic details like age and gender. Despite the various studies conducted on this phenomenon, not much has been done in the context of recreation for women. Thus, the current study sought to assess the determinants of women's participation in recreational activities in Kibera slums since they are the most vulnerable population in the slums and they are the ones who are available in the slums taking care of the children as the men go out to earn a living. Therefore there was a need to carry a study that allowed for the exploration of influence of gender on recreational participation.

Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to examine influence of gender on recreational participation.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study might be useful to discover the available recreational opportunities for women this might aid the government and other non-governmental organizations with valuable guidance on the recreational needs and in return they can avail safe, healthy and inexpensive recreational facilities so as to strengthen their social skills and relations for relaxation. The information provided by this study may encourage women in Kibera Informal Settlement to participate in recreational activities, thereby enhancing originality, expressiveness and can be utilized in obtaining particular services, thereby opening career opportunities and creating revenue. It might also help in sensitizing women in slums on the importance of participating in recreational activities and positive use of their free time in diffusing positive social values. The study may add to the body of knowledge concerning recreational opportunities and factors determining women's participation in recreational activities and serve as a basis for more research work by future researchers. This therefore underpins the need for this study that allowed for exploration of influence of gender on recreational participation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Influence of Gender on Recreational Activities Participation

Gender roles have been considered in many studies and it is reported that female's participation in physical recreation is less as compared to the male counterparts (Onywera, 2016). Mutz (2014) notes that constraints such as being obliged by family are considered to be important by most of the respondents while Nolan and Surujal (2019) in their study in South Africa report that female's duty were traditionally termed as the home-maker and the family's wellbeing was left to her to manage. There is also evidence of social stigma to those women in competitive sport by regarding/labeling them as non-feminine (Okonkwo, 2021). Ethic of care is surrounded within the family structure and this is seen in family commitments which undergo (Henderson, 2018) and their role as primary caregivers (Henderson 2018) while Kelly and Freysinger, (2020) claim that the communal production work of females makes them obliged in the care of other family members. The issue of lack of funds to pay for recreational facilities hinders females from participating in physical recreational activities, they rely mostly on their spouse as a housewife, and this makes it more difficult for females to find enough money to spend on recreational activities (Jackson, 2015). Also, socio-cultural constraints provided an umbrella under which, other constraints are experienced (Little, 2022).

As Roberts (2019) states, women seem not to get the freedom for recreation and sport activities like men who are engaged in paid work and this makes sports to be regarded as men's interaction arena, physical growth and competition. Kelly and Freysinger (2020) argue out that women act as buddies for men to offer joy for their physical outlook by the manner they have dressed or behave, they are regarded ornaments to men or a measure of status and power and therefore, they also become a mode of refreshment for men. Female reach out to acquire higher physical and sporty opportunity has always been constrained; they have been burdened in every culture in existence in the universe even within the most developed countries (Overhart & pemberton, 2021). According to Cohen (2019), knowledge is determined by the moral dogmas on sexual category, that is, what distinguishes the role of male and female, why parents view their children contrarily and understand from the beginning how to differentiate male and female. Girls have always been anticipated to take the traditional female roles of domestic chores instead of being involved in sporting activities, therefore, this has given rise to gender stereotyping which is a major hindrance, for example, netball has always been regarded a female game but majority of females may be unwilling to play it. Most people associate men with competence while they associate femininity with warmth, expressiveness, and nurturance (Cohen, 2019).

Vigorous sport has been viewed as health threat to female's societal roles such as childcare and household tasks, communal values of male-female gender characters and this has led to women being discouraged from participating in sport and recreation (Overhart 2021). Similarly, Jones (2001) notes that, female traditionalists could not engage in the same recreational activities with men since they were perceived harmful to their bodies. Expectations coming from the society for females to acquire the ideal body image may hamper one from participating (Shaw, 2014). Lack of this expected figure that is dependable with communal pressure can cause female retiring from

participating at all (Dattilo, 2016). The pleasure of participation in a certain recreational activity can diminish due to this body image hopes (Fredrick & Shaw, 2015). The societal views the ideal body image for men as one of muscularity and strength while the one for women is regarded one of thinness (Martz, Handly & Eisler, 2015). This results to having the masculine females regarding themselves and or been seen as unladylike and or even lesbians causing decline sport- recreation participation. Henderson (2018) claims that lack of sense of entitlement makes female feel uncomfortable when they pamper themselves in their own recreation making them feel like they have no right to recreate.

This leads to have them limited to only the recreational activities near their homes especially the family woman who organizes her recreational activities near her residence or have one of the family members accompanying her which may hinder total enjoyment, so, social constraints are still hurdles as far as women's participation in sports and particularly in the performing sports (Popović & Kocić 2022). In the current world, girls and women have variety of recreational options than men as it was in previous generations. Fresh areas of interest for women and girls' recreation have been discovered where studies done describe some women opinions on leisure as means for fighting back dominant gendered customs (Henderson, Kaczynski & Park, 2017). Bryce and Rutter (2013) in their study on technology as a recreational choice indicates that computer gaming is still regarded a masculine activity, even if more girls seek for this activity as it is geared less gendered activity. Schneider, Allison, Berg and Trost (2021) indicates that joint leisure for married couples has no significant influence on their association and the individual leisure satisfaction of both men and women was not linked to partner's contentment. A similar study by Herridge, Shaw and Mannell (2019) that looked at women's leisure within romantic relationships reports that trying to fulfill couple relationships in leisure disputed individual interests of women. This shows that leisure satisfaction can also be constraints

Empirical Review

Mwangi (2022), conducted a study that assessed the Exercise Self-Efficacy (SEE) and Physical Activity (PA) status among young adults in Nairobi County who participate in Gym Based Group Fitness Programs (GBGFPs) and the Outdoor Based Group Fitness Programs (OBGFPs). Cross tabulations for analysis of nominal level data to establish the physical performance in relation to gym and outdoor program. Chi square tested the demographic relationship of participants in gym and outdoor program. Descriptive statistics showed that the gender distribution was 37.6%, 62.4% male and female respectively with 45.6%, 54.4% outdoor and gym participants respectively. The age was categorical with 23.8% 26-30 year-olds being the highest and 18.2% 36-40 year-old being the smallest group. Gender against mode of training showed a no significant relationship between outdoor and gym program participants at $\chi(1) = 0.280, p < .597$. The findings of this study inform and advocate for more efficacious fitness programs and bring more knowledge to the different socio-demographic classes on the need to indulge and sustain fitness. They will also greatly assist design more appropriate interventions in the world of fitness harnessing the benefits of outdoor

and gym based programs. The study however presented a contextual gap as it focused on Exercise Self-Efficacy (SEE) and Physical Activity (PA) status among young adults in Nairobi County while our study will focus on influence of gender on recreational participation.

Fimber (2019), conducted a study that examined recreational behaviour in relation to domestic tourism participating in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Descriptive statistics were used to measure intervals and tendencies – test. Ordinary least square model was used to respond to the hypothesis, Pearson correlation was used to measure the relationships between variables while multiple regression analysis was used to reflect all the independent variables. The findings from the study reviewed that the residents' high income means a positive motivation for participation in domestic tourism in Nasarawa State. The findings also revealed that participation in domestic tourism are influenced by hindrances which must be addressed as it is the case in Nasarawa State. Finally, the study suggests further studies including conducting same research in Nasarawa State to involve all segment of the population as this focused in the public servants which income can be easily measured. The study concluded that recreation behaviours poses challenges in the rural and urban areas in Nigeria as in the case of Nasarawa State, Nigeria are yet to embrace the values of active recreation participation, despite knowledge of the recreation and tourism. Therefore, the only way to sustain domestic tourism participation is through the assessment of residents behaviours toward domestic tourism. The study presented a methodological gap as it was descriptive in nature while our study will be a desktop review.

Muthoni (2015), conducted a study on influence of demographic characteristics; age, marital status, number of children, and level of education of the female teachers in Nairobi County on their leisure and recreation participation. Data were gathered from 291 respondents who included teachers from public and private schools from Nairobi. Questionnaires were used to gather data. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics while hypotheses were tested using chi-square and One Sample T- test. The results indicated that most of the female teachers were aged between 36 -45 years, married and had children. The largest proportion of teachers was bachelor degree holders. The most popular leisure and recreation activity was watching television. Amongst the teachers, teaching work load was rated as the most important factor in influencing leisure and recreation participation while gender discrimination emerged as extremely unimportant factor. A larger proportion of teachers rated their participation in leisure and recreation as frequent, enjoyable and fun. The study presented a geographical gap as it was conducted in Nairobi while our study will determine influence of gender on recreational participation

Mugambi (2011), conducted a study to establish the relationship between the destinations attributes and tourists' overall level of satisfaction. The result from this study shows that KWS has higher recreational value of Ksh. 280 Million (US\$ 3.7 Million) than FD with Ksh. 191 Million (US\$ 2.6 Million). The satisfaction results shows that KF is a potential tourists destination offering a satisfying experience to tourists (mean satisfaction = 5.38). The results show that twenty nine destination attributes determine the tourist overall level of satisfaction while visiting KF. These

factors relate to key hospitality variables like tangibles, responsibilities, reliability, assurance and empathy. Further, the results show that the tourists' satisfaction relates to sources of information about the forest and the interests for visiting the forest. These findings are important to tourist planners, managers and promoters. Based upon the results the study concludes by giving several recommendations on promotion of conservation of KF, while increasing tourists' satisfaction. The study presented a contextual gap as if focused on KWS while our study will focus on gender on recreational participation

Sylvester (2011), conducted a study to establish the preference of Nairobi residents on the use of urban forested areas as outdoor recreation sites, as well as identifying the opportunities existing within the forests for outdoor recreation. Survey research design was used to gather information on urban residents' preferences on the use of forested areas for outdoor recreation. Factors under investigation were facilities within the forested areas as independent variables and urban residents' preferences as dependent variables. Most of the respondents affirmed the benefits of outdoor recreation in urban forests, as including improved social ties, improved well-being and renewed energy. However there were issues that visitors to the urban forests felt should be addressed; ensuring safety and security within the recreation sites. The study recommends that the government should support the marketing of outdoor recreation in urban forests through funding, advertising and enacting of laws that will stimulate growth of outdoor recreation by the ministry of tourism and ministry of environment and natural resources. Improving these satisfaction attributes could help increase visitors' overall experience, which could lead to repeat visits. The study presented a methodological gap as it focused on survey research design while our study will focus on desktop review approach.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a desktop literature review method (desk study). This involved an in-depth review of studies related to examining influence of gender on recreational participation. Three sorting stages were implemented on the subject under study in order to determine the viability of the subject for research. This is the first stage that comprised the initial identification of all articles that were based on examining influence of gender on recreational participation. The search was done generally by searching the articles in the article title, abstract, keywords. A second search involved fully available publications on the subject on thematic concerns addressed by influence of gender on recreational participation. The third step involved the selection of fully accessible publications. Reduction of the literature to only fully accessible publications yielded specificity and allowed the researcher to focus on the articles that related to influence of gender on recreational participation which was split into top key words. After an in- depth search into the top key words (influence, gender, recreational, participation), the researcher arrived at 5 articles that were suitable for analysis. This were findings from:

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Based Group Fitness Programs (GBGFPs) and the Outdoor Based Group Fitness Programs (OBGFPs). Cross tabulations for analysis of nominal level data to establish the physical performance in relation to gym and outdoor program. Chi square tested the demographic relationship of participants in gym and outdoor program. Descriptive statistics showed that the gender distribution was 37.6%, 62.4% male and female respectively with 45.6%, 54.4% outdoor and gym participants respectively. The age was categorical with 23.8% 26-30 year-olds being the highest and 18.2% 36-40 year-old being the smallest group. Gender against mode of training showed a no significant relationship between outdoor and gym program participants at $\chi^2(1) = 0.280, p < .597$. The findings of this study inform and advocate for more efficacious fitness programs and bring more knowledge to the different socio-demographic classes on the need to indulge and sustain fitness. They will also greatly assist design more appropriate interventions in the world of fitness harnessing the benefits of outdoor and gym based programs.

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SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study concluded that most popular indoor recreational activity of women was listening to music followed by singing and dancing while the least popular indoor recreational activity was aerobics and snooker/pool. The most popular outdoor recreational activity was walking while the least popular outdoor recreational activity for women was swimming and playing cards/ajua. Frequency of participation in both indoor and outdoor recreational activities by women i was influenced by the age. Frequency of participation in both indoor and outdoor recreational activities was not influenced by the family size or the number of children. Frequency of participation in the indoor and outdoor recreational activities by women was not influenced by their monthly income.

The family size was not a determining factor for participation in both indoor and outdoor recreational activities

Recommendations

This study recommended that the county government should set aside land for developing various recreational facilities within the informal settlement areas to be accessed by all residents to mitigate time constraints; for example, construction of swimming pools since swimming is reported as the least popular outdoor activity. The ministries of health and sports, culture and the arts to educate the members of the public within the informal settlement on the health benefits of recreation and good time management so as to encourage more people including those with higher levels of education to take part in various recreation activities since level of education emerged as one of the demographic factors influencing frequency of participation in indoor recreational activities

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