

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The first connections between sport and tourism emerged in the early mid nineteenth century A.D. with English competitive sports as a central pillar of modern western sports (alongside German exercises and Swedish gymnastics). Sport is an important activity within tourism and tourism is a fundamental feature of sport (Hinch & Higham, 2001). Glasson, Godfrey and Godfrey (1995) noted that tourism has been argued to be the world's largest industry, accounting for about 5.5% of the world's Gross National Product and 6% of the employment. Tourism is a trillion dollar industry. Sport is a multi-billion dollar industry worldwide and has become a dominant and defining force in the lives of millions of people globally (Martin, 2007). Sports and tourism are distinct but interrelated socio-cultural events and experiences of a society.

The first connection between sports and tourism was dated in the year 1827. It is debatable, however, whether this connection can really be attached to a particular year. Pigeassou et al. (1998) located the connection between tourism and sport in the emergence of alpine winter – sports in the nineteenth century, but assumes the autonomy of the sport tourism domain to be only since the 1950s. Standeven and De Knop (1999) also provided that forms of sport tourism may be dated back to the times of the ancient Greeks. Weed and Bull (2009) defined sport tourism as a social, economic and cultural phenomenon developed from the unique interaction of people, place and activity. Sport tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing segments of the travel and tourism industry and one that is receiving increased attention for its social, environmental, and economic development and opportunities (Standeven and De Knop 1999). It is widely understood that major sporting events contribute significantly to the economic development and tourist traffic in a city or region where the sporting takes place (Higham, 1999, Turco et al., 2003). Sport tourism is a vital component of the marketing mix for tourist destinations. Gibson (1998) described sport tourism as leisure-based travel which takes person(s) outside their usual environment for the purpose of watching, participating (in physical activities) or adoring attractions associated with physical activities.

Considering the returns from sports tourism in other climes, Nigeria has a monumental advantage in exploring and exploiting sports tourism to boost her hospitality industry. For example, Brazil which hosted the 2014 World Cup added 7.5 billion Brazilian Real (BRL) to the economy with tourism being a key contributor, an estimated 1 million foreigners visited the country and 95% of them said they will love to return for holidays. The attributed reasons for this include Brazil's scenic beaches, vibrant musical culture and its vast amazon rainforest according to the Wall Street Journal. Meanwhile for previous world cups, South Africa welcomed 310,000 tourists and Germany accommodated 2 million. These figures simply reveal how massive the contribution of sports can multiply the growth of Nigeria's hospitality industry and the economy. With this platform, states like Ekiti, Jos, and Kwara, with tourism endowments will possibly achieve a certain degree of financial autonomy.

Sports and tourism can develop Nigeria in many ways and one of the ways is through *Revenue Generator*, Simple-the economic returns are massive. The Hospitality sector contributes a large chunk of the returns during a sports tourney. It follows that if the government develops these destinations, tourists will visit and be willing to part with their naira, dollars and pounds. Included in this is the production of souvenirs and other marketing cum promotional items leading to a geometric rise in hotel bookings and revenues. Another

way sports can develop Nigeria is through *Publicity*, These sports tourneys are opportunities for hotels and hospitality companies to put their brand in the face of their target audience. They can produce jingles, commercials and other public relations tools which oftentimes go a long way in impacting perception and patronage. Lastly, *Development of tourist destination*; the near dilapidated state of Nigeria's tourism sites have headlined stakeholder's meetings and tourism seminars. They have called on the government at both the Federal and state level to revamp these amazing sites which cut across Nigeria. With Nigeria hosting a sport event, monies will be budgeted to develop these destinations to attract tourists and the ripple effect will be felt in hospitality sector.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Various studies have been carried out by different researchers in the area of impact of sport tourism. These studies have identified and classified economic impact of sport tourism to include: provision of temporary and permanent jobs, increasing cash flow in the community within and sometimes beyond the period of the event, improving standard of living, attracting new investments to host community and encouraging local entrepreneurship. Social benefits of sport tourism event documented in the literatures includes: sense of pride, entertainment, family and community cohesion, self actualization and provision/improvement in infrastructural facilities. Environmental benefits pointed out in earlier studies include: the provision of incentives for the conservation of natural resources and provision/maintenance of infrastructures such as recreational parks, sporting facilities, car parks, road etc. However, all these benefits have not come without their costs. From previous studies, negative effects such as forceful relocation of residents to accommodate tourists, crowding, hooliganism, crime, consumption of hard drugs, disruptions of the normal life of the local people, increased rents and tax rate were all identified as negative effects of sport tourism on a host nation. A good example is Sydney 2000 Olympics where the cost of living soured immediately it was announced to host the 2000 Olympics. Also, the impact of sport tourism on the environment can be negative as a result of clearing of trees, building ski huts thereby increasing waste and carbon emission, traffic congestion, built-up construction areas, noise pollution, light pollution and overcrowding. However, these previous studies have used mega sport tourism events such as FIFA World Cup and Olympics to examine the impact of sport tourism event on the host nation, hence the essence of this study, to ascertain the impact of sports and tourism on Nigeria development.

1.3 Research Questions

The following are some of the questions which this study intends to answer:

- i) what are the effects of sports and tourism on Nigeria development?
- ii) what are the steps taken by the Nigerian government to promote sports and tourism to bring about good development to the country?
- iii) what are the attitudes of the Nigerian youths towards sports and tourism to ensure good development in the country?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to determine the impact of sports and tourism on Nigeria development. However, the specific objectives are:

- i) to survey the effects of sports and tourism on Nigeria development
- ii) to establish the steps taken by the Nigerian government to promote sports and tourism to bring about good development to the country

iii) to assess the attitudes of the Nigerian youths towards sports and tourism to ensure good development in the country

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research work would benefit the government, entrepreneurs and the youth of Nigeria about the importance of sports and tourism on the national development of our nation and it would give more insight on how to achieve more success in the area of sports and tourism by actively engaging the youths.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study investigated the impact of sports and tourism on Nigeria development. It covered the youths, Ministry of sports and tourism and as well as the entrepreneurs in the country.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The only challenge faced by the researcher was finance. There was no fund to print as many as possible questionnaires for this study. However, the researcher was able to print out two hundred questionnaires for this study.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used in the course of this study:

Development: the act or process of growing or causing something to grow or become larger or more advanced

Sport: an athletic activity requiring skill or physical prowess and often of a competitive nature, as racing, baseball, tennis, golf, bowling, wrestling, boxing, hunting, fishing, etc.

Tourism: the commercial organization and operation of vacations and visits to places of interest.

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