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POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FACILITY COMMERCIALIZATION ON SPORTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The sports business all over the world today is worth billions of dollars and thus, the importance of standard and well-maintained sports facilities in generating funds is taking a front stage in the development of sports programmes. Developed nations of the world invest heavily on sport facility construction and maintenance because of the high dividend derived from it. Hence, the need to assess the importance of standard sports facilities as a bailout for Kwara State towards the development of sports and a contributing factor towards the economic recovery of the state during this period of economic recession.

The research adopted a descriptive survey method. The population of the study was made up of athletes and coaches within the Kwara State stadium complex. The sample was purposively selected because of the availability and accessibility of the respondents. The sample was made up of 102 respondents drawn from 8 different sports. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The data gathered was subjected to descriptive research statistics of frequency and percentage. Inferential statistics of χ^2 was used at a 0.05 alpha level to test the hypotheses.

The findings of the study showed that gate taking, facility leasing and facility naming (Cal. Value of 83.824 > table value of 16.92) and sports tourism (Cal. Value of 104.101 > table value of 16.92) respectively will contribute significantly to sports and economic development of Kwara State. It was therefore recommended that the state government should invest in the construction of world class sports facilities which will enhance the state's revenue generation through leasing, naming, taking gate and sport tourism at different organized events.

Key words: Sports facilities, gate taking, facility naming, facility leasing, sports tourism, economic recession.

Introduction

At independence, agriculture was the backbone of the Nigerian economy providing food and employment for the populace, raw materials for the emerging industrial sector, and generating the bulk of government revenue and foreign exchange earnings. Following the discovery of oil and its exploration and exportation in commercial quantities, the fortunes of agriculture gradually diminished while crude petroleum replaced it as the dominant source of revenue and export earnings.

The discovery of crude petroleum in commercial quantities in Nigeria greatly enhanced the performance of the economy of the nation. The newly found oil wealth ensured that the economy performed impressively in terms of real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates. The extraordinary oil revenue permitted colossal federal government expenditure. The period thus witnessed an increase in the provision of economic and social infrastructure such as roads, air and sea ports, hospitals, schools and housing (Oni, 2014).

The crash in world crude petroleum prices, the severe economic crises in developed industrial countries, coupled with the internal crises of Boko Haram insurgency in the North Eastern part of the country where lives and property were destroyed with impunity, and the militant activities in the Niger-Delta region where petroleum pipelines were vandalized created hard times for the nation's economy in recent times. Therefore, the economy had begun to experience negative GDP growth rates (Oni, Aninkan & Akinşanya 2014). The dominant role of oil price on economic activities of Nigeria calls for urgent need to diversify the Nigerian economy. Major risks associated with the economic recession include lower oil prices, shortfalls in non-oil revenues, a further worsening in finances of state and local Governments, deepening interruptions in private sector activity due to constraints on access to foreign exchange, and resurgence in security concerns.

The Nigerian economy was faced with substantial challenges. Low oil prices, a lengthy period of policy uncertainty, and ongoing insecurity, have produced a widening fiscal gap with backlog of salary arrears at state and local government levels, a weaker external current account and the introduction of exchange restrictions as international reserves declined, lower financial sector resilience; and sharply slower economic growth. These shocks have compounded an already challenging development, such as inadequate infrastructure, high level of unemployment and a high poverty rate (Eugene, 2016).

Diversified economies are less exposed to external and fiscal shocks; therefore experts emphasized the critical need to raise non-oil revenues to ensure fiscal sustainability while maintaining infrastructure and social spending. The government should be committed to advancing structural reforms to smooth transition to a lower or non-oil dependent, competitive, investment-driven economy (IMF, 2016).

Sport has always been an important part of society, but it is now becoming an increasingly important part of the economy. Sport plays an important role in the growth and appeal of any global city. It is a driver of economic development and has a significant bearing on tourism, lifestyle, public health and ultimately, a city's international reputation. The sports industry is constituted by body building industry, professional sports events industry, sports products industry and sports managing industry. Others are: the sports sponsor, sports construction, sports publication, souvenir sales, sports lottery, and a host of others.

The importance of standard sports facilities as a non-oil venture in generating funds around the world is no longer taken lightly nowadays. Developed nations invest heavily on sports facility construction and maintenance because of the high dividend derived from it, such as from facility naming, rents, lease and on the spot usage. The sports business in the world today is worth billions of dollars and thus marketers have realized that sports facilities are a vital part of the economy that offers a suitable and sustainable opportunity for consumers (Hutchins, 2015).

Sports facilities serve as a tourist attraction for recreational sports clubs that travel or go on a sports tour at the end of the league season. Some of these tours could be by visitors, spectators, sports squad and holiday makers who pay money to visit and see or use these facilities. These visitors pay transportation fare, lodge in hotels, buy home made goods as a souvenir, and a host of other income generating business ventures which invariably help to boost the economy of the host community.

In order to boost her Internally Generated Revenue (IGR), Kwara State established *different business* outlets under the control of Harmony Holdings which was incorporated to ensure efficient running of all State-owned ventures in a bid to improve the IGR of the State Government. Such ventures as Shonga Farms, Advanced Diagnostic Center and the International Aviation College and so on have yielded little or no appreciable dividend in the area of economic development of the state (Akarah, 2014).

Agriculture is one of the main sources of the state's economy and the principal cash crops are cotton, cocoa, coffee, Kolanut, tobacco, beniseed and palm produce. Mineral resources that could boost the economy of the state that abound in sufficient quantity are Gold, limestone, marble, feldspar, clay, kaolin, granite rocks and quartz (Lukpata, 2013). Industries in the state include Dangote Flour Mill, Lubcon Lubrication Company, Kam Industries Nigeria Ltd, Tuyil Pharmacy Nig Ltd, Padson Industries Nig, Global Soap and Detergent Industry Ltd among others (Alex, 2017). All these have however not satisfied the financial needs of the state, hence, the need to explore other viable means to which this study is focused.

Sporting activities in Kwara State are managed by the State Sports Council under the Ministry of Youths and Sports. The importance attached to sports in the state led to the construction of a stadium complex in 1977. The Kwara State

Stadium Complex is one expansive edifice strategically located in the heart of the city. The facilities available at the Kwara State stadium complex are a main bowl, outdoor courts, fields, and pitches, indoor sports hall, hostel, recreational press center as well as an Olympic-size swimming pool. The state is actively represented both in football and basketball. The state is the home to the Kwara United Football Club, Abubakar Bukola Saraki (ABS) Football Club and Kwara Falcons Basketball Club, all playing at various elite leagues in the country (Aliyu, 2015).

Sport Halls are extremely important as they provide a multipurpose space for a variety of sports such as badminton, indoor volleyball, handball, basketball, gymnastics as well as providing a space that can accommodate keep fit activities and martial arts. They can also be used for events and functions which are vital community assets, where localized activities can take place (Amorim, Molina-Moreno, Peña-García, 2016). The Kwara State indoor hall can accommodate many events at the same time. It will be on a pay and use basis.

Swimming pools are highly valuable sporting facilities. Swimming is a popular aquatic activity. Vast arrays of activities take place in swimming pools, from learning to swim to aerobics and are an essential facility to getting people active (Health & Services, 2017). All visitors will be required to pay for its use. Health and fitness suites are those facilities providing fitness stations for both cardiovascular and strength training activities. When in good shape, they can be available on a pay and play basis.

There is currently a fairly good athletics facility. The facility offers a 400 metre, 8 lane oval track of Synthetic Turf with facilities for field events. The track provides flexible space allowing it to be used for a variety of different activities such as hosting of states, zonal, national and international athletics competitions, fitness classes, Children's Day activities, inter-house athletics competitions for schools with limited playing space etc. All these attract some fee payment when patronized. The stadium complex hosts a main bowl soccer pitch with a capacity of about 20,000 spectators. It is also available on a pay and play basis. Abubakar Bukola Saraki (ABS) Football Club is currently in the Nigeria Premier League (NPL) category playing all her home matches on that facility. The Kwara United football Club also hosts the visiting Division one teams on that same facility.

Other facilities present at the Kwara State Stadium Complex include indoor Squash Courts, outdoor tennis courts, handball courts, basketball courts, hockey pitch, cricket pitch, and outdoor soccer pitches. There are currently no functional floodlit on all the outdoor pitches, and the changing room facilities are poorly lightened with poorly maintained restrooms. All these factors have negative impacts on the patronage of the facilities (Irwin, 2017). Some of these facilities are rented out for wedding receptions and special religious activities.

A standard facility can be commercialized through different means. A facility or portion of a facility may be named for or after a person; in honor of an

historic event or for a major donor. The term "portion of a facility" in this study will include a hostel building, media center, auditorium, gymnasium, indoor-sports hall, athletics track and field, courts and pitches. A facility or portion of a facility may be renamed based on the fact that the new name would not affect the original use of the facility or portion of the facility (Katy, 2016).

In today's sports industry, facility leasing to event organizers who are seeking use of facility to sponsor a particular event is gaining acceptance. For many recreational sport departments such rental provides a source of revenue necessary to sustain their operation. It also serves as an excellent vehicle for promoting positive community relations (Daniels, 1989). For example, Libertyville Sports Complex in Illinois, United States of America has rent agreements with regional clubs that include boxing, soccer, volleyball, and a field hockey club. Local organizations that utilize the Complex include the Libertyville Parks and Recreation's youth basketball programs, the Libertyville youth football programmes and camps. The fitness center is leased to a private sports performance company and additional space is leased to a sports rehabilitation company (Cross Road Consulting Service, 2015). It is believed that the peak time of activity at the venue is usually December through March. During the peak weekend tournaments the facility is in use, on average, from 8:00am through 10:00pm in which there are over 1,000,000 spectators and participants involved in events at the Complex annually. This will obviously generate enormous revenue for the proprietor.

Glyptic (2001) observed that sports tourism can generate economic benefits, support environment initiatives and create employment opportunities for the host community. Sports facilities serve as a tourist attraction for recreational sports clubs that travel or go on a sports tour at the end of the league season. Some of these tours could be by visitors, spectators, sports squad and holiday makers who pay money to visit and see or use these facilities. These visitors pay transportation fare, lodge in hotels, buy home made goods as a souvenir, and a host of other income generating business ventures which invariably help to boost the economy of the host community. Jim, David and Michael (2007), emphasized that, travelers and tourists will want accommodation, food, visit tourist centers and go to concerts in their host communities, which will contribute to a big money spent. The World Tourism Organisations, (2007) reinstated that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) generated by visitors' consumption is the most comprehensive aggregate illustrating the economic relevance of tourism. There is an increasing agreement on the importance of tourism as a strategic sector in the national economy in as much as it provides an essential contribution to the economic well-being of the residents, it contributes to the economic objectives of governments and shows its possible role as a relevant player in moving towards a more advanced economy. Hosting sporting events put community on the world map.

What are economic forces that drive sport tourism? In order for people to participate in any form of sport tourism, an adequate amount of money must be possessed. The affluence of families today has risen to new heights, mainly because of major changes in the type of jobs people are employed in, as well as how people work. Similarly, people are experiencing an increase in the amount of leisure time available for sport tourism activities. In general, the number of hours on the job has decreased significantly over the past century, particularly as the number of holidays has increased and improvements in technology have led to more disposable time for many people. Ultimately, for most Western societies the economic changes in recent history have increased the amount of time and money available to individuals, and have motivated them to engage in sport tourism activities. Sport and tourism each contribute a great deal to the global economy and have become an element in the armory of politicians, planners and economists seeking to regenerate local economies (Ross, 2001). The general benefits of sport tourism include the creation of economic growth through filled hotels, restaurants and retail establishments. It creates exposure and enhances a positive image for the host community. All these can be replicated in Kwara State if special attention is placed on the construction of world class sports facilities and the renovation of the existing ones to modern standard.

Modibbo, (2016) stated that the government of Kwara State had invested greatly in the Harmony Holding, but is not getting enough IGR to justify the government's enormous investment in the liability company. Hence, there is the need for the state to find means of generating more revenue to sustain her needs (Akarah, 2014)

Statement of the Problem

As a result of the sharp decline and unstable price of crude oil which has resulted in the prevailing economic recession in Nigeria, there is a need for the diversification of the Nigerian economy. This fact is very true of every sphere of the life of the nation. Kwara state is not an exemption from these financial challenges. This is reflected in her share of the revenue allocation to states in Nigeria by the Federal Government in the last two years. The state got N52,385,587,394.17 between June 2015 and May 2016 which is an average of N4.36bn monthly. She got N3.07bn in July 2016 and N2.77bn in the month of September 2016 (Osewa, 2017). Her Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) in the whole of 2015 stood at N7,178,922,182 (Which is approximately N600m monthly) from taxes and institutions owned by the state (Kawu, 2015).

The continuous downward slide in the state's monthly revenue is a situation requiring alternative means of generating revenue for the execution and sustenance of both the capital and the recurrent expenditures of the state. On this note therefore, there is the need to explore the potential of standard sports facilities as a contributor to sports development and by extension, the economy of Kwara State.

Research Questions

1. Will the Commercialization of sport facilities through gate taking and facility leasing contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State?
2. Will the Commercialization of sport facilities contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State through sports tourism?

Hypotheses

1. Commercialization of sport facilities through gate taking and facility leasing will not significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State.
2. Commercialization of standard sports facilities will not significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State through Sports tourism.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive survey research. The population of the study was made up of experienced athletes and coaches within the Kwara State stadium complex. The sample was made up of 102 respondent athletes and coaches purposively drawn from 8 different sports. A self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher was used to find out the potential economic impact of facility commercialization on Sports development of Kwara State. Section A contained the distribution of sampled sports, athletes and coaches and the distribution of respondents by personal data, while section B was made up of four- point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The data gathered were subjected to descriptive research statistics of frequency and percentage. Inferential statistics of Chi-Square was used at a 0.05 alpha level to test the hypothesis.

Table 1: Distribution of sampled sports, athletes and coaches.

Sports	Athletes	Coaches
Athletics	20	2
Badminton	10	2
Basket Ball	15	2
Foot Ball	12	2
Squash	5	2
Table Tennis	5	2
Tennis	5	2
Volleyball	15	1
Total	87	15

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by personal data.

SPORTS SELECTED	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Athletics	22	21.57
Badminton	12	11.76
Basketball	17	16.68
Football	14	13.72
Table Tennis	7	6.86
Tennis	7	6.86
Squash	7	6.86
Volleyball	16	15.69
Total	102	100
Status of Respondents		
Athlete	87	85.30
Coach	15	14.70
Total	102	100
Year of Experience		
1-5 years	74	72.50
6-10 years	14	13.70
11-15 years	7	6.90
16 years Above	7	6.90
Total	102	100
Level of participation		
State level	67	65.70
National Level	26	25.50
International level	9	8.90
Total	102	100

Table 2 revealed that out of 102 respondents, athletics have the highest number of respondents (22) which constitute 21.57% of the 8 selected sports. 87 Athletes/Players which made up of 85.3% of the respondents participated in the study. Most of the respondents have less than 5 years of playing experience and very few have international sporting experience.

Hypotheses Testing

Ho1: Ticketing and facility leasing will not significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara state.

Table 3: Contingency and x² Table for analysis of the contribution of gate taking and facility leasing to sports and economic development of Kwara State.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	df
Table	Cal	Remark				
Value (x ²)	Value(x ²)					
1 Ticketing helps in generating revenue	20 (19.6%)	46 (45.1%)	30 (29.4%)	6 (5.9%)	102	
2 Facility leasing helps in generating revenue	14 (13.7%)	65 (63.7%)	15 (14.7%)	8 (7.8%)	102	
16.92	104.101	Rejected				9
3 Facility naming increases revenue generation	34 (33.3%)	47 (46.1%)	18 (17.6%)	3 (2.9%)	102	
4 Quality of facility influences lease and ticket pricing.	26 (25.5%)	50 (49%)	11 (10.7%)	15 (14.7%)	102	
Column	94	208	74	32	408	
p < 0.05						

Table 3 revealed that the calculated value of 104.101 was greater than the table value of 16.92 at 9 degree of freedom. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that "Commercialisation of sport facilities through gate taking and facility leasing will not significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State". This implies that gate taking and facility leasing will significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State.

Ho2 Standard sports facilities will not significantly contribute to the sports and economic development in Kwara State through Sports Tourism

Table 4: Contingency and x² table of respondents on the contribution of sports Tourism to the sports development of Kwara State.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL	df
Table	Cal	Remark				
Value (x²)	Value(x²)					
1 High-quality sports facilities encourage patronage	63 (61.7%)	35 (34.3%)	3 (2.9%)	1 (1%)	102	
2 Standard sports facilities serve as tourist center	26 (25.5%)	69 (67.6%)	7 (6.9%)	0 (0%)	102	
83.824 Rejected					9	16.92
3 Sports facilities are used for other purposes at a fee	45 (44.1%)	51 (50%)	4 (3.9%)	2 (2%)	102	
4 Visits to sport facilities Promote cultural integration	38 (37.2%)	48 (47.1%)	15 (14.7%)	1 (1%)	102	
Column	172	203	29	4	408	
p < 0.05						

Table 4 shows the calculated x² of 83.824 with table value of 16.92 at 9 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis which states that "Commercialisation of standard sports facilities will not significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State through Sports tourism" was therefore rejected. This implies that sports tourism will significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study is as discussed hereunder:

From Hypothesis, 1, the result on table 3 revealed that gate taking and facility leasing will significantly contribute to the sports and economic development of Kwara State. This finding is supported by Daniel (1989), that facility rental provides a critical source of revenue necessary to sustain the operation of the landlord or the facility owner. Additionally, the observation by Cross Road Consulting Service (2015) that a club may lease out her sports facility and have three year agreements with two additional one year terms, and that the Club is

guaranteed annual revenue for her operation through these agreements and do not absorb the costs associated with managing and operating sports programs also lent credence to the findings of this study.

From Hypothesis 2, the result from table 4 revealed that standard sports facilities will significantly contribute to sports and economic development of Kwara State through sports tourism. This is in agreement with the statement of Glyptic (2001), Jim, David and Michael (2007), and The World Tourism Organisations, (2007) which observed that sports tourism can generate economic benefits, support environment initiatives and create employment opportunities for the host community.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn from the result of the findings:

1. That gate taking and facility leasing will contribute to sports development of Kwara State through facility rental which provides a critical source of revenue necessary to sustain the operation and maintenance of the facility.
2. That sports tourism will contribute to sports development of Kwara State. Sports facilities can serve as a tourist attraction for recreational sports clubs that travel or go on a sports tour at the end of the league season.

Recommendations

- From the research findings, the following recommendations were made: That
- i. the state government should invest in the construction of state of art sports facilities and also embark on full renovation of the existing ones at the Kwara State stadium complex to enhance economic development which will invariably improve the development of sports in the state.
 - ii. gate ticketing for sports events and facility leasing should be taken seriously by the state government. These tasks can be contracted out to individuals or corporate bodies to manage. Some of these facilities can be rented out for wedding receptions, special religious activities, social and political events when sport clubs are in their off-season. All these factors will have a positive impact on the economy of the state.
 - iii. the state needs to develop her sports tourism industry to generate substantial revenue. It can generate benefits through an increase in sports participation, hosting competitions and events. It can also generate economic benefits in terms of employment opportunity for youths.

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