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ASSESSMENT OF FANS' SATISFACTION FROM FACILITIES PROVIDED IN THE NIGERIA PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

BY

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Abstract

In an effort to spur patronage by fans, there are proliferation of new stadia built and renovated in and round the country as venues for the Nigeria Professional Football league, yet the league is suffering from poor turnout at the stadia in some places. Some match venues/stadia and clubs play with open gates or free tickets to attract fans to their home matches and yet, there is poor turnout of fans to watch the league in the stadia. The poor stadia turnout by fans is not because of the Government's and sports bodies' directives for clubs to play behind closed doors as the result of COVID-19 pandemic in the country. This study was designed to assess the fans' satisfaction with the Nigeria Professional Football League whether facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League is satisfactory to the fans. The population of Nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight (9,998) fans of the twenty (20) Nigeria Professional Football Clubs under the umbrella of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) in Nigeria was used for this study. It was therefore hypothesized that there would be no significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League. The results of the findings revealed that there was significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League, In conclusion, fans derived significant satisfaction from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League. It was recommended that there is need to consider satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League.

Keywords: Assessment, Fans' Satisfaction, Professional, League.

Introduction

The need-satisfaction approach is mainly concerned with the factors that arouse, energize and activate behaviour. The term “needs” “drives” and “expectations” have been used to label these internal activating factors. The services and marketing literature, view satisfaction as an outcome of a three-step process. The first step includes fans' pre-purchase needs and expectations about the performance of the service. In the second step fans establish perceptions about the performance of the service. These perceptions then are compared with the original expectations. The result of this comparison is a level of perceived disconfirmation, which determines the level of satisfaction third step. If the performance of the service fulfills the original needs and expectations the outcome is satisfaction (Mannell, 2019).

A variety of studies have been published in the sport and leisure literature aiming to investigate needs and motives for sport and recreation participation (Aguilar & Petrakis, 2019). A review of the literature indicates that individuals are driven by multiple motives towards sport participation. Examples include improvement of their health (Fredrick & Ryan, 2013), relaxation, competition and intellectual (Alexandris & Palialia, 2019). There have been limited attempts to measure the fulfillment of these needs in sport settings, and develop measurements of the need-satisfaction concept. The leisure satisfaction scale developed by Beard and Ragheb (2010), and the recreation experience preference scales developed by Driver, Tinsley, and Manfredo (2011) are the two scales that have been widely used in the literature. They have both been developed in the context of leisure and recreation. A third scale has been recently developed by Alexandris and Palialia (2019) and further elaborated by Alexandris, Palialia and Tinsley (2019) in the context of health and fitness clubs in Greece.

Thus, Nigeria Football Association (NFA) Decree 101 of 1990 as the sole regulatory authority for football in Nigeria and recognised by both Confederation of African Football (CAF) and Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) (Mannell, 2019). An attempt was made at the congress of Nigeria Football Association on Thursday 24th July 2008 in Makurdi to repeal Decree 101 to change its name to Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) with a Bill for an Act to repeal the Nigeria Football Association Decree 101 of 1990 which was sent to National Assembly of Nigeria for consideration (NFA, 2018).

The NFA which is the owner of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) established by Decree 10 and 11 of 1990, issued the license to organise and regulate the top tier league to the League Management Company (LMC) for the purpose of organizing and promoting the league to meet global technical and commercial standards, *(NPFL*, 2013). The Association had in November 2012 with the agreement and support of the then National Sports Commission (NSC) the nation's sports regulatory authority constituted an Interim League Management Committee (ILMC) for the League as part of measures to avert a total collapse of the top tier professional league, *(NPFL*, 2013). In seeking not to perpetuate the illegality of the now defunct NPFL and to avoid running football in a vacuum in the absence of the NPFL, the then ILMC supervised the formation and incorporation of the LMC to run a transparent and commercially viable professional league, *(NPFL*, 2013). This study was aimed to assess the satisfaction of Nigeria Professional Football League fans in Nigeria and to assess fans' satisfaction to their vitality on their social and emotional status.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to assess whether the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League are satisfactory to the fans.

Research Question

Does the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) satisfactory to the fans?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was used for this study. **Stephen** (2019) stated that descriptive survey design is a kind of research design in which a person is able to find out the feelings of others about something. He added that descriptive survey design is a systematic description of event in a very factual and accurate manner. The design was considered appropriate because it sought the opinion of fans about fans' satisfaction with the Nigeria Professional Football League in Nigeria. The population of this study was Nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight (9,998) fans of the twenty (20) Nigeria Professional Football Clubs under the umbrella of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) in Nigeria(NPFL, 2019). The sample size for this study was six hundred and twenty-two (622). According to Research Advisor (2006), for a population of about ten thousand (10,000), a sample size of six hundred and twenty-two (622) is said to be adequate at 99% confidence level. The sample size of six hundred and twenty-two (622) fans of the twenty (20) Clubs were randomly selected from Nigeria Professional Football League for this study. In order to assess the fans' satisfaction with the Nigeria Professional Football League, the appropriate instrument to obtain the information is a well-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire have two (2) sections. Section A on demographic data of the respondents, section B for fans' satisfaction of the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League. A letter of introduction was collected from the Head of Department Human Kinetics and Health Education introducing the researcher to the management of these clubs for permission to collect data using twelve (12) research assistants who visited each of the respondents in their respective places. Research assistants were properly instructed to handle the instrument for this study. A total of six hundred and twenty-two (622) copies of this questionnaire was distributed by the research assistants to all the respondents from all the twelve (12) NPFL clubs in the six (6) geo-political zones in Nigeria.

Result

The table below, revealed significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League.

Number	**χ^2 cal.**	**χ^2 crit.**	χ	**Df**	**P-value**	**Decision**
619	47.08	9.488	0.05	4	0.001	Rejected Null Hypothesis

(χ^2 critical = 9.48, P> 0.005)

The table showed the p-value of 0.001 which is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance and the ^{2} calculated value of 47.08 which is greater than the ^{2} critical value of 9.488 at df4. This result indicated same significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League. Hence, the implication of this

result was to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League.

Discussions

Hypothesis stated that there is no significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League. This hypothesis was tested to assess if there is significant satisfaction derived by fans from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League. Finding from this study revealed that fans derive significant satisfaction from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League. This finding is in agreement with that of Arnold (2018), who found that attendance is not synonymous with revenues and dissatisfaction; higher prices, income from other products, the introduction of new competitions and products including the facilities on ground lead to fans satisfaction which make club revenue to grow. Also, findings from this study with regards to fans' satisfaction on the facilities for Nigerian Professional football leagues agrees with that of Wann, Carlson & Schrader (2019) who found that motives for attendance is directly related to product loyalty. Spectators' and fans' motives differ depending on degree of loyalty to the team and the facilities available for NPFL matches. They suggested that spectators with a high degree of product loyalty give priority to the facilities available and were more likely to attend matches with friends than family. They added that General customer satisfaction brings many benefits. For example, satisfied customers are less price sensitive, less influenced by competitors, buy additional products and stay with the product longer. This implied that the amount of satisfaction derived by fans with regards to facilities increases the degree of loyalty they show to their team and the NPFL matches. The finding of this study also agrees with that of Hill and Green (2010) who noted that the sports facility is an important element in the marketing sport, since the sport is dependent on the facility for its production and services, predominantly the experience within the stadium bring about fans satisfaction. Surprisingly, the agony of watching a live match at a poorly constructed stadium, with bad seats and unusable convenience, kills the passion many have for the game; the bad condition of some NPFL stadiums has taken life away from the game. More so, the finding of this study is in line to that of Behzad (2014) who found that data on game quality, augmented service, interaction, outcome, environment, fan satisfaction and attendance from spectators attending an Iranian premier league soccer match by means of a survey show that quality of the game, an exciting game atmosphere, the physical environment of the stadium and outcome quality (opportunities for people to come together to be entertained) are among the factors that increased fan satisfaction with the event. Furthermore, games and services satisfaction were found to have a significant effect on fans' behavioural intentions in terms of attendance. He also found that fans' satisfaction was found to be mediating the relationship between event quality and game attendance. These findings are important to sports marketers and managers in helping them consider strategies to increase the revenue of a sports team or stadium by satisfying fans and encouraging them to attend matches. Since finding from this study revealed that fans derive satisfaction from the facilities provided in the Nigeria Professional Football League.

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