

INFLUENCE OF GENDER ON MASS PARTICIPATION IN SPORT EVENTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN NIGERIA**BY****Y.Y. Ibrahim: Department of Physical and Health Education, Federal College of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State****Dr. M. U. Sani: Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Faculty of Education. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria****Prof. F.B Adeyanju: Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Faculty of Education. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria****Prof. E.J.Chom: Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Faculty of Education. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria****&****Prof. M.G.Yakasai: Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Faculty of Education. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria****Corresponding Author: ibrahimyy2212@gmail.com****Abstract**

Mass participation in sport events is the involvement of many people in different forms of sporting and physical activities irrespective age, gender, international or local athleticism, and social status. An example is marathon and half marathon races which are now increasingly being organized by various states in Nigeria. Such events require traveling from one destination to the other by both the participants and the spectators. Tourism is said to be a process of traveling to and staying in a different environment for leisure, business and other purposes and not more than one consecutive year. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of mass participation in sport events on the development of tourism in Nigeria with regards to respondents' gender. Survey and ex-post facto designs were used. A self developed questionnaire was validated and has reliability co-efficient .87. Six hundred and twenty two copies of the instrument and were administered to staff members of sport councils/commissions and those of tourism boards in the twelve sampled states across the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. Six hundred and twenty one copies of the instrument were retrieved. Data were analyzed descriptively using frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviation, and inferentially using Mann Whitney U test in order to provide answers to research questions and to test the hypotheses respectively. The results showed that; there is no significant difference in the respondents' opinions on the influence of mass participation in sport events on the development of tourism in Nigeria based on their gender (p calculated > 0.05 at Z 0.385). Based on the major findings, it was recommended among others that; the government of Nigeria especially ministries department and agencies in both sports and tourism sectors at various levels should encourage the mass participation of people in sporting events through subsidizing transports fares tickets and accommodation.

Keywords: Influence, Mass Participation, Sport Events, Tourism, Development and Gender

Introduction

Mass participation in sport events is becoming increasingly popular worldwide. It facilitates a healthier lifestyle, and a challenge to compete. The events are key factors which attract entrants. Mass participation events are effective tools to attract in bound tourism (Deloitte, 2015). The beauty of mass participation events is that it knows no boundaries, engages participants of all ages regardless of social status. These events bring communities together, both local and international participants, professionals and casuals. (Thailand 2017). In the same vein, Roberts (2021) opined that such events widely and commonly range from small-scale, local, 5-km run-walks with participants primarily recreational athletes and non-athletes to major international marathon as well as triathlon events with elite or professional participants. In recent times, sport and physical activity in one's leisure time have become a synonym for a healthy and quality life, whereas participation in sports events is for many people also a way of socializing. The social environment is an intertwinement of social, cultural, political and economic circumstances. Circles of friends, relatives and acquaintances as well as schools, societies, clubs and different organizations shape one's views on sport activity (Rauter, 2014). The legacy of an Olympic Games in a host city or country can take a variety of forms, including non-sporting benefits, such as enhanced urban infrastructural development, national and international exposure of the country's tourism profile.

Sporting benefits, such as improved sporting facilities, strengthened sports organization and potential increase in grassroots sport participation, constituted the legacy of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and other international sporting events hosted in Australia (Veal Toohey, Frawley 2012 and Yoon 2016). There are many events that have benefited tourism in the host area, bringing in visitors, and raising the destination profiles. Specialist tour operators offer packages to big events across the globe for individuals and groups (Visitscotland, 2014). Sports events can enhance the image of a place, as well as showcasing an area's natural or built attractions, through which they promote healthy, active life-styles, and community involvement. Visitscotland,(2014), reported that, accommodation providers, restaurants and local producers benefit from events and the visitors they bring while community groups get involved in organizing and volunteering. Local charities benefit through fund raising and awareness building. There are many examples across the world of mass participation in sports events that have had positive impact on tourism in the local area (Visitscotland, 2014).

The African continent has now a common reference framework to promote sustainability and responsibility in the tourism sector. It was comforting when in April 2012, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) released an analytical report on Nigeria's tourism that read, travel and tourism generated 838,500 jobs directly in 2011 (1.4 percent total employment) and is forecasted to grow by seven percent in 2012 to 897,500. This includes employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger services excluding commuter services. It also includes for example the activities of the restaurants and leisure industries directly supported by tourists (Jumia, 2015). The report went further to say, capital investment in the tourism sector was N252.5 Billion Naira adding that it would rise by 2.3 percent in 2012. It said a rise of 6.5 percent per annum was envisaged over the next 10 years. And forecast that domestic travel spending was expected to grow by 1.5 percent in 2012 to N119.4 Billion Naira and rise by 2.4 percent per annum to N151.5 Billion Naira in 2022. Pertaining to GDP the WTTC concluded that total contribution of travel and tourism was N1.232 Trillion Naira being 3.3 percent of Nigeria GDP in 2011. Adding that GDP was expected to rise by 10.8 percent in 2012 and 7percent per annum to N2.691 Trillion Naira by 2022.(sJumia, 2015). Despite the impressive potential of Nigeria's tourism as highlighted by the WTTC report, it seems Nigeria has failed to evolve into a prominent tourism destination in Africa let alone in the world. Yet the country is enormously blessed with several resource-based tourist attractions (Jumia, 2015).

Sports has become an important aspect of Nigerian culture so much that the interest in and popularity of sports have affected the political, social, economic and educational fabrics of the nation(Yazid,2014).Similarly, Shilbury, Sotiriadou and Green (2008), observed that fundamentally sport development is about participation and promoting the opportunities and benefits of participation. People are increasingly travelling to participate in sports events. As athletics has become increasingly popular, and big events such as the London Marathon and Great North Run receive widespread media attention with a mix of elite athletes, celebrities and charity runners adding to the interest, more people are travelling to take part in races. The same behaviour can be seen in other sports such as cycling and swimming (Visitscotland, 2014). According to Johnson and Lewis (2014), the timing of hosting sport tourism events during tourism high season can socially impact the quality of life of the residents living within the host community. Therefore, in order to successfully assess the impact of these types of events on the social well-being of residents, the perceptions of those who reside in close proximity to the event should be taken into consideration. Social impact assessment of sport tourism events though seemingly important, are often avoided by scholars who give precedence to the perceived economic benefits of hosting a tourism sporting event. Avoidance in measuring the social impact stems from the limited credibility that this type of assessment is believed to have as the perceptions of residents can change over time regardless of this, the manner in which local residents view a particular event is critical to its long-term success from a social sciences perspective.

Events such as National Sport Festival, Nigeria leagues and others alike, are sports activities that make people travel increasingly in Nigeria. An example of Mass participation in sport is the 10km Okpeke Road Race Marathon which is a traditional intermixes of local recreational and upcoming runners with the best of the best. Okpeke is a town in Etsako East Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. Okpeke is famous for its position on the hill top in the Edo North Senatorial district and its huge agricultural and investment potential and quite a suitable tourism destination. In the 5th edition of this Marathon, which took place in June, 2017 Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, Morocco, Israel, Bahrain and Nigeria were the participating countries(okpekperoadrace.com/race information). Tourism is a dynamic and competitive industry that requires the ability to adapt constantly to customers changing needs and desires as the customers' satisfaction safety and enjoyment are particularly the focus of tourism business. Tourism is the activity of people travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for leisure business or other purposes for not more than one consecutive year (Oluwaseyi, 2017). Elandu (2013), opined that apart from mega sports events like Olympics Games and FIFA World Cup, regional sports competitions like Africa

Games attract sport tourist from all parts of Africa especially Nigeria. Nigerians and foreigners still temporarily leave their residential homes to participate in National, regional, interstate, inter-local governments, Universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Secondary schools and Primary school's sports competitions. In Nigeria, the National Sports Festivals is now fast growing in terms of sports tourism. Athletes, coaches, media crew, fans and spectators from different states of Nigeria leave their homes to participate in sports competitions.

According to Doswell (1997), all forms of development bring about change, and entirely new values and ways of life. Some of these forms of development include; political development, economic development, social development, community development, rural development, and of course tourism development among others. The term 'development' often connotes positive change, expansion, growth and transformation. However, the concept of growth in relation to development is subject to questioning. For instance, a nation's economy can be growing without corresponding improvement in the social and economic lives of the people. Society may be studied in terms of different but mutually dependent sub-systems. These have various special foundations and domain of influence. Does economic growth automatically mean positive development in the social and ecological system as well? It is clear that this cannot be taken for granted. Development is also a question of scale. Positive development at the macro level is, for instance not automatically positive for households and individuals at the micro levels. Hence the term 'development' may not always mean growth, but it always implies change. This change can be sudden or revolutionary; it can be gradual or evolutionary.

Gender is one of the demographic characteristics of the respondents used in various researches. Grademiners (2017) stated that a huge component of basic human rights is equality between the sexes; meaning that both men and women poses equal opportunities to showcase their potentialities in all ramifications and opinions including mass participation in sport events and tourism. Although inequality issues still persist, maintaining equal rights and justice for both sexes is critical in order to meet a wide range of sustainable goals in global development. According to W.H.O (2021) gender refers to those characteristic or features associated to men, women, boys and girls, which are socially constructed. This takes into consideration behaviours, norms as well as roles attached to men, women, boys and girls especially in terms of their relationships with each other. Gender is said to influence people's experience of and access to health services. Therefore, such services should be affordable, accessible and acceptable to all men and women, boys and girls with reasonable amount of equity and dignity. Hence inequality that intersect with social and economic inequalities and any form of gender-based discrimination intersects with other factors such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability, age, geographic location, etc. (W.H.O. 2021). As such, sport for all through mass participation in various sport events is recommended.

Going by the aforementioned, Chinurum, Lucas and O'Neill (2014) stated that the society expect males and females to adopt, believe in, and fulfill specific gender roles and other established stereotypes. For instance, males are generally expected to be strong, independent, and athletic; whereas females are expected to quiet, obedient, attractive and nurturers. Compliance to the enforced gender order as stipulated is demanded by the society. It has been observed that over the years gender roles of men and women in the society have been experiencing a lot of dynamism especially in the world of sports. Thus in recent years there has been a significant shift from advocating for "gender equity in sport towards using 'sport for gender equity and personal development. Although female athletes are beginning to establish themselves and are becoming more prominent in the sport world as well as in the society at large, many still wonder how these women feel about the evolution of gender roles and how they have influenced the opinions and perceptions of female athletes.(Chinurum, Lucas and O'Neill ,2014) Therefore, this study intends to investigate the influence of mass participation in sports events on the development of tourism in Nigeria based on people's gender with a view to ensuring sustainability in the tourism industry and the entire development of the country

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain whether mass participation in sport events influence the development of tourism in Nigeria based on the respondents' gender.

Methodology

Descriptive survey and Ex-post facto research designs were used. A self-developed questionnaire with likert scale was validated and pilot tested for reliability. Six hundred and twenty two copies of the instrument and were administered to staff members of sort councils/commissions and those of tourism boards in the twelve sampled states across the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. Six hundred and twenty one copies of the instrument were

retrieved. The data supplied by the respondents were statistically analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviation, Mann-Whitney U test to test the hypothesis formulated.

Results

Hypothesis: Respondents do not significantly differ in their opinions on influence of mass participation in sport events on the development of tourism in Nigeria based on their gender.

Table showing Mann-Whitney U test statistics on difference in respondents' opinions on influence of mass participation in sports events on the development of tourism in Nigeria on account of their gender.

Ranks

Variable	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Z	P
TOURISM DEVT. IN NIGERIA							
	Male	352	305.54	107550.50	45422.500	-0.869	0.385
	Female	269	318.14	85580.50			
	Total	621					

p calculated > 0.05, at Z -0.385

Outcome of the table shows that there is no significant difference on difference in the respondent's opinions on influence of mass participation in sports events on the development of tourism in Nigeria based on their gender. This is because the calculated p value of 0.385 is greater than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that respondents do not significantly differ in their opinions on influence of mass participation in sports events on the development of tourism in Nigeria based on their gender is hereby accepted.

Discussion

There is significant no significant difference in the respondents' opinions on influence of mass participation in sports events on the development of tourism in Nigeria based on their gender. Balaska (2014). Found out that there was low annual sport participation rates and low frequency of sports participation. Similarly, females were reported to have higher sports participation rates than their male counterparts without the difference being statically significant, while it was observed that sports participation significantly decreased among less educational and older individuals. In a similar study conducted specifically on gender differences for active sport events participants, Triantarfylliais and Darvin (2021) revealed that women have significantly higher perceptions of connectedness to nature than men. However, Chen (2010) found out that self-actualization, socialization, travel, volunteering, and promoting gender equality and other social responsibilities through sport participation enable people to reach their potential and achieve a healthy lifestyle; hence participation in sport events could provide both male and female tourists the opportunity to reach their goals. According to the results of t-test in independent groups presented by Avcikut and Yagci (2016) there is significant difference between emotional labour behaviors displayed in tourism business and gender. Modzik, Kazimierczak and Moska (2021) using chi-square statistics found out that there was no significant relationship between gender and choice of modern or traditional sport events; hence in modern events 57.7% of the participants were men, whereas in traditional events it was 53.3%, thus the difference was not statistically significant.

Conclusion

In conclusion mass participation in sports events influences the development of tourism in Nigeria with regards to the respondents gender. Both male and females have almost equal opinions as regards influence of mass participation in sport events on the development of tourism in Nigeria. Therefore, no significant difference was found in the respondents' opinions on influence of mass participation in sports events on the development of tourism in Nigeria based on their gender.

Recommendations

1. Both males and females, locals and internationals, young and old, should be motivated to mass participate in sport events alongside mass tourism even if it is domestic in nature.
2. Individuals and organizations in both the sport and tourism industries should sponsor and create awareness on the benefits of mass participation in sports events.

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