

*Research Paper*

## **Sport Tourism Event and Cruises as Predictors of Employment Generation in Sport Sector of Southern Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The sport tourism in Nigeria has a great potential of generating employment. However, the sector has not been fully utilized because of non commitment of the stakeholders in the sport industry. Several studies on economics of sports done locally have neglected the aspect of sports tourism with specific emphasis on sports tourism events and cruises. Given the prevailing circumstances which make the need to generate employment imperative in Nigeria, this study therefore, investigated sport tourism event and cruises as predictors of employment generation in sport sector of Southern Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design of ex post facto type. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select 1,598 participants: 181 directors, 288 deputy directors, 319 managers, 346 assistant managers and 464 supervisors from selected federal and state ministries, commissions, corporations, travel agencies and tourism centres in 9 states; 3 states each from the three geo-political zones in Southern Nigeria. A self structure and developed questionnaire tagged "Sport tourism event and cruises as predictors of employment generation in sport sector" (STECPEGSS) with  $r=0.91$  was used for data collection. Data was analysed using regression analysis and the result shows that sport tourism event and cruises contributed immensely to employment generation in the sport sector of southern Nigeria. Thus, the study recommends that sport tourism event and cruises should be explored to actualize employment generation in the sport sector.

**Key words:** Sport tourism, Cruises, Employment Generation, Southern Nigeria

### **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the world, one of the fastest growing tourism niche markets is sports tourism (Gratton and Taylor, 2000). Sports tourism broadly defined is "leisure-based travel that takes individuals temporarily outside their home communities to participate in physical activities, to watch physical activities, or to venerate attractions associated with physical activities" (Gibson, 1998). Sports tourism now stand among the largest and fastest growing industries in the global economy even though sports tourism is not a new phenomenon, it has received increasing

attention in recent years as an economic development strategy (Daniels, Norman, and Henry, 2004). Indeed, the resource and infrastructural requirements of sports and tourism are often shared (Higham and Hinch, 2002).

### **Sports Tourism Events and Employment Generation**

Sports tourism events are viewed as a growing niche market and consideration of sports tourism events on the host community is an effort to understand the different ways in which local residents react to the hosting of the events and its impacts

and the reasons for their reactions. As noted by Delamere (2001) awareness of the event impacts and of resident's attitudes towards the event impacts may enable action that could lead to a reduction of unwanted disruption of local community life, thereby encouraging a balance between social and economic development. This means, hosting the event is not good enough until recognition is given to the resources used, and at the same time people (host communities) should identify with the participatory processes. Involvement of people in the host community as an integral part of both sports and tourism, directly or indirectly is vital for the continuing existence of these activities. Following this trend, negative event impacts could be minimized. Event impacts are the effects and implications of how the events impinge on local residents' quality of life and their reactions thereof (Fredline & Falkner, 2002). Base on the foregoing, Dwyer *et al.* (2000) provide a summary of tangible cost and benefits of events to include:

#### **Social Benefits/Social Costs**

1. Community development
2. Disruption to resident lifestyle
3. Civic Pride
4. Traffic congestion
5. Event production extension
6. Noise
7. Vandalism
8. Crowding
9. Property damage

#### **Economic Benefits/Economic Costs**

1. Long term promotional benefits
2. Resident's exodus
3. Induced development and construction expenditure
4. Interruption of normal business
5. Additional trade and business development
6. Under-utilized infrastructure
7. Increased property values

According to Weed and Bull {2004} the reflection presented above underscores the importance of management of events. Zauhar, Swart and Smith,{ 2005}observed

that it is widely recognized that events have the power to have impacts of a socio-cultural, economic and environmental nature on their host destination and within the affected community. Swart & Smith{2005} suggest that events are usually evaluated from an economic perspective and largely driven by the needs of government and tourism agencies to justify the staging of special events based on their economic contribution such as employment generation to the host community. This is because of the benefits or economic stimulus associated with sports tourism events (Turco, 2003).

However, studies by Turco, 2003 on the costs and benefits and impacts of events, suggests the tangible costs and benefits presented above can be used as the basis of understanding and assessing some of the impacts linked to events. Looking at the nature of the impacts that are evident above, sports tourism events could be beneficial to the host destination. Measuring these impacts depends on the scale and the nature of the event. It also cannot be disputed that when providing a sports tourism experience, utilization of resources in the entire organization of the event remains crucial{Swat,1998}.Thus, proper planning, taking cognizance of both management and impacts of sports tourism events could result in the maximization of positive impacts. It is critical that the impacts of events be managed effectively so that benefits accrue not only to select stakeholders, but to all of the host community (Richie, 2005).

#### **Sports Tourism Cruise and Employment Generation**

Cruise is often cited as the fastest growing segment of the sports tourism industry, with travel to the Caribbean region accounting for about 50 percent of the global market. In 1999, the Caribbean region hosted over 12 million cruise passengers. However, the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the cruise industry are not well understood and have been neglected in the literature. Studies on social impacts of sports tourism cruise are "practically nonexistent" (Turco, 2003) and

little research has been done to quantify the economic effects of cruise tourism on port states (WTO, 2006). The sports tourism cruise industry has the potential to provide economic benefits to a port state. However, accommodation of large cruise ships into port requires a great deal of initial capital investment in infrastructure as well as maintenance costs. As cruise ships continue to grow larger, further investment may be required {Gibson,1998}. Under these types of tourism scenarios with high infrastructure or environmental costs, rapid growth of tourism may result in a stagnation of or even a decline in GDP (Zauhar, 2004). Without significant foreign investment into this infrastructure, it is questionable whether construction of large cruise ship terminals could pass a benefit-cost analysis.

Sports tourism cruise generates revenue for a port state through passenger spending, per person head taxes, and other fees. Passenger spending is thought of as the greatest benefit in support of cruise tourism on a given island, with the gross passenger spending on the order of US\$75-100 per day (WTO, 2008). However, these numbers can be misleading because they are not corrected for leakage; the occurrence of tourist revenue flowing out of the country in which it was spent, a particular problem for many small islands since a high proportion of food and goods must be imported {Gammon&Robinson,2003}. Once leakage is taken into account, passenger spending numbers fall dramatically, providing much less economic benefit to an island nation. S

Turco (2003) describes a “tourist bubble” within which a majority of cruise ship passengers will spend their time while in port, with the core of the bubble experiencing a dramatic increase in pedestrian traffic when cruise ships are in port. He describes the tourists exhibiting pack behavior acting as though they were connected by a “behavioral umbilical cord,” disembarking from the ship as a group, proceeding down the pier together, and heading toward the city center en masse. Overcrowding caused by this behavior

according to him can inconvenience and annoy local residents, causing the locals to alter their daily behavior to avoid the central business district while cruise ships are in port. He noted that although difficult to quantify, these social and economic impacts should be taken into account by decision makers in port states, particularly island ports of call. He emphasized that sports tourism cruise cannot be planned effectively apart from broader destination or regional planning. He submitted that many of the key assets from the point of view of cruise visitors and indeed all tourists are managed by other industries. These include the small boats which make the port attractive, the main street facades where historic architecture is the valued feature, the protected wetland habitats, reefs, and dunes etc which are the reason for tours. He postulated the following as factors to consider in advancing sport tourism cruise development as thus:

1. **Port location:** A nation with several potential port sites can consider which ports are most likely to help achieve broader goals. For example to spread tourism to new areas, help strengthen infrastructure, create tourism routes, provide investment for key facilities etc
2. Design of shore facilities at the port and for tours
3. Human resource considerations (language, training etc for guides, coordinators, civil authorities etc
4. **Investment:** Can the cruise lines and/or visitors help in funding the infrastructure they need?

#### **Objective of the study**

The objective of the study is to examine the influence of sport tourism event and cruises on employment generation in the sport sector of southern Nigeria

#### **Research question**

What influence does sport tourism event and cruises have on employment generation in the sport sector of southern Nigeria?

### Hypothesis

There would be no significant influence of sport tourism event and cruises on employment generation in the sport sector of southern Nigeria.

### METHODOLOGY

The study adopted survey research design of ex post facto type. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select 1,598 participants: 181 directors, 288 deputy directors, 319 managers, 346 assistant managers and 464 supervisors from selected federal and state ministries, commissions, corporations, travel agencies and tourism centres in 9 states; 3 states each from the three geo-political zones in Southern Nigeria. A self structure and developed questionnaire tagged “Sport tourism event

and cruises as predictors of employment generation in sport sector” (STECPEGSS) with  $r=0.91$  was used for data collection. Data was analysed using regression analysis, while the split-half method was adopted and data collated and analysed using cronbach alpha coefficient to determine the internal consistency of the instrument whereby reliability for STECPEGSS ( $r=0.91$ ) and the inferential statistic of regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level.

### RESULT

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There would be no significant influence of sport tourism event and cruises on employment generation in the sport sector of southern Nigeria.

**Table 1:** Regression Analysis Showing Significant Influence (Relative) of Sports Tourism Event and Cruises, on Employment Generation in the Sports Sector of Southern Nigeria

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	5.663	.859		6.592	.000
Sports tourism cruises	.358	.083	.118	4.308	.000
Sports tourism events	1.166	.076	.332	15.443	.000

The result above shows the relative contribution of sports tourism event and sports tourism cruises on employment generation in the sports sector of southern Nigeria: Sports tourism events showed ( $\beta = .332$ ,  $P < .05$ ) while Sports tourism cruises indicate ( $\beta = .118$ ,  $P < .05$ ). This result showed that both of them contributed immensely to employment generation in the sports sector of southern Nigeria.

### DISCUSSION

The findings from the study shows that sport tourism event and cruises relatively contributed to employment generation in the sport sector of southern Nigeria. This shows that these indices are good predictors of employment generation in the sports sector of southern Nigeria. The result of this study corroborates that of Neirotti (2003), Hurdson (2007) and Delpy (2010) who noted that sports tourism events and cruises are key element in the growth

and development of sports tourism industry with emphasis on employment generation.

Similarly, Honarvar (2004) inferred that the sports tourism indices such as event and cruises count fondness for culture, art and architecture as well as night life as sports tourism development is a key factor. He noted that these variables which were embedded into sports tourism event and cruises open up employment for residents of the host communities. Daniels, Norman and Henry (2004) study also supported the result of this study when they observed that the sports tourism indices of sports tourism cruises, and event has received increasing attention in recent years as an employment generation factor in the sports tourism industry as well as an economic development strategy. They submitted that these have made sports tourism to stand among the largest and fastest growing industries in the global economy.

In the same vein, Funk and Bruum (2007) while corroborating the result of this

study noted that sports tourism event and cruises has made sports tourism one of the fastest growing niche markets in the world. They observed that tourism index has made sports tourism to expand considerably and become more clearly defined in recent years. They submitted that these indices have impacted greatly on sports tourism which has made leisure-based travel that takes individuals temporarily outside their home communities to participate in physical activities, to watch physical activities, or to venerate attractions associated with physical activities more popular and a means of generating employment for members of the community where such events are been organized.

### Recommendations

Based on the foregoing, the following recommendations were made:

1. Harmonization of the sports tourism indices are imperative in order to achieve sustainability on infrastructure and manpower needed in advancing sports tourism in various communities in Nigeria.
2. Communities should be allowed to adopt their own strategy in developing sports tourism in their locality as compelling them to adopt what obtains in other locality may not turn out to be positive due largely to differences in geographical location and what obtains there.
3. Effective marketing strategies should be embraced in enhancing good sporting image and help influence first time visitors positively in order to project the image of the host community and further attract more sports tourists for future events in the community.
4. Improvement and increase in man-made and natural sports tourism infrastructure should be evolved so as to attract sports tourist and help create employment for the citizenry.

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