

# Outdoor Recreation Activities of College Students in the University of Eastern Philippines

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**Abstract:** *This study aimed to find out the outdoor recreation activities of college students in the University of Eastern Philippines. Specifically, it sought to find out the profile of the students –respondents in terms of their age, sex and college where they were enrolled. It also looked into the activities done during the free time; favorite outdoor recreation; involvement in outdoor recreation; reasons for outdoor recreation participation; health benefits of outdoor recreation; and barriers in outdoor recreation participation. It was conducted for school year 2018-2019. It employed the descriptive method of research. The respondents of the study were the first year college students randomly selected from eight colleges of the university. A survey questionnaire was used in gathering the data. Frequency counts, percentages, ranks and weighted mean were used in this study. The findings revealed that a majority of the respondents belonged to age bracket of 18-19 (82.53%), were dominated by females (68.07%), from the college of education. Study revealed that free time were mostly used in watching movies and television, using gadgets and sleeping. Their favorite outdoor recreation were team sports, swimming and walking. Their involvement in outdoor recreation had a weighted mean of 2.45 which falls in the intervals of “seldom involved”. The reasons that student’s participated in outdoor recreation were to relax, to keep fit and healthy and to have fun. It obtained an overall mean of 4.29 which falls within the interval of “very important”. On the health benefits of outdoor recreation, it obtained a 4.49 overall mean interpreted as “highly beneficial”. The common barriers that hinders participation were “I do not have the time”, “lack of recreational facilities”, and “I am always tired”, with a total mean of 3.41 which falls within the mean interval of hindering.*

**Keywords:** outdoor recreation, free time, involvement, barrier

## 1. Introduction

Movement and physical activity are basic functions that the human organism evolved to perform with vigor and proficiency. College students, being young are expected to participate in various recreational activities.

Recreation refers to time spent in an activity one loves to engage in. They are a source of joy and they provide relaxation to one. It is a break from monotony and a diversion from the daily routine. It is a positive change from the stereotypical lifestyle and involves active participation.

Recreational activities can be sporty, adventure, entertainment, amusement and in the form of clubs. Choices for outdoor recreation vary from person to person. What makes one happy may not be so for others. Therefore, activities depends on one’s interest, pursuits and needs which may be reflective of one’s beliefs and level of gratification.

Active recreation like playing a sport and other outdoor recreation, typically relates to more positive outcomes on well-being than passive recreation which includes reading, watching television and computer use. Majority, who have experienced outdoor activities have fun and pleasure. Being close to natural environment is healthy. Being in the outdoors prevents a person from having a sedentary life because it allows people to move.

Outdoor recreation involves a lot of physical activity, but it does not require one to have athletic level of skills to be able to participate unlike sports competition.

Due to technology advancement, the percentage of the adolescents who engage in the regular recreational activity is

decreasing, causing an increase in risk for several health issues. Students are at risk to develop a wide range of diseases when adopting an inactive lifestyle dominated by sedentary and screen time.

In the University of Eastern Philippines, it was observed that students come to Physical Education classes late just in time that the warm up exercises has been done. Likewise, as early as 6:00 in the morning, students were already busy using their cellphones and keep it only if told to do so.

Hence, for the above reasons, it was the primary concern of this study to find out the outdoor recreation activities of college students in the University of Eastern Philippines.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

This was generally aimed to find out the outdoor recreation activities of college students in the University of Eastern Philippines.

Specifically, this study aimed to (1) know the profile of the students in terms of age, sex and college, (2) determine activities done during free time, (3) find out their favorite outdoor recreation activity, (4) evaluate their involvement in outdoor recreation, (5) identify the reasons for outdoor recreation participation, (6) determine the health benefits of outdoor recreation, and (7) identify the barriers that hindered their participation in outdoor recreation.

## 3. Methodology

This study was conducted in the University of Eastern Philippines, University Town main campus during the second semester of the school year 2018-2019. The UEP main campus covers a land area of 481 hectares. It is

composed of ten colleges with eight undergraduate studies namely: College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CAFNR), College of Arts and Communication (CAC), College of Business Administration (CBA), College of Engineering (COE), College of Education (COED), College of Nursing and Allied Sciences (CNAHS), College of Science (CS) and College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM).

The respondents of this study involved 332 first year college students who happened to be the first batch of the graduates of senior high school in the k-12 program, the newly implemented curriculum in the University. These enjoyed a four months vacation due to the transition period and change of school calendar.

This study utilized the descriptive survey method of research which was designed to gather, tabulated, analyze and interpret data result.

#### 4. Findings

The findings revealed that a majority of the respondents belonged to the age bracket of 18-19 (82.53%), were dominated by females (68.07% vs. 31.93%) from the College of Education.

The study revealed that students free time were mostly used in watching movies and television in rank 1, followed by using gadgets, sleeping, reading books, and eating. This confirms the findings of Bouillet, Illisin, and Potocnik(2008) where watching television is included in the three most frequently endorsed activities.

The result showed that the most favorite outdoor recreational activities were team sport which included basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball and soccer, followed by swimming and walking. This implied that the students enjoy doing activities if they are with the group.

**Table 1:** Favorite Outdoor recreation Activities of College Students

Activity	Frequency	Rank	Percentage
Biking	15	7	4.52
Camping	13	8	3.92
Dual Sports (badminton, lawn tennis, table tennis)	38	5	11.44
Hiking	22	6	6.63
Jogging	44	4	13.25
Picnicking	11	10	3.31
Scenery Viewing	12	9	3.61
Swimming	55	2	16.57
Team Sports (basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer)	76	1	22.89
Walking	46	3	13.86

The table 2 discloses the involvement of college students in outdoor recreation. It obtained a weighted mean of 2.45 interpreted as "seldom involved". The result implied that students involved more in passive recreation like watching television, using gadgets and sleeping during free time instead of going out for recreation.

**Table 2:** Involvement in Outdoor Recreational Activities of College Students

Activity	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Walking for pleasure (on streets, sidewalks, parks, paths, or trail in your community)	3.82	Often Involved
Jogging or Running for exercise	2.59	Seldom Involved
Day Hiking on trails	2.14	Seldom Involved
Picnicking and family gathering	3.41	Often Involved
Relaxing, hanging out, malling, escaping heat, noise, etc.	3.81	Often Involved
Bicycling on paved roads/paths	2.43	Seldom Involved
Mountain biking	1.54	Never Involved
Horseback riding	1.27	Never Involved
Camping	2.18	Seldom Involved
Hunting	1.45	Never Involved
Fishing	1.64	Never Involved
Boating/floating/paddling (Sailboarding, kayaking, canoeing, etc.)	1.84	Seldom Involved
Rock climbing/bouldering/mountaineering	1.75	Never Involved
Ocean or freshwater beach activities	3.80	Often Involved
Viewing natural features such as scenery, wildlife, birds, flowers, fish, etc.	3.40	Often Involved
Visiting a nature center, nature trail or nature-themed visitor center	2.20	Seldom Involved
Visiting historic sites (museums, outdoor displays, history-themed visitor center)	2.01	Seldom Involved
Outdoor photography, painting, drawing	2.58	Seldom Involved
Gathering Seashells, or other natural products	2.49	Seldom Involved
Driving for pleasure on roads	2.61	Seldom Involved
Outdoor sports and games (basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball and soccer)	2.80	Seldom Involved
Swimming in an outdoor pool	2.43	Seldom Involved
Mean	2.45	Seldom Involved

Table 3 revealed the reasons for outdoor recreation. It showed that "to relax", "to keep fit and healthy", and "to have fun", were the top three reasons for students participation in outdoor recreation.

This confirms the findings of Delany(2013) that the main reasons given for participation in sport and recreation activity are because "I want to keep fit", "I enjoy sport" and "I enjoyed playing sport in Physical Education". Wall and Mathieson (2006) stated that leisure and recreation activities gives many opportunities to satisfy different needs, they give opportunities to escape from routine, do something exciting and just relax.

**Table 3:** Reasons for Outdoor Recreation Participation of College Students

Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
To relax	4.72 (1)	Very Important
To keep fit and healthy	4.70 (2)	Very Important
To experience challenge and excitement	4.48	Very Important
To have fun	4.66 (3)	Very Important
To meet new people	4.26	Very Important
To be with family and friends	4.64	Very Important
To maintain ethnic identity and traditions	4.06	Important
To learn something new	4.57	Very Important
To escape the daily routine	3.41	Important
To get away from crowded situations	3.75	Important
To be in the outdoors	3.72	Important
To feel harmony with nature	4.30	Very Important
To achieve spiritual fulfillment	4.36	Very Important
To feel safe and secure	4.46	Very Important
To reduce tension	4.39	Very Important
Mean	4.29	Very Important

Table 4 presents the health benefits of outdoor recreation activities. It obtained a mean of 4.49 which falls within the mean interval of highly beneficial. The three most common benefits were “build and maintain healthy muscles, bones and joints”, “reduce or maintain body weight or body fat”, and “improve posture and physical appearance”.

According to William (2003), in most recreational activities the participants derives some restorative benefit through participation-that they are re-created by the experience or its outcomes- and that recreation may deliver both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits.

Regular physical exertion also generates greater skeletal mineralization, greater bone density and increased bone mass and flexibility (Bouchard, Shepard and Stephens 1994). Likewise, Coleman and Iso Aloha (1993) concluded that leisure works as a buffer against increased life stress through leisure generated social support and self-determination to help maintain physical and mental health.

A study that examined reaction to stress response and recovery found that leisure activities and leisure environments had an effect on the transition from stress to relaxation, (Ulrich et.al 1991). In their study Drakau et.al stated that regular participation in physical activity is a part of healthy lifestyle and a preventer of diseases fostered by the under-mobility characterizing everyday life.

**Table 4:** Health Benefits of Outdoor Recreation Activities

Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Reduce the risk of premature death	4.43	Highly Beneficial
Reduce the risk of developing and/or dying from heart disease	4.50	Highly Beneficial
Reduce high blood pressure or the risk of developing high blood pressure	4.53	Highly Beneficial
Reduce high cholesterol or the risk of developing high cholesterol	4.50	Highly Beneficial
Reduce the risk of developing colon	4.37	Highly Beneficial

cancer and breast cancer		
Reduce the risk of developing diabetes	4.41	Highly Beneficial
Reduce or maintain body weight or body fat	4.60 (2)	Highly Beneficial
Build and maintain healthy muscles, bones and joints	4.66 (1)	Highly Beneficial
Reduce stress, depression and anxiety	4.57	Highly Beneficial
Improve psychological well-being	4.57	Highly Beneficial
Enhance work, recreation and sports performance	4.58	Highly Beneficial
Improves functioning of the immune system	4.58	Highly Beneficial
Improves posture and physical appearance	4.59 (3)	Highly Beneficial
Thins the blood so that it doesn't clot	4.20	Highly Beneficial
Extends longevity and slows aging process	4.34	Highly Beneficial
Mean	4.49	Highly Beneficial

Table 5 showed the barriers that hinders participation in outdoor recreation. “I do not have the time”, “lack of recreational facilities”, and “I am always tired”, were the top three barriers. The obtained overall mean was 3.41 and falls within the mean interval of hindering.

The study confirms the findings of Delany(2013) that the most popular reasons for not participation were “I don't have enough time”, “I have other interest”, “I'm too lazy”, “I'm not good at sport”, and “I have too much study to do”.

Lack of time and cost are the top two barriers preventing participants from doing more, with lack of time by far the most common barrier.(Active new Zealand Survey Series).

According to REID et.al.(1994), the principal infrastructural barriers impeding participation in recreational activities by youth at risk appear to be a lack of money to pay for the costs of programs or equipment, lack of public transportation and time.

Previous research has observed that the biggest constraints centralize in lack of time and money, lack of interest, little support from the family and health problems, (Blazey 1987, Crompton 1977, Lansing and blood 1964, as cited in chick and Dong 2003).

Another survey revealed “facilities” factors as the most inlying leisure constraints according to leisure preference and significant differences among university students who prefer sporting activities. (Gurbuz B., Henderson K.A. 2014)

**Table 5:** Barriers that Hinders Participation in Outdoor Activities

Barriers	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
I do not have the time (too much school work) (1)	4.38	Hindering
I am always tired (3)	4.33	Hindering
I do not know how (don't know any sport or exercise)	2.50	Less Hindering
I do not have enough money to enroll in gym	3.56	Hindering
I do not feel support	2.56	Less Hindering

I am not motivated	3.52	Hindering
I lack willpower	3.53	Hindering
I easily get discourage	2.58	Less Hindering
I am lazy	3.44	Hindering
I cannot leave my gadgets	4.19	Hindering
I wake up late	3.47	Hindering
I do not look good when I exercise	2.40	Less Hindering
I do not have equipment (Ball, rope, etc.)	3.59	Hindering
The playing area is always occupied by athletes	3.71	Hindering
Unfavorable weather condition	2.59	Less Hindering
Lack of recreational facilities (2)	4.35	Hindering
Mean	3.41	Hindering

## 5. Conclusions

The highest percentage of 332 respondents spend most of their free time in passive recreation like watching movies and television, using gadgets and sleeping. Although they reflected team sports and their favorite outdoor recreation, they did not spend much time on physical activities. Their seldom involvement in outdoor recreation is due to the barriers like lack of time, lack of facilities and feeling tired.

It is important for outdoor recreation to be part of students lifestyle because it plays an essential task for students physical and psychological well-being.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the university should provide additional recreational facilities that will cater to all students. Likewise, the university should improve the facilities which are already available to encourage students involvement in outdoor recreation.

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