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Factors Influencing Undergraduate Students' Choice of Human Kinetics as a Field of Study in Edo State, Nigeria

Ebako Faith Destiny[1]* & Erahu Hope Odin[2]

[1]*Department of Human Kinetics and Sports Science, University of Benin, Nigeria*
[2]*Department of Health Education, Federal University of Education, Zaria, Nigeria*

Corresponding author

Abstract: This study examined the factors influencing undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was conducted in three public universities in Edo State. The population comprised 886 undergraduate students enrolled in Human Kinetics/Physical Education-related programmes, from which a sample of 300 respondents was selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire titled Factors Influencing Undergraduate Students' Choice of Social Services in Human Kinetics Questionnaire (FUSSHKQ). The instrument was divided into sections measuring personal, social and institutional factors and was validated by two experts in Human Kinetics and Sport Science. Of the 300 copies of the questionnaire administered, 278 were retrieved and used for analysis. Data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings showed that personal factors influenced students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics, with a cluster mean of 2.84. Social factors had a relatively low influence, with a cluster mean of 2.44, although coaches, sports instructors, mentors and perceived societal respect for Human Kinetics professionals showed some influence. Institutional factors also influenced students' choices, with a cluster mean of 2.66, particularly sports facilities, career guidance and practical training opportunities. The study concluded that students' choices were influenced more by personal and institutional factors than by social factors. It recommended strengthened career guidance, improved practical training opportunities, better sports facilities and structured mentorship programmes to support informed choices among Human Kinetics undergraduates.

Keywords: Personal Factors, Social Factors, Institutional Factors, Social Services, Human Kinetics, Undergraduate Students

INTRODUCTION

Human Kinetics has evolved from the traditional understanding of physical education as predominantly school-based physical activity into a broad academic discipline concerned with human movement, physical activity, sport, recreation, fitness, health and wellness. The discipline provides students with theoretical knowledge and practical competencies relevant to the understanding of human movement and the promotion of physical, mental, emotional and social well-being. In Nigerian universities, Human Kinetics programmes prepare undergraduates for diverse professional opportunities, including physical education teaching, sports coaching, sports administration, recreation management, fitness training and health promotion. Esan and Adewunmi (2018) described Human Kinetics and Health Education as important areas of study that contribute to the holistic development of individuals. Similarly, Amadi and Azubuike (2022) emphasised the relevance of professional competencies in fitness

Corresponding author: ebako.destiny@uniben.edu

and health-centre management, while Adeoye, Yusuf, Dominic, Bakinde and Abubakar (2025) demonstrated the entrepreneurial opportunities available to Human Kinetics undergraduates in fitness and physical activity. These developments have increased the academic and professional relevance of Human Kinetics, making the factors that influence students' decisions to pursue the discipline worthy of investigation.

The choice of a field of study represents an important decision in an individual's educational and professional development. It involves selecting an academic discipline based on perceived interests, abilities, expectations, available opportunities and anticipated career outcomes. Such decisions may be influenced by personal characteristics, the opinions and expectations of significant others, and the educational environment within which prospective students make their choices. In this regard, Saranapala and Devadas (2020) identified internal, interpersonal, external and institutional influences as important considerations in graduates' career decisions. Abe and Chikoko (2020) also established the relevance of personality, career interests, self-efficacy and family influences in students' decision-making. These findings suggest that the decision to study a particular discipline may not depend exclusively on individual preference but may also reflect the social and institutional circumstances surrounding the student.

For the purpose of this study, the factors influencing undergraduate students' choice of Human Kinetics as a field of study are examined under three dimensions: personal factors, social factors and institutional factors. These dimensions provide a framework for understanding the individual characteristics, interpersonal influences and educational conditions that may shape students' decisions to pursue Human Kinetics at the university level. Personal factors relate to the interests, abilities, personality, values, attitudes and expectations of individual students. Abe and Chikoko (2020) identified personality, career interest and self-efficacy as important intrapersonal considerations in students' career decision-making. Similarly, Badmus and Jita (2023) identified personal conviction, academic ability, professional interest, personality and expectations of personal growth as relevant intrapersonal influences. Onipede, Omojemite and Akinlade (2025) also highlighted the relevance of beliefs, attitudes, adaptability and assertiveness in undergraduate career choice. In the context of Human Kinetics, students who have a strong interest in physical activity, sporting events, fitness, health promotion or human movement may be more inclined to select the discipline. Equally, students' perceptions of their physical abilities, academic competence and future professional prospects may influence their willingness to pursue the programme.

Social factors constitute another dimension that may influence students' choice of Human Kinetics. These factors encompass the opinions, expectations, encouragement and experiences of parents, siblings, peers, teachers, lecturers, mentors and other significant individuals within the student's social environment. Vautero, Silva and Taveira (2021) observed that family values, expectations and support could influence the implementation of students' career choices through perceived support, barriers and self-efficacy. In the Nigerian context, Ojewola (2024) identified parents, peers and teachers as interconnected influences in undergraduates' career decisions. These social influences may be particularly important in the choice of Human Kinetics because students' understanding of the discipline and its professional opportunities may be shaped by the experiences and opinions of people around them. For instance, parental encouragement, peer recommendations, teachers' guidance and exposure to successful sports professionals may strengthen students' interest in pursuing Human Kinetics. Conversely, negative societal perceptions, limited family support or the belief that the discipline offers restricted employment opportunities may discourage prospective students from selecting it.

Institutional factors also constitute important considerations in students' choice of an academic discipline. These refer to the characteristics and conditions of educational institutions that may influence students' decisions, including curriculum content, availability of facilities, lecturers' qualifications, institutional reputation, admission requirements, practical learning opportunities, career guidance and exposure to professional experiences. Saranapala and Devadas (2020) identified institutional influences as relevant considerations in students' educational and career-related decisions. In the context of Human Kinetics, the availability of standard sporting facilities, functional laboratories, qualified lecturers, practical teaching resources and opportunities for participation in sporting activities may influence students' perceptions of the programme. Furthermore, institutional reputation, the quality of programme delivery and the perceived relevance of the curriculum to employment opportunities may shape prospective students' willingness to study the discipline. Institutions that provide adequate learning resources and meaningful exposure to the different areas of Human Kinetics may therefore be more attractive to students considering the programme.

Empirical studies have provided evidence of the influence of personal, social and institutional considerations on students' educational and career decisions. Abe and Chikoko (2020), in their study of university students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines in South Africa, identified family influences, personality, expectations and career interests as relevant considerations in students' decision-making. Similarly, Badmus and Jita (2023), in their investigation of Nigerian university undergraduates in STEM-related disciplines, found that career outcome expectations, interpersonal influences and intrapersonal characteristics were relevant to students' career choices. Ojewola (2024) also established that parental, peer and teacher influences contributed to career choice among undergraduates of Adekunle Ajasin University. These findings demonstrate the relevance of personal and social environments in shaping students' academic and professional decisions. However, their focus was not specifically on the choice of Human Kinetics as a university field of study.

Evidence from studies conducted within the Human Kinetics discipline also provides a useful basis for the present investigation. Adeoye et al. (2025) reported that entrepreneurial mindset significantly predicted entrepreneurial intention among Human Kinetics undergraduates at the University of Ilorin, suggesting that students' perceptions of professional and entrepreneurial opportunities are relevant to their engagement with the discipline. Similarly, Abbah (2022) identified relationships between socio-demographic characteristics and participation in recreational activities among Nigerian undergraduates. Although these studies provide insights into students' experiences, interests and opportunities within Human Kinetics-related activities, they do not directly explain the factors responsible for students' initial choice of Human Kinetics as an academic programme. Consequently, the available evidence provides a basis for further investigation into the personal, social and institutional circumstances that influence students' decisions to study the discipline.

The need for the present study arises from the limited attention given to the specific factors influencing undergraduate students' choice of Human Kinetics as a field of study, particularly within the context of Edo State, Nigeria. Existing studies have largely examined general career choices, STEM-related disciplines, entrepreneurial intentions and participation in recreational activities. Although these studies offer useful explanations of students' educational and professional decisions, they do not sufficiently establish how personal interests and abilities, social expectations and institutional conditions influence the decision to pursue Human Kinetics at the undergraduate level. This distinction is important because the choice of Human Kinetics as an academic discipline precedes students' subsequent

engagement in its various professional and career pathways. The researcher was therefore motivated to investigate the influence of personal factors, social factors and institutional factors on undergraduate students' choice of Human Kinetics as a field of study in Edo State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Current programme descriptions in Nigerian universities show that graduates are prepared for several professional roles within and beyond teaching, while recent evidence indicates that Human Kinetics undergraduates already express preferences for particular sport- and physical-activity-related opportunities, such as fitness and wellness entrepreneurship. Some prospective students may select a programme because of personal interest in sports and physical activities, while others may be influenced by parental expectations, peer recommendations, societal perceptions, admission circumstances or the reputation and learning environment of the institution. Where these considerations are not adequately understood, it becomes difficult to establish the extent to which students' decisions to study Human Kinetics reflect their personal aspirations, social experiences and perceptions of the academic opportunities available within the discipline. This raises the need to investigate the personal, social and institutional factors associated with undergraduate students' choice of Human Kinetics in Edo State.

The consequences of such a situation may extend beyond students' immediate preferences. When students select areas of service without sufficient understanding of their interests, capabilities, social influences or institutional opportunities, they may experience uncertainty in developing relevant competencies and professional direction. Existing Nigerian studies show that personal, interpersonal and outcome-related considerations can influence undergraduate career choices, while family support and academic considerations have also been associated with students' career decisions (Badmus & Jita, 2023; Abe & Chikoko, 2020). Within Human Kinetics specifically, recent evidence shows that students differ in their entrepreneurial intentions and preferred areas of sport-related activity, suggesting that students' orientations towards professional opportunities are not uniform. If these influences are not properly understood, educational institutions may find it difficult to provide targeted guidance, practical exposure and institutional support that correspond with students' emerging professional interests.

The motivation for this study therefore arises from the need to establish what actually shapes undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State. Although previous studies have examined general career choice among Nigerian undergraduates and factors such as personal, interpersonal, family and institutional influences, there remains limited evidence specifically addressing the choice of social-service areas within Human Kinetics. The study consequently intends to fill this gap. On this premise, the following specific objectives were raised:

1. To examine the influence of personal factors on undergraduate students’ choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria;
2. To determine the influence of social factors on undergraduate students’ choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria and;
3. To examine the influence of institutional factors on undergraduate students’ choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria.

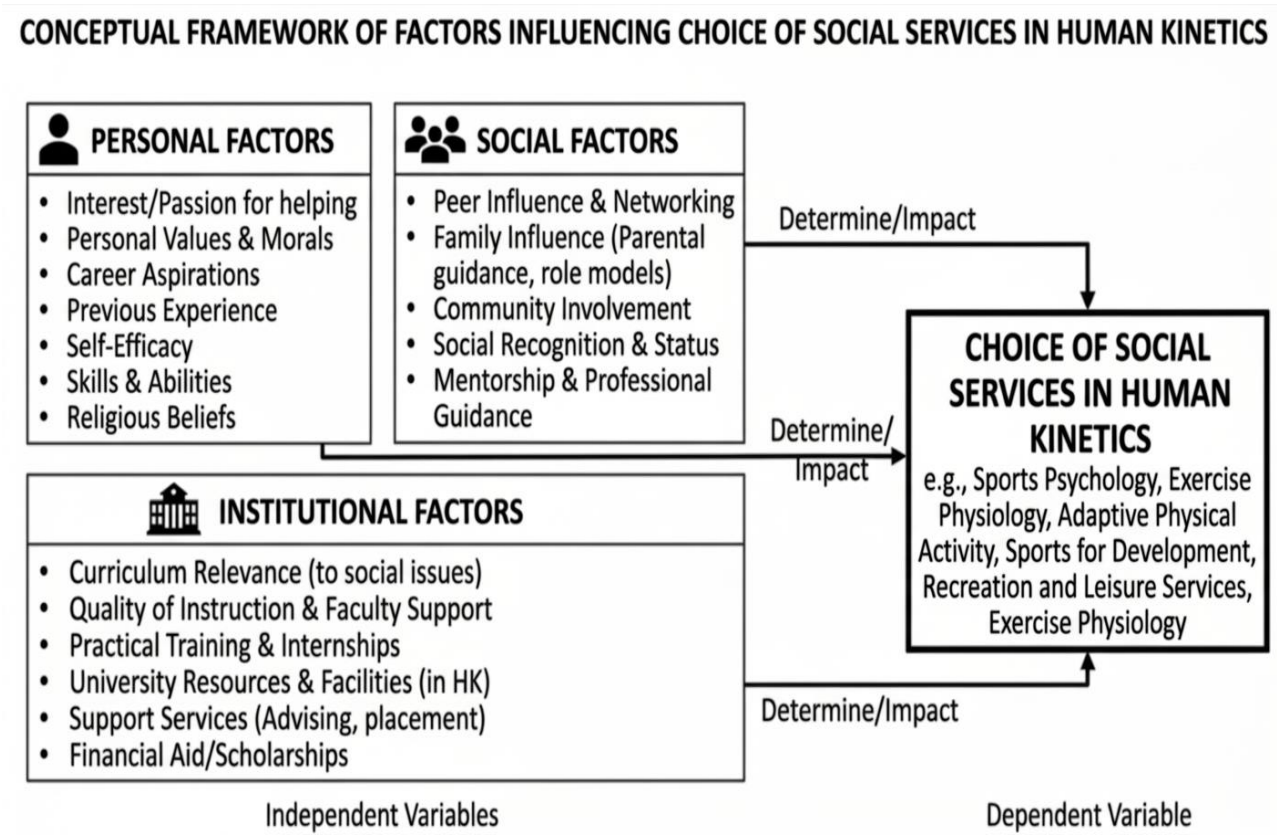
Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the influence of personal factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria?

2. What is the influence of social factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria?
3. What is the influence of institutional factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria?

Conceptual Model



The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between the independent variables comprising personal, social, and institutional factors and the dependent variable, undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics. Personal factors, such as career aspirations, self-efficacy, and values, influence individual decision-making processes. Social dynamics, including peer influence, family support, and community engagement, further mediate students' orientation toward community-oriented physical activity and health promotion initiatives. Additionally, institutional factors, such as curriculum relevance, faculty support, and practical training facilities, shape academic and professional opportunities. As indicated by the directional arrows, these three distinct dimensions collectively determine and impact the selection of specific social service specializations such as sports psychology, exercise physiology, adaptive physical activity, sports for development, and recreation and leisure services

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Occupational Socialization Theory

Occupational Socialization Theory was developed by Lawson (1986) to explain how individuals acquire the knowledge, values, beliefs, attitudes and skills that shape their orientation towards an occupation. The theory has been particularly influential in physical education and Human Kinetics because it explains how people become socialized into the profession through different stages of their lives. Lawson (1986) proposed that occupational socialization occurs through three major phases: acculturation, professional socialization and organizational socialization. Acculturation begins before formal professional training and

involves experiences gained through family, school, peers, teachers, coaches and participation in physical activities. Professional socialization occurs during formal preparation in institutions such as universities, where students acquire professional knowledge, skills and values. Organizational socialization takes place after entering the workplace, as individuals encounter the expectations, practices and culture of employing organizations. Together, these experiences influence how individuals understand an occupation and the roles they eventually choose to pursue.

The theory assumes that occupational choices are not formed suddenly but develop through continuous interaction between individuals and their social and professional environments. Lawson (1986) argued that previous experiences can influence how students perceive particular occupational roles even before they enter professional preparation programmes. During university education, these orientations may be reinforced, modified or challenged through coursework, practical experiences, relationships with lecturers and peers, professional role models and exposure to different occupational opportunities. Consequently, students who receive positive experiences in a particular area may develop stronger interest in pursuing it, while limited exposure or negative experiences may reduce their inclination towards that area. Occupational socialization therefore provides a useful explanation for the development of professional preferences because it recognises both individual experiences and environmental influences.

The relevance of Occupational Socialization Theory to the present study lies in its explanation of why undergraduate students may differ in their choice of social services in Human Kinetics. Students enter university with personal interests, previous experiences, values and abilities, which correspond with the personal factors examined in this study. Their interactions with parents, peers, lecturers, coaches and other significant individuals represent social influences that can shape their perceptions of available services. Furthermore, curriculum content, practical experiences, facilities, professional guidance and institutional opportunities constitute institutional influences through which students become exposed to different areas of Human Kinetics. The theory therefore provides a framework for examining how personal, social and institutional factors may influence undergraduate students' choices of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because the study sought to obtain information directly from undergraduate students concerning the personal, social and institutional factors that influenced their choice of social services in Human Kinetics, without manipulating any of the variables.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Edo State.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all 886 undergraduate students enrolled in Human Kinetics/Physical Education-related programmes in the three public universities in Edo State. Reports from the Department of Human Kinetics in each institution, it was revealed that there are 310 undergraduates in University of Benin, 294 undergraduates in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, and 282 undergraduates in Edo State University, Uzairue.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 300 respondents was selected for the study using multi-stage sampling technique. At the first stage, the three public universities offering Human Kinetics/Physical

Education-related programmes in Edo State were purposively selected because they constituted the institutions relevant to the study. These were the University of Benin, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, and Edo State University, Uzairue. At the second stage, proportionate sampling was used to determine the number of respondents to be selected from each university based on its undergraduate student population. The allocation was determined using the formula:

$$ni = \frac{Ni}{N} X n$$

Where:

- ni = Sample allocated to each state.
- Ni = Population of the respective state.
- N = Total population (886).
- n = Overall sample size (300).

The proportionate allocation is presented below:

University	Population	Sample allocation
University of Benin	310	105
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	294	99
Edo State University, Uzairue	282	96
Total	886	300

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for data collection was a researcher-developed structured questionnaire titled Factors Influencing Undergraduate Students' Choice of Social Services in Human Kinetics Questionnaire (FUSSHKQ). The questionnaire was developed from the objectives of the study, the reviewed literature and the propositions of Occupational Socialization Theory. It was structured into four sections. Section A elicited the demographic information of the respondents, such as university, level of study, age and sex. Section B contained items measuring personal factors, including students' interests, abilities, values, confidence, previous experiences and career aspirations. Section C contained items measuring social factors, including the influence of parents, peers, lecturers, coaches, mentors and other significant persons. Section D measured institutional factors, including curriculum exposure, availability of facilities, practical experiences, career guidance, mentoring and opportunities provided by the university. The items measuring the three factors were structured on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) with nominal values 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by two experts from the Department of Human Kinetics and Sport Science from the University of Benin, Benin City.

Reliability of the Instrument: Cronbach Alpha Method was used to test the internal consistency of the research instrument and coefficient values of 0.72, 0.82 and 0.84 were obtained for the three specific objectives. An overall coefficient of 0.79 was obtained.

Procedure for Data Collection:

The researcher obtained the necessary permission from the relevant university authorities and heads of the participating departments before commencing data collection. The researcher, together with three research assistants who were briefed on the purpose of the study, the administration of the questionnaire, and the procedures for handling completed instruments, carried out the data collection. The questionnaires were administered to the selected respondents during periods that did not interfere with their academic activities. Respondents

were informed about the purpose of the study and were encouraged to provide honest responses. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately where possible, while arrangements were made for retrieving questionnaires from respondents who required additional time. The researcher checked the returned instruments for completeness before coding the responses for analysis. Out of 300 copies distributed to the respondents, a total of 278 were retrieved and used for data analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, particularly frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation, were used to summarize the respondents' demographic characteristics. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. The mean cut-off for a four-point modified Likert scale was 2.50. It implied that questionnaire items with 2.50 and above mean scores were rated agreed while the mean scores below 2.50 were rated disagree

RESULTS

Research Question 1:

What is the influence of personal factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Ratings on the influence of personal factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics

S/N	Item statement	X	SD	Remarks
1	I chose social services in Human Kinetics because I have a personal interest in helping people.	2.80	0.65	Agree
2	My personal passion for physical activity influenced my choice of social services in Human Kinetics.	3.20	0.73	Agree
3	I chose this area because I enjoy working with children and young people.	2.10	0.70	Disagree
4	My desire to improve people's health and well-being influenced my choice.	2.72	0.69	Agree
5	I chose social services in Human Kinetics because it matches my personal values.	3.15	0.74	Agree
6	My own experience with sports or exercise motivated me to choose this area.	3.25	0.71	Agree
7	I believe I have the natural abilities needed for social services in Human Kinetics.	2.69	0.68	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**2.84**		**Agree**

The analysis in Table 1 reveals that the highest mean scores were recorded for the item on students' own experience with sports or exercise motivating them to choose this area ($\bar{X}$ = 3.25), personal passion for physical activity influencing their choice ($\bar{X}$ = 3.20), and the area matching their personal values ($\bar{X}$ = 3.15), all rated Agree. These findings suggest that personal experiences, passion, and values were the personal factors most strongly endorsed by undergraduate students as influencing their choice of social services in Human Kinetics. In contrast, the lowest mean scores were observed for enjoying working with children and young people ($\bar{X}$ = 2.10), rated Disagree, and believing they have the natural abilities needed for social services in Human Kinetics ($\bar{X}$ = 2.69), rated Agree. The cluster mean of 2.84 indicates that students generally Agree that personal factors influence their choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria. Standard deviations ranged from 0.65 to 0.74, indicating

moderate variability in responses, which implies some disparity in how students perceive the influence of personal factors on their career choice.

Research Question 2

What is the influence of social factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Ratings on the influence of social factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics

S/N	Item statement	X	SD	Remarks
8	My parents encouraged me to choose social services in Human Kinetics.	2.10	0.60	Disagree
9	My family members support my decision to study social services in Human Kinetics.	2.25	0.66	Disagree
10	My friends influenced my choice of social services in Human Kinetics.	2.46	0.68	Disagree
11	My teachers in secondary school inspired me to choose this area.	2.44	0.76	Disagree
12	My coach or sports instructor motivated me to choose social services in Human Kinetics.	2.70	0.69	Agree
13	I chose this area because people around me respect Human Kinetics professionals.	2.55	0.94	Agree
14	The advice I received from mentors guided my choice of social services in Human Kinetics.	2.52	0.61	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**2.44**		**Disagree**

The analysis in Table 2 reveals that the highest mean scores were recorded for the item on coaches or sports instructors motivating students to choose social services in Human Kinetics (X = 2.70), people around them respecting Human Kinetics professionals (X = 2.55), and advice received from mentors guiding their choice (X = 2.52), all rated Agree. These findings suggest that coaches, sports instructors, mentors, and societal respect for Human Kinetics professionals are the strongest social factors influencing students' choice. In contrast, the lowest mean scores were observed for parents encouraging students to choose social services in Human Kinetics (X = 2.10) and family members supporting their decision to study social services in Human Kinetics (X = 2.25), both rated Disagree. The cluster mean of 2.44 summarized that student Disagree that social factors influence their choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria. Standard deviations ranged from 0.60 to 0.94, indicating moderate to high variability in responses, which implies considerable disparity in how students perceive the influence of social factors on their career choice.

Research Question 3

What is the influence of institutional factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Respondents ratings on the influence of institutional factors on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics

S/N	Item statement	X	SD	Remarks
15	The courses offered in Human Kinetics attracted me to choose social services in the department.	2.68	0.84	Agree
16	The availability of sports facilities in my institution influenced my choice.	3.21	0.92	Agree
17	I chose this area because my institution provides good practical training in Human Kinetics.	2.84	0.89	Agree
18	The reputation of my institution influenced my choice of social services in Human Kinetics.	2.09	0.85	Disagree
19	The career guidance services provided by my institution helped me choose this area.	3.02	0.91	Agree
20	The availability of laboratory and fitness equipment in my institution influenced my choice.	2.18	0.87	Disagree
21	I chose this area because my institution offers opportunities for internships in Human Kinetics.	2.62	0.83	Agree
	Cluster Mean	**2.66**		**Agree**

The analysis in Table 3 reveals that the highest mean scores were recorded for the item on the availability of sports facilities in the institution influencing students' choice (X = 3.21), career guidance services provided by the institution helping them choose this area (X = 3.02), and the institution providing good practical training in Human Kinetics (X = 2.84), all rated Agree. These findings suggest that sports facilities, career guidance services, and practical training opportunities are the strongest institutional factors influencing students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics. In contrast, the lowest mean scores were observed for the reputation of the institution influencing their choice (X = 2.09) and the availability of laboratory and fitness equipment in the institution influencing their choice (X = 2.18), both rated Disagree. The cluster mean of 2.66 summarized that students Agree that institutional factors influence their choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State, Nigeria. Standard deviations ranged from 0.83 to 0.92, indicating moderate variability in responses, which implies some disparity in how students perceive the influence of institutional factors on their career choice.

DISCUSSION

The finding revealed that personal factors influenced undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State. In particular, students' previous experiences with sports or exercise, passion for physical activity, personal values, desire to improve health and well-being, and personal interest were prominent influences. This finding suggests that students' choices were substantially connected to what they personally enjoyed, valued and had previously experienced. The finding agrees with Goh and Jamaluddin (2021), who found that intrinsic factors were the most influential factors in undergraduate students' career decisions, ahead of interpersonal factors. Similarly, Osei, Tepprey amd Mensah (2023) found that self-efficacy and outcome expectations, both of which are personal or cognitive-person factors, significantly influenced tertiary students' career choices. The finding is also consistent with Serra, Soler, Camacho-Minano, Rey-Cao and Vilanova (2019), whose study of students pursuing Physical Activity and Sport Science found that interest and social-support considerations were relevant to the pathways leading students towards the field.

The finding revealed that social factors did not exert a substantial overall influence on undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics. This suggests that while students generally did not regard family, friends and teachers as strong determinants of their choices, individuals who had direct professional relationships with them could still influence their orientation towards Human Kinetics-related services. This result partly contrasts with Ojewola (2024), who found that parental, peer and teacher factors jointly contributed to the career choices of Adekunle Ajasin University undergraduates, with peer influence particularly evident. Similarly, Yunusa, Ibrahim, Mainagge and Haruna (2022) reported that family support had a statistically significant relationship with Nigerian undergraduates' career decision-making. Ebeh et al. (2023) also found that mentoring significantly predicted career choice among undergraduates in Imo State, although parental support was not a significant predictor.

The result showed that institutional factors influenced undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics. This finding indicates that students' choices were partly shaped by what their universities made available and the extent to which they were exposed to practical and professional opportunities. The finding is strongly supported by Getachew and Defar (2023), who found that institutional influence was the most reported factor affecting public university students' career choices and that institutional influence significantly predicted career choice. Similarly, Agbo, Odiri, Auta and Onwusuru (2024) found that vocational guidance significantly influenced students' career choices in a public university in Anambra State, reinforcing the importance of institutional career guidance in helping students make occupational decisions. Nevertheless, the present finding does not completely agree with Goh and Jamaluddin (2021), who found that industrial training had no significant relationship with undergraduate students' career decision-making. This difference is noteworthy because internship opportunities and practical training were positively rated by respondents in the present study.

Conclusion

The study concluded that undergraduate students' choice of social services in Human Kinetics in Edo State was shaped more strongly by personal factors (cluster mean = 2.84) and institutional factors (cluster mean = 2.66) than by social factors (cluster mean = 2.44). Students' previous experiences with sports or exercise, passion for physical activity and personal values emerged as particularly influential personal considerations, suggesting that students' choices were largely rooted in their individual interests and experiences. Institutional conditions also mattered, especially the availability of sports facilities, career guidance and practical training opportunities, indicating that the university environment could either expose students to or strengthen their preference for particular social-service areas. In contrast, family, friends and secondary-school teachers exerted relatively limited influence, although coaches, sports instructors and mentors showed some influence.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities should establish or strengthen career guidance programmes specifically for Human Kinetics students, providing regular information on the various social-service opportunities available in coaching, fitness, recreation, wellness, sport administration and community-based physical activity.
2. Departments of Human Kinetics should provide students with more practical experiences, internships, fieldwork and community-based programmes that expose them to different social-service areas before graduation. This would enable students to make choices based on actual experience rather than limited classroom knowledge.

3. Human Kinetics departments should establish mentorship arrangements that connect undergraduates with coaches, sports instructors, practising professionals and experienced alumni. Since coaches/instructors and mentors recorded stronger social influence than parents and peers, these professionals should be deliberately incorporated into students' career-development activities.
4. Lecturers and academic advisers should help students identify their interests, previous experiences, abilities, values and professional aspirations through individual counselling, career-interest assessments and reflective activities.

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