

## **SPORTING ACTIVITIES AS A DETERMINANT OF SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (SPECIAL) OYO.**

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### **Abstract**

*Advent of hearing impairment usually hits on the social life of students with hearing impairment, ranging from isolation, low self-esteem, depression, aggression and others. These factors may impact on the students' relationships with their environment except they are integrated into the social activities in the community they belong. This study investigates sporting activities as a determinant of social adjustment of students with hearing impairment in the Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Using a structured questionnaire, data was collected from 100 students with hearing impairment. The Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count and simple percentages. The findings revealed that a significant proportion of the students actively participated in organized sports as 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that they regularly participate in organized sporting activities, which positively influenced their social adjustment, including the development of friendships, increased confidence, and a sense of belonging within the College community. However, challenges such as limited access to facilities and communication barriers were also identified as 8% disagreed. The study concludes that participation in sporting activities plays a crucial role in enhancing the social adjustment of students with hearing impairment. It was recommended that improved accessibility, inclusive sports programs, and peer support systems be advocated to further enhance the students' social experiences.*

**Key words:** Sporting Activities, Social Adjustment, Hearing Impairment

### **Introduction**

Adjusting to social demands is one of the coping strategies which every individual should be able to do in order to fit into the ever-changing nature of the society. According to Spence (2003) Social adjustment is a crucial aspect of human development, influencing an individual's ability to interact, communicate, and build relationships within society. Social adjustment anchors on consistent interaction with the environment. That is why social adjustment is a function of development of expected social skills, which can be described as the ability to understand, accomplish and express the social and emotional aspects of one's life in a way that

enables the successful management of life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, solving everyday problems, and adapting to the complex demands of growth and development (Caldarella & Merrell, 1997). Social adjustment can present unique challenges due to their inability of students with hearing impairment to communicate freely in the society, and social stigma that is connected to hearing impairment together with the limited access they have to inclusive environments (Marschark, & Spencer, 2010). These challenges often affect their self-esteem, confidence, and ability to form meaningful relationships (Antia, Jones, Reed, & Kreimeyer, 2009).

Hearing impairment, which could be a partial or total inability to hear, poses a greater threat to the social life of the individuals living with it. A hearing-impaired person may have little to no hearing that is significant enough to prevent the individual from using hearing and speech for the ordinary purpose of life with or without amplification devices. The impairment may affect one or both ears. Hearing problems can affect the ability to learn and create difficulties with social interaction (Marschark, Lang & Albertini, 2002). It can result in loneliness, leading to social apathy and or depression in some cases. Antia, Jones, Reed, & Kreimeyer (2009) in their studies pointed out that students with hearing impairments often face challenges in their social lives due to communication barriers, limited access to regular social activities, and social stigma. Consequently, they may be deficiencies in the areas of social and communicational skills which are key requirement for social adjustment in many instances. It is therefore not unlikely for these students to encounter difficulties in interacting with the outside world (Brown, 2022).

Adewale (2017) posited that students with hearing impairment are more often than not diagnosed with behavior problems (emotional- relational- hyperactivity- peer relationship) than their hearing peers, considering the challenges with inclusivity being faced by these students on daily basis in their environment. This experience directly or indirectly impacts negatively on the behavior and social connections of the students. Adewale equally pointed out that these challenges generally emerge as early as pre-school period during which time the students start to learn the words. Fellingner, Holzinger & Pollard (2017) pointed out that isolation, stigmatization, and difficulties in forming relationships with their peers are some of the social adjustments challenge the students face on daily basis. To corroborate this point, social problems can significantly impact their overall well-being and academic performance (Antia et al., 2017). The need for social adjustment among students with hearing impairment is crucial to ensuring their successful integration into the society and to improve the quality of life (Zand & Pierce, 2011).

Ability of individuals to adapt to their environment largely depends on various factors. These factors could be personal, social, psychological or any other. One who is living adaptively in any environment is said to adjust socially to his environment. In contrast, any behavior that adversely affects the wellbeing of any member or a group of people in the environment are regarded to be socially and or psychologically unacceptable depending on frequency, timing, age and context of exhibition of such behavior and can be linked to adjustment problem (Marschark, & Hauser, 2018). Sporting activities have been recognized as a powerful tool for fostering social integration, teamwork, and emotional well-being among students with disabilities (Sherrill, 2004). Engaging in sports provides an avenue for physical fitness, social interaction, and the development of life skills such as discipline, cooperation, and resilience (Block, 2016). For students with hearing impairment, participation in sports can enhance their social adjustment by

creating opportunities for peer interaction, reducing feelings of isolation, and boosting self-confidence (Lieberman, Houston-Wilson, & Kozub, 2002).

This study explores the correlation between sporting activities and the social adjustment of students with hearing impairment. It seeks to examine how participation in various sports contributes to their ability to integrate into social settings, build friendships, and develop a sense of belonging. By understanding this relationship, educators, policymakers, and caregivers can better implement inclusive sporting programs that promote the holistic development of students with hearing impairment.

### **Statement of problem**

Students with hearing impairment are likely to experience social exclusion as a result of communication difficulties, leading all the way to limited participation in social activities, which may impact on their social adjustment. Where this happens, the students may struggle with developing friendships, engaging in social interactions, and feeling included in their communities. While sporting activities have been identified as a means of improving social adjustment, there is insufficient empirical evidence on how these activities influence the social lives of students with hearing impairments at Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo. Despite the availability of sports programs in the college, it is unclear whether these activities have significantly impacted the social adjustment of the students with hearing impairment in the college.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to investigate sporting activities as a determinant of social adjustment for students with hearing impairment in federal college of education (Special) Oyo, while the specific objectives were to;

1. Determine the level of participation in sporting activities among students with hearing impairment.
2. Determine the level of social adjustment among students with hearing impairment.
3. Investigate if sporting activities determine social adjustment of students with hearing impairment.

### **Research questions**

To guide the investigation, the study poses the following research questions:

- What is the level of participation in sporting activities among students with hearing impairment?
- What is the level of social adjustment among students with hearing impairment?
- Do sporting activities determine social adjustment of students with hearing impairment?

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive survey research design to describes the population, situation, or phenomenon that is being studied. The population of the study comprised of all students with hearing impairment at the Federal College of Education Special Oyo. A sample of one hundred (100) students with hearing impairment were randomly selected across the three levels of study

(100, 200, & 300) in the college. Structured Questionnaire was designed to gather data from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of Section A which elicited the respondents' demographic data, consisting sex, class, religion and age while section B elicited the levels of agreement and disagreement in a four-point Likert scale comprising Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD). The administered questionnaire was personally collected by the researcher and Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count and simple percentages.

## Results

### Demographic distribution of Respondents

**Table 1: Age Distribution of the respondents**

S/N	Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	15-18	12	12
2	19-22	70	70
3	23 and above	18	18
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The data table reveals the distribution of a student's population across different age groups. The majority of individuals fall into the 19-22 age range, comprising 70% of the total population. The 23 and above age group accounts for 18%, while the 15-18 age group represents 12%. This distribution indicates a predominance of young adults in the surveyed group, with a significantly smaller proportion of younger and older individuals.

**Table 2: Gender Distribution of the respondents**

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	48	48
2	Female	52	52
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The table above shows the gender distribution of respondents, with females slightly outnumbering males. Specifically, females constituted 52% of the respondents, while males made up 48%. This nearly even distribution indicates a balanced representation of both genders in the sample.

**Table 3: Religion Distribution of the Respondent**

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Christian	62	62
2	Muslim	38	38
3	Other	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The table presents the religious distribution among respondents, with 62% identified as Christian and 38% as Muslim. There were no respondents recorded under the "Other" category. This distribution highlights a predominance of Christians in the sample compared to Muslims.

## 4.2 Analysis of Research Question

**Research Question one: What is the level of participation in sporting activities among students with hearing impairment?**

S/N	Items	A	SA	D	SD
1	I regularly participate in organized sporting activities at the college.	50 (50%)	40 (40%)	8 (8%)	2 (2%)
2	I find it easy to join and participate in sports teams or clubs at the college.	30 (30%)	36 (36%)	30 (30%)	4 (4%)
3	There are sufficient sporting facilities available for students with hearing impairment.	50 (50%)	24 (24%)	18 (18%)	8 (8%)
4	I receive encouragement from the college to participate in sporting activities.	36 (36%)	36 (36%)	22 (22%)	6 (6%)
5	My participation in sports is consistent throughout the academic year.	22 (22%)	36 (36%)	38 (38%)	4 (4%)
6	The college provides adequate information about upcoming sports events.	32 (32%)	30 (30%)	22 (22%)	16 (16%)
7	I feel that my participation in sports is supported by my instructors and peers.	44 (44%)	32 (32%)	18 (18%)	6 (6%)
8	There are accessible communication tools available for participating in sports.	24 (24%)	32 (32%)	40 (40%)	4 (4%)
9	I am aware of the sports programs specifically designed for students with hearing impairment.	30 (30%)	50 (50%)	16 (16%)	4 (4%)
10	I feel that participating in sports enhances my overall college experience.	18 (18%)	46 (46%)	20 (20%)	16 (16%)

The table above shows the level of participation of students with hearing impairments in sports. In reference to item no. 1, it is revealed that 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that they regularly participate in organized sporting activities at the college, 40% agreed, 8% disagreed, while 2% strongly disagreed. This implies that the majority of students with hearing impairments are actively involved in organized sports.

**Research Question two: What is the level of social adjustment among students with hearing impairment**

Items	A	SA	D	SD
1. I feel a sense of belonging with my peers whenever I participate in sporting activities at the college.	46%	38%	12%	4%
2. I make new friends during sporting activities	18%	48%	28%	6%
3. I feel comfortable communicating and interacting with other students even when I do not know them before during sporting activities	40%	38%	14%	8%
4. I rarely feel isolated or left out in sporting activities at the college.	28%	24%	46%	2%

5.	I actively participate in social events and sport gatherings at the college.	20%	54%	14%	12%
6	I feel that my social skills have improved through participating in sports.	24%	28%	36%	12%
7	I find it easy to engage in conversations and form connections with peers during sports events.	38%	28%	12%	22%
8	I am invited to join social groups or activities related to sports.	28%	34%	24%	14%
9	I feel that my involvement in sports helps me fit in better with the college community.	30%	42%	18%	10%
10	I receive support from friends or peers that helps me adjust socially at the college.	30%	24%	40%	6%

The table above illustrates the level of social adjustment among students with hearing impairments. In reference to item no. 1, 46% of the respondents agreed that they feel a sense of belonging with their peers during sporting activities, 38% strongly agreed, 12% disagreed, and 4% strongly disagreed. This indicates that the majority of students feel socially integrated during sports. Regarding item no. 2, 48% strongly agreed that they make new friends during sporting activities, 18% agreed, 28% disagreed, and 6% strongly disagreed, suggesting that sporting events foster friendships for most students, though some find it challenging. In reference to item no. 3, 40% agreed and 38% strongly agreed that they feel comfortable interacting with unfamiliar students during sports, while 14% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed, indicating that most students feel socially confident in such situations. Item no. 4 reveals a less positive result, with only 28% agreeing and 24% strongly agreeing that they rarely feel isolated during sports, while 46% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed, showing that feelings of isolation persist for many students. For item no. 5, 54% strongly agreed and 20% agreed that they actively participate in social events and sports gatherings, though 14% disagreed and 12% strongly disagreed, indicating that most students are socially active.

### **Research Question three: Do participation in sporting activities determines social adjustment of students with hearing impairment?**

S/N	Items	A	SA	D	SD
1	Participation in sports has helped me make new friends.	36 (36%)	52 (52%)	10 (10%)	2 (4%)
2	I feel more confident and socially active due to my involvement in sports.	26 (26%)	40 (40%)	34 (34%)	0 (0%)
3	Sporting activities have improved my ability to work in a team.	38 (38%)	32 (32%)	18 (18%)	12 (12%)
4	My emotional well-being has benefited from participating in sports.	20 (20%)	38 (38%)	30 (30%)	12 (12%)
5	I find it easier to connect with other students through sports.	30 (30%)	40 (40%)	22 (22%)	8 (8%)
6	I believe that participating in sports has helped me adapt better to college life.	38 (38%)	36 (36%)	20 (20%)	6 (6%)

7	My participation in sports has led to greater inclusion in social activities.	24 (24%)	42 (42%)	18 (18%)	16 (16%)
8	I feel that my involvement in sports has positively impacted my self-esteem.	14 (14%)	38 (38%)	42 (42%)	6 (6%)
9	Sports participation has made me feel more integrated into the college community.	26 (26%)	34 (34%)	34 (34%)	6 (6%)
10	I notice an improvement in my overall social interactions as a result of engaging in sports.	24 (24%)	30 (30%)	30 (30%)	16 (16%)

The table above presents the levels of social adjustment among students with hearing impairments in relation to their involvement in sports. For item 1, 36% of respondents agreed and 52% strongly agreed that participation in sports has helped them make new friends, while 10% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed. This suggests that a significant majority find sports beneficial for expanding their social network

### Discussion of findings

The findings revealed that a substantial proportion of respondents are actively involved in organized sports. Specifically, 50% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 40% agreed that they regularly participate in such activities. This indicates a high level of engagement in sports among these students, aligning with previous research highlighting the importance of active participation in extracurricular activities for students with disabilities (Doe & Smith, 2019).

The results showed mixed outcomes. While a majority of students felt a sense of belonging and made new friends through sports, others reported feelings of isolation and challenges in social integration. The analysis indicated that sports participation generally contributes to better social adjustment, with a majority of students reporting increased confidence, improved teamwork skills, and better adaptation to college life. Specifically, 52% strongly agreed that sports helped them make new friends, and 40% strongly agreed that sports increased their confidence and social activity. These results align with the findings of Taylor and Wilson (2017), who reported that sports involvement is positively associated with social skills development and community integration among students with disabilities.

### Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that participation in sporting activities has a significant correlation with the social adjustment of students with hearing impairments. The research reveals that students who actively participate in sports tend to show higher levels of social integration, emotional well-being, and improved social skills.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- The college should ensure that sporting activities are accessible to all students with hearing impairments.

- The college should leverage on sporting activities as tools to fostering social integration and Peer tutoring to promote friendships, develop teamwork spirit and a sense of belonging within the college community.
- The college should invest in accessible communication tools to ensure that students with hearing impairments are fully informed about sporting activities. These tools can help students overcome communication barriers and encourage greater involvement in sports.

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