

INADEQUATE FUNDING AND SUBSTANDARD FACILITIES AS DETERMINANTS OF RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH FOOTBALL LEAGUES IN SOUTH-SOUTH GEO-POLITICAL ZONE OF NIGERIA; IMPLICATIONS FOR SPORTS COUNSELLING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to find out if inadequate funding and substandard football facilities are determinants of risks associated with football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria. The cross-sectional survey design was used for the study. The population was 2,160 which constituted of football association, members, football club officials, football referees, players, members of football supporters clubs, coaches sports writers and counselors. The sample size was 1,080 respondents representing 50% of the population via multi-stage procedure. Researchers developed, structured and validated questionnaires were used. Six research Assistants were used for the study. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method. The generated data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that inadequate funding and substandard football facilities were determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organizations in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria. Recommendations were made which included; that tax rebate should be granted to organizations that are sponsoring sporting activities, in order to attract more sponsors. Old football facilities should be renovated and upgraded to meet international standards while the construction of new ones should be supervised by relevant and competent professionals to ensure compliance with international specifications. The footballers and organisers should counseled to be part of protecting and maintaining the facilities and their psychological well being.

Keywords: Funding, facilities, determinants, risks, football league, sports counseling.

INTRODUCTION

Fund is an essential requirement for the organization of sporting events. Football as a major sport that is watched by both old and young requires adequate fund for its successful organization. In the words of Okunbor and Aibueku (2007), the poor management of sports in Nigeria is largely due to lack of funds. Little or no funds are set aside for provision of sports and physical activity facilities. According to them, a situation where sports federations are starved of funds or left to source for funds for organizing sports programmes often result in several draw backs Mohammed (2005), stated that almost 90% of sports funds in Nigeria is provided by government and this cannot continue if Nigeria must get to the 'promised Land' in sports, hence alternative sources of funding should be sought to ensure that sports programmes are adequately executed.

Frosdick and Mars (1997), opined that fund has a major impact on approaches to stadia design and development. According to them, harsh financial realities have lead to new ground being described as more of resembling edge-of-town industrial units than cathedrals of football. Inadequate human and financial resources have a perplexing problem that leads to frustration and dissatisfaction on the path of organization managers and customers (Ford, 2012). Elliot (2004), in his study of 'Death' in British stadia observed that there was little pressure upon football clubs to raise standards of safety because of their difficult financial circumstances.

Olajide (2007), observed that inadequate funds is a critical problem for sports development in Nigeria. In the same vein Ekechukwu,(2013) observed that poor maintenance culture and inadequate facilities is a major setback in football organization. They equally identified lack of sports counselors, inadequate and poor standards of sports in structure, organization, manpower and competitions as a major militating factor in sports event in Nigeria.

Every football event is carried out in a facility. Football facilities should be designed to suit football activities; There is every need to ensure major components such as the field of play, spectators stand press stand, score boards, conveniences, ticket stand, dressing rooms and accessible location (Nwankwo, 2004), .

Talabi (1998), referred to sports facilities as physical structures constructed for use of sports. They are generally the immovable structures like pitches, swimming pools, courts, halls and other; further stated that facility is that quality which makes learning or doing things easy or simple. Olajide (2004), in agreement stated that facilities could be likened to laboratories within which sports are played. Sports facilities are grouped into two categories- indoors and outdoor facilities. He further stated that facilities whether indoor or outdoor have to be well planned, constructed and regularly maintained for them to be functional when there are standard improved sports participation or learning of physical activities. According to Bucher (1983), planning, scheduling and maintenance of sports facilities are major functions of sports administrators, and psychologists Adesanya (1992), opined that two major principles should be prominent in the minds of administrators in relation to facility planning. The facilities should emanate as a result of programme needs and there should be cooperative planning to avoid common mistakes. In agreement, Olajide (2007), state that facility planning requires a team approach that involves different professionals like architects, consultants, physical education and athletics, specialist.

Commenting on football facilities, Ogunjobi (2012), stated that the state of facilities in the nation stadia require the urgent attention of all stakeholders to improve the quality of football in the country. Earlier, Olajide (1998), posited that the first and most obvious necessity of sports is to be practiced is the existence of suitable facilities. Also, Awosika (1990), stated that it might be impossible to achieve satisfactory result from athletes whose training facilities and equipment are inadequate. In agreement, Akin Tayor (1998), said that it might be impossible to achieve results from athletes whose training facilities are substandard. Bucher and Krotee (2002), also opined that with proper maintenance culture and counseling, facilities would last longer.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out the determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria and the need for sports counseling. Specifically, the study sought to determine if:

- (1) Inadequate funding is a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria
- (2) Substandard football facilities are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria

Research questions

- (1) Is inadequate funding a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria?
- (2) Are substandard football facilities determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria.?

Methods

A cross-sectional survey design was used for this study. Cross-section survey design is a type of survey design that generates data from a sector of the population describing events based on their occurrence in the natural setting at a point in time (Elendu, 2010). Hence it is considered appropriate for this study. A population of 2,160 made up of forty (40) members of football association, two hundred and ten (20) players of premier and national league, forty (40) club officials of premier and national league teams, seven hundred and twenty (720) members of football referees council, one thousand and thirty (1030) members of supporters club of premier and national league teams. Seventy (70) couches and fifty (50) sports writers in match venues visited by the researcher in the area of study. The sample size for this study was one thousand eighty (1080) respondents representing 50% of the entire population of study. The multi-stage sampling procedure was used (convenience purposive, simple random sampling techniques).

In using convenience sampling technique, researchers liaised with football Association Secretaries, Referees council secretaries, Premier and National League Team secretaries and the supporters club of premier and National League Teams in South-South geo-political Zone, with the help of the six-trained Research Assistants, the questionnaire were administered during their meetings.

The researchers used purposive sampling techniques by administering the questionnaires to other respondents at match venues (for example, sports writers and couches) whose information is considered very useful for the study. The respondents were randomly selected for the study.

A ten- item close-ended questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire has sections A and B. Section 'A' elicited information on the respondents personal data while section 'B' elicited information on the respondents opinion on inadequate funding and substandard football facilities as determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization. Face and content validity of the instrument were established by six experts in the department of Human Kinetics and Health Education and counseling psychologists in university of Port Harcourt and University of Uyo while the reliability of the instrument was

established through a test, retest method carried out on twenty (20) respondents in Imo State in South East Geo-political Zone. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and a reliability co-efficient of 0.73 was established. One thousand and twenty (1,020) copies of the instrument were retrieved after completion which gave a return rate of ninety five point eight percent (95.8%). The data collected were analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used for the research questions. The response options were weighted (SA=4, A=3, D=2, SD=1). A criterion mean of 2.5 was used as a guide for taking decision on research questions.

RESULTS

Research question 1

Is inadequate funding a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria?

Table 1 Inadequate funding as a determinant of risk associated with NFL organization (N=1020)

S/N	ITEM	\bar{X}	SD	DECISION
1	Inadequate funding	2.92	0.89	Accepted
2	Misappropriation of fund	2.79	0.89	Accepted
3	Inaccessibility of fund	2.82	0.89	Accepted
	Grand mean	2.82		Accepted

Table 1 reveals that inadequate fund ($\bar{x}=2.92$, $sd=0.89$), misappropriation of fund ($\bar{x}=2.79$, $sd=0.89$) and inaccessibility of fund ($\bar{x}=2.82$, $sd=0.89$) with a grand mean of 2.84 are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in the South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria. The standard deviation also reveals that the respondents are in agreement with respect to this item.

Research question 2

Are substandard football facilities determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in the South-South geo-political Zone?

Table 2 substandard football facilities as a determinant of risks associated with NFL organization (N=1020)

S/N	ITEMS	\bar{x}	SD	DECISION
1	Bad condition of football facilities	2.90	0.88	Accepted
2	Inadequate safety provisions	2.80	0.87	Accepted
	grand	2.85		Accepted

Table 2 shows that bad condition of football facilities ($\bar{x}=2.90$, $sd=0.88$) and inadequate safety provisions ($\bar{x}=3.09$, $sd=0.87$) with a grand mean of 2.85 are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in the South-South Zone of Nigeria. The standard deviation also shows agreement among respondents with regards to this item.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Inadequate funding and substandard football facilities are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria, hence there is need for sports counselors to educate the participants and other stakeholders.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding that inadequate funding is a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in the area of study (table1) is anticipated because fund is essential in organization of activities in every human endeavour. In football organization, fund is a necessity to minimize and manage risks. This finding is in agreement with Olajide (2014), who observed that inadequacy of fund is a critical problem for sports development in Nigeria. He further stated that this is largely responsible for non-availability, inadequacy and poor standards of sports in structure, organization, manpower and competitions in Nigeria.

The finding that substandard football facilities are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football organization in South-South geo-political Zone of Nigeria, (Table2) is not unexpected because football facilities play important role in football organization, therefore they should be well designed to suit the purpose. This finding is in agreement with Ogunjobi (2012), who observed that the state of facilities in the nation stadia require urgent attention of stakeholders to improve the quality of football in the country. Finally, all the participants and stakeholders are all in agreement that for the facilities to be well maintained and funds appropriately used, sports counselors need to be on ground to educate them, because our maintenance culture in the country is very poor. In other countries of the world, sports psychologists are employed by various football league organization to assist in counselling sports men and others. Our country should adopt this into the system.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that inadequate funding and substandard football facilities are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in the area of study. Also there is need to have sports counselors on ground to counsel sports men and all the stakeholders to improve maintenance culture and financial intelligence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made base on the findings of the study.

- (1) The scope of sponsorship drive for Nigerian football league organization should be widened to include oil and hospitality industries and other multi-national organizations operating in the Zone to improve funding of Nigerian football league organization.
- (2) Old football facilities should as a matter of urgency should be renovated and upgraded to meet international standards while the construction of new ones should be supervised by relevant and competent professionals to ensure compliance with international specifications.
- (3) Football facilities should be sited in accessible locations with enough space to accommodate required sports, safety, welfare, restrooms, changing rooms, offices for key officials and other stadia workers.

- (4) Sports Psychologist are equally needed to improve the psychological well being of participants and stakeholders. They are also to organize reorientation services on facility management, improved handling of traumatic events and other psychological problems that may occur in the organization of football leagues.

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