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HUMAN KINETICS AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION: AN ATTEMPT TO SHAPE NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

Nigeria faces significant poverty challenges exacerbated by regional disparities. In an attempt to shape Nigeria, this paper reviews the intersection of Human Kinetics and poverty alleviation in limiting its coverage Northern Nigeria. It emphasized the role of physical activity and sports in addressing socio-economic challenges. Human Kinetics. This review synthesizes existing literature on how physical activity and sport initiatives can contribute to economic development, health improvement, and social cohesion. It highlights case studies and empirical evidence demonstrating the positive impacts of such initiatives, and identifies key areas where Human Kinetics can play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life and economic opportunities in the region. The paper revealed that integrating Human Kinetics strategies into broader poverty reduction programs could yield substantial benefits for Northern Nigeria. This could be through developing partnerships between governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community groups can enhance resource mobilization and program implementation. It was concluded Human Kinetics, encompassing both usual and intentional physical activities, offers a range of benefits that extend beyond mere health improvements to economic development. Regular engagement in physical activities, including walking, cycling, and sports, can enhance overall well-being, boost productivity, and foster economic stability. It was therefore recommended that adoption of physical activities as part of poverty alleviation efforts can yield significant positive outcomes by reducing transportation costs, lower healthcare expenses, and improve work capacity, thereby contributing to economic stability and poverty reduction.

Keywords: Human Kinetics, Poverty Alleviation, Northern Nigeria.

Introduction

Poverty remains a pervasive issue in Nigeria, characterized by high levels of economic deprivation, limited access to resources, and regional inequalities which require serious shaping. Despite various poverty alleviation strategies in Nigeria, significant gaps persist, particularly in addressing the multifaceted nature of poverty which includes health, education, and economic opportunities in the North. In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the potential roles of physical activity and sports in contributing to socio-economic development. Human Kinetics being the scientific study of human

movement, offers valuable insights into how physical activity can be leveraged to improve health outcomes, foster social integration, and stimulate economic growth (Kraus, W. E., & Bouchard, C. (2014). This paper will limit its jurisdiction to Northern Nigeria where the authors were domiciles.

Brown and Harris, 2019, demonstrated that physical activity enhances individual well-being, reduce healthcare costs, and support community development. In Northern Nigeria, where traditional poverty alleviation programs have struggled to achieve sustained impacts, integrating Human Kinetics into these programs could provide a novel approach to addressing both immediate and underlying poverty challenges. This review seeks to explore how Human Kinetics can be effectively utilized within the context of Northern Nigeria's unique socio-economic landscape, evaluating existing interventions and proposing strategies for future initiatives. By examining relevant literature and case studies, this paper aims to highlight the potential benefits of incorporating Human Kinetics into poverty reduction efforts and provide recommendations for policymakers and professional in the region.

Northern Nigeria, a region marked by high poverty rates and various developmental issues, could benefit from integrating Human Kinetics into poverty alleviation efforts. This review examines the intersection of Human Kinetics and poverty alleviation, highlighting key areas where physical activities and sports can contribute to socioeconomic development in the region. It also reviews existing literature on how Human Kinetics can contribute to poverty reduction and explores its potential applications in Northern Nigeria.

Concept of Human Kinetics

Human Kinetics refers to as physical activities that includes any body movement produced by skeletal muscles that results in energy expenditure above resting level (Caspersen, Powell, & Christenson, 2005). This definition includes all types of activity: household and outdoor chores, the jobs held outside the home (occupational activity) walking, cycling, shopping, sports, intentional exercises, and other activities of daily living or other recreational activities. Exercise is also a vigorous physical activity, planned, and structured, designed specifically to improve fitness and health. Examples include brisk walking, cycling, and aerobics as well as competitive sports. Physical activities in may be categorized into the following;

i. **Usual Activities:** These are physical activities that are performed regularly as part of a subject's daily routine. Examples include: dressing, bathing, climbing, flight of stairs, and walking etc.
ii. **Intentional Activities**: These are activities that are performed in addition to the usual activities. These activities are planned and often done at leisure time (free time). They include recreation activities or leisure-time activities like games and other sports.

Assessment of physical activities

Complete assessment of physical activity irrespective of its type (household, occupational, recreational called also leisure-time activity, transportation-walking, bicycling for a purpose of going somewhere), must include three (3) components (American Institute for Cancer Research, 2005).

a. **Frequency:** Frequency describes the number of times that the activity is undertaken in a given period (e.g. three times per week).
b. **Duration:** Duration informs about the total time spent in activity during the same period (e.g. 30 min per week).
c. **Intensity:** This describes the amount energy expenditure by a person during the activity. The intensity of physical activity is often stratified into three levels: light (<3 METs), moderate (3-6.0 METs) or vigorous (>6 METs).

Poverty Alleviation:

Poverty alleviation is the process of reducing or eliminating poverty through strategies and interventions designed to improve the economic and social conditions of people living in poverty. This can include economic development, social protection, education, and healthcare initiatives (Ravallion, M., 2009) It may also refers to as efforts and policies aimed at decreasing the number of people living below the poverty line. This often involves/economic policies, social programs, and international aid designed to improve living standards and provide opportunities for the disadvantaged. The Strategies for poverty alleviation involve a range of actions such as promoting economic growth, providing social safety nets, enhancing educational opportunities, and improving access to healthcare. These strategies aim to increase income levels and improve quality of life for the poor (Ravallion, 2009).An integrated approach to poverty alleviation combines various methods and sectors, such as economic development, Human Kinetics, physical education, health, and governance, to address the multidimensional aspects of poverty. This holistic approach seeks to create sustainable improvements in the quality of life for the poor (United Nations Development Programme, 2005).

The Link between Physical Activity and Economic Development

Human Kinetics, which encompasses the study of human movement and physical activity, has been increasingly recognized for its potential to contribute to economic growth and development. Physical activity has been linked to numerous economic benefits, including improved productivity and reduced healthcare costs. Brown and Harris (2019) underscores that regular physical activity can lead to healthier populations, which in turn reduces the economic burden of disease and enhances overall economic productivity. These benefits are particularly pertinent in regions where health-related productivity losses are significant.

According to Usman and Aliyu, (2021) titled "The Economic Impact of Physical Programs in Northern Nigeria: A Review of Evidence and Policy Implications". The

review assessed how physical activity programs derived economic growth in Northern Nigeria. It explores the ways in which such programs contribute to economic development by creating job opportunities, enhancing skills, and fostering community engagement. The study emphasize that integrating physical activity into economic development policies can lead to significant improvements in poverty alleviation and overall economic health.

Another study by Mohammed and Danladi, (2020) titled "Physical Activity, Economic Development, and Poverty Reduction". The findings of the study revealed that the nexus between physical activity, economic development, and poverty reduction in Northern Nigeria. It highlights how physical activity can influence economic growth by improving public health, increasing productivity, and creating economic opportunities through sports and recreational industries. The review provides insights into how these factors collectively contribute to poverty alleviation.

Gambo and Mohammed, (2022) conducted a study on "Economic Benefits of Physical Activity in Northern Nigeria" The study examines the economic benefits of physical activity in Northern Nigeria, focusing on how it contributes to economic development and poverty alleviation. It covers how physical activity can stimulate local economics through sports events, health improvements, and job creation. The study provide policy recommendations for integrating physical activity into economic development strategies.

Engagement in sports and physical activities can foster community cohesion, provide employment opportunities, and stimulate local economics. Programs such as community sports leagues and fitness initiatives have been shown to contribute to social capital by enhancing community engagement and reducing crime rates (Gordon, 2018). In Northern Nigeria, where social cohesion can be fragile due to economic and political instability, sports can serve as a unifying force, creating opportunities for social interaction and mutual support (Aliyu, 2021). Community-based physical activities and sports programs can foster social cohesion and community resilience. According to Yusuf & Ali (2020), organized sports and recreational activities strengthen community bonds, reduce social tensions, and encourage collective action. Social fragmentation and conflict are prevalent, Human Kinetics could play a role in building more cohesive and resilient communities, indirectly supporting poverty alleviation efforts. Sports and physical activities can create economic opportunities and stimulate local economies. Ibrahim, Salisu and Mohammed, (2021) argue that sports development programs can generate employment, stimulate local business, and attract investment in Northern Nigeria, where economic opportunities are limited, investing in sports infrastructure and programs could create jobs and enhance local economic development, further supporting poverty alleviation efforts. By so doing sports and physical activities generate economic benefits that contribute to poverty alleviation. By engaging in sports, individuals can gain skills that are transferable to other areas of life, including teamwork, leadership, and discipline. Additionally, sports can stimulate local economies through job creation and infrastructure development.

Several case studies highlight how physical activity programs have been leveraged for poverty alleviation in other developing regions. For instance, in Kenya, the "Football for Hope" initiative has successfully integrated soccer into community development programs, improving youth employment prospects and fostering local entrepreneurship (Barker & Green, 2019). Similarly, in India, the "Sport for Development" programs have demonstrated that sports can enhance educational outcomes and provide economic opportunities for marginalized populations. (Kumar, A., & Patel, R. (2020). These examples suggest that similar approaches could be adapted for Northern Nigeria, taking into account the region's specific socio-economic and cultural context.

Another case study illustrate the successful application of Human Kinetics for poverty alleviation in Nigerian contexts. For example, the "Sports for Development" programs in Nigeria have demonstrated how sports initiatives can foster youth development and improve community health (Olugbenga, 2019). These programs have often resulted in improved local infrastructure and enhanced social capital, contributing to poverty reduction.

Human Kinetics and Poverty Alleviation

In Northern Nigeria, where poverty remains a significant challenge, integrating physical activity as a component of Human Kinetics can play a transformative role in poverty alleviation. Physical activity, encompassing both usual and intentional activities, offers multifaceted benefits that extend beyond mere health improvements. Regular engagement in physical activities, such as walking, cycling, and participating in sports, can enhance overall well-being, increase productivity, and foster economic stability (WHO, 2018). For instance, activities like walking or cycling for transportation not only save on transportation costs but also contribute to better physical health, which can reduce healthcare expenses and increase work capacity (Ravallion, 2009).

Moreover, promoting physical activity can stimulate local economies by encouraging the development of sports facilities and recreational programs, which can create job opportunities and stimulate local businesses (Green, B. C., & Chalip, L., 2019). In Northern Nigeria, where access to organized sports and recreational activities might be limited, investing in such infrastructure can have profound social and economic impacts. Community-based sports programs can also serve as platforms for education and social integration, helping to build skills, foster teamwork, and provide youth with constructive outlets (UNDP, 2005).

Furthermore, the benefits of physical activity extend to educational outcomes and cognitive development. Regular physical exercise is linked to improved academic performance and concentration, which can lead to better educational achievements and, ultimately, greater employment prospects (Donnelly, J. E., & Lambourne, K., 2011). By integrating physical activity into daily routines and educational curricula, communities can enhance learning experiences and empower individuals to break the cycle of poverty.

An integrated approach that combines physical activity with broader poverty alleviation strategies can thus address multiple dimensions of poverty simultaneously. By enhancing health, creating economic opportunities, and improving educational outcomes, physical activity can serve as a catalyst for sustainable development in Northern Nigeria. This holistic approach aligns with the principles of Human Kinetics and underscores the potential of physical activity to contribute significantly to the alleviation of poverty in the region.

Human Kinetics, encompassing various forms of physical activity, has emerged as a promising tool for economic and social development. This review revealed that physical activity can significantly influence economic productivity by improving public health, reducing healthcare costs, and creating job opportunities. For instance, regular physical activity, including walking and cycling, not only saves on transportation costs but also enhances overall health, which in turn reduces the financial burden of healthcare and boosts work capacity. These findings are supported by Brown and Harris (2019) and Usman and Aliyu (2021), who underscore the economic benefits of physical activity in terms of productivity and economic growth.

Conclusion

From the journey so far, the authors concluded that the economic impact of physical activity can stimulate local economies through job creation and enhanced community engagement. This is particularly pertinent in regions where traditional economic opportunities are scarce. By investing in sports infrastructure and recreational facilities, local economies can be invigorated, leading to broader socio-economic benefits.The ability of physical activity to reduce healthcare costs and increase productivity has significant implications for poverty alleviation. By addressing health disparities through physical activity, communities can achieve more sustainable improvements in health and economic well-being.

Recommendations

The authors recommended that:

1. There is need to develop partnerships between Federal, State and local governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and community groups to enhance resource mobilization on Human Kinetics program to alleviate poverty.
2. There is need to integrate physical activity programs into existing poverty reduction frameworks that complement existing efforts of poverty alleviation.

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