

ASSESSMENT OF PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF EVENT CENTRES' OPERATIONS AMONG CUSTOMERS IN OSOGBO METROPOLIS, OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assesses the perceptions and satisfactions of events facilities and services among customers in Osogbo metropolis in Osun State, Nigeria. The study population comprises of all the event centres registered with Osun State Ministry of Commerce, Cooperative and Empowerment which is about eight (8) in numbers, out of which three were selected through random sampling procedure. Purposive sampling technique was also employed to select 50 respondents from all the three sample event centres in the study area that were hosting event during the period of data collections which lasted for about four (4) weeks. Findings of the study revealed that security services and toilet facilities in most of the event centres are inadequate but customers seem to be satisfied with parking space facilities and hall furniture and fitting. In order to enhance the operations of event centres the study recommended improvement in power supply and that relevant government agencies saddle with approving and registration of event centres should ensure that they meet all necessary town planning standard in terms of space and relevant setbacks. The study is significant to Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation, Osun State Bureau of Tourism and the researchers in the field of event management.

Key words: Event Centre, Perceptions, Satisfaction, Operation and Customers.

Introduction

In recent past years, events have been basis for tourism participation in both developed and developing countries. Event Organization, Planning and Marketing have greatly enhanced tourism activities. According to Allen, O'Toole, Harris and McDonell (2011) when one critically examines tourism, one may see that it affects all our lives because it intermingles with the entirety of every community, residents, regions or countries. Moreover, the proliferation of event industries in recent time have led to the formation of strong and viable event programmes with their own key players such as practitioners, suppliers and professional associations. Event industries have been greatly affected by rapid

globalization of market and communication and this have also structured the formation of the industry. Similarly another factor that has affected the event industry is the increasing governmental regulation, policies which have left the industry operating in a complex ways.

In the 1990's, the pursuit of event services have become a big business because event tourism corporations and firms were being established in many countries. Also, there were an uprising of national and regional tourist establishment and organization in Nigeria. For instance, Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), the Scottish Tourist Board, et c. Different key players have also involved in the promotion of event as measures for economic development, nation-building and destination marketing. In addition, non-governmental bodies such as corporation and boards, nowadays see events services as key element in marketing and promoting their services. Many communities, social groups and individuals now have great excitement for or interest in event services (Allen, et al, 2011).

Event centres are multipurpose facilities generally used for meetings, conventions, and the display of merchandise by a wide variety of industrial groups, professional groups, and organization. In recent years, there are proliferations of event centres in Nigeria cities Osogbo inclusive. Osogbo metropolis has fourteen (14) of such centres. Recent study by Adebayo (2016) on the level of patronage and socio-economic contribution of event centres to stakeholders which include host organization, the host community, sponsor media, participants, spectators and the co-workers revealed that event centres employ indigenes of Osogbo as staff and large percentage of their staff also come from Osun State compare to the staff from other state. Event centres as part of community service have provided good roads, among others. However, to sustain all these benefits event centres being an investment must be manage effectively. This is because the business of every business is to remain in business. To achieve this, business makes profit by obtaining customers and retaining them. Unfortunately, the business world of today is excruciating hence, managers need to pay attention to what customers want, how they want it and where they want it and at what price. Observation shows that event centres business within Osogbo metropolis still believe in a supply led economy, which means customers must come. They may come only if they are satisfied with facilities and services expected from event centres. Thus, we must understand customers' perception about level of facilities in our event centre as a basis for sustainable event centre development in Osogbo metropolis. The need to do this constitutes the focus of this study.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the patrons of event centres?
2. What is the customers' perception of level of facilities in event centres in Osogbo?
3. Are customers satisfied with level of facilities in event centres in Osogbo?
4. What are the challenges associated with event centres operations in Osogbo metropolis?

5. What measure should be adopted to ameliorate problems confronting event centres operations in Osogbo metropolis?

Study areas

Osogbo is located within longitude 4.3°E and 4.4°E of the Greenwich and latitude 7.4°N and 7.8°N of the Equator see Fig.1 below. Osogbo is the capital of Osun State, Nigeria, see Fig.2 below. Osogbo has population of 187,704 people (National Population Commission, 2006). Osogbo has tropical rainforest climate with two marked season namely, dry season and wet/raining season. Osogbo falls within the tropical rainforest of south-western Nigeria. The economic structure of Osogbo as a State capital can be categorised into formal sector and informal sector. This is comprised of legally recognised firms/establishments that have structured operation, public service/administrative activities, large-scale companies (e.g. steel rolling mill and machine tools) and business services (of expatriate firms, indigenous establishments and professional enterprises) fall under this sector. On the other hand, informal sector relates to primary activities (agricultural occupation), secondary activities (traditional and modern crafts e.g. weaving tailoring, hair dressing, retailing, etc.), small distribution and tertiary activities (for instance transport operations, restaurant, dry cleaning etc.). Osogbo the State Capital is known for her annual traditional festivals include famous Osun Osogbo festival that attracts thousands of people from all over the world.

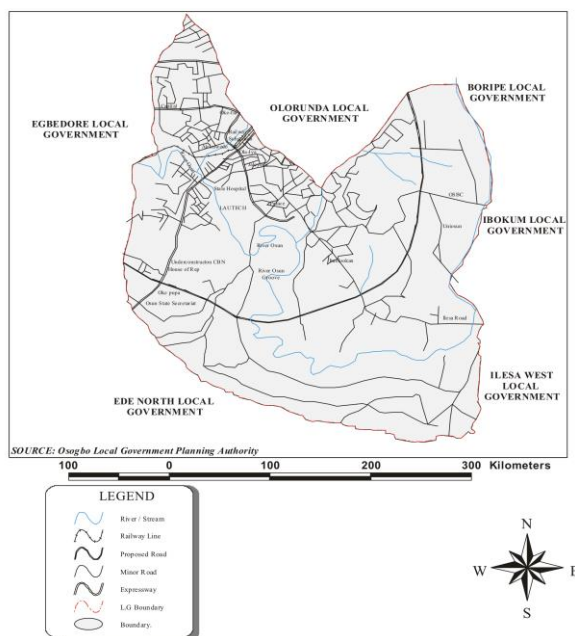


Fig.1: Osogbo Metropolis
Nigeria

Source: Ministry of Land & Physical Planning, Osogbo
& Field Work, 2019

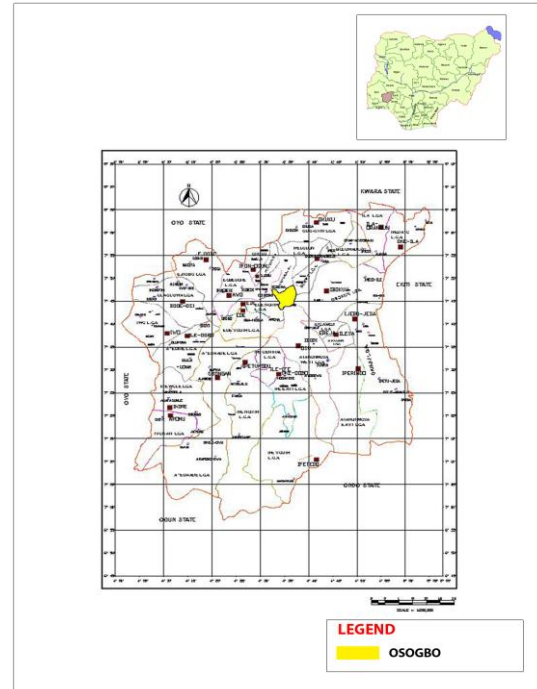


Fig.2: Osogbo Metropolis in Osun State

Source: Ministry of Land & Physical Planning,
Osogbo & Field Work, 2019

Methodology

The study population comprises of all the events centres registered with Ministry of Commerce, Cooperative and Empowerment in Osun State and located in Osogbo metropolis which are eight (8), see table 1 below.

Table 1: Event Centres in Osogbo Metropolis

| S/No | Event Centres | Locations |
|------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Funfield | Adjacent Leisure Hotel |
| 2 | GMT | Bye-pass ring road |
| 3 | Delightsome | Halleluyah Estate Osogbo |
| 4 | WOCDF | Ring road Osogbo |
| 5 | Adebimpe | Opposite Stadium Osogbo |
| 6 | Aurara | Ring road Osogbo |
| 7 | Yessry | Zone 11 Along Owode Ede |
| 8 | Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding | Behind Government Secretariat, Osogbo |

Source: Field survey, 2019

Out of the eight (8) event centres in Table 1 above, researchers selected three (3) event centres through random sampling procedure. Also, purposive sampling techniques was employed to select fifty (50) respondents from event stakeholders in any of the three sample event centres that host event during the period of data collection, which lasted for about four (4) weeks. Where the 50 respondents could not be sought from one occasion researchers waited until any of the other event centres was hosting event. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study because it identifies important common patterns that cut across variations. It permits logical generalization and maximum application of information to other cases. The interviewees' ages are between 20 years and above. The study employed quantitative and qualitative methods. Questionnaire which was structured into section A and B was used for quantitative method. The section A part elicit information on demographic data whereas section B comprised about fifteen (15) questions and centres on eliciting information from event stakeholders directed toward answering research questions set for the study. The questions were characterized by closed-ended questions which are quantitative in nature and open –ended or pre-coded questions which on the other hand are qualitative in nature. The in-depth interview was

adopted for qualitative method and gave both the respondents and informants the breathing space to talk freely and give all the information they known about the issues. The administration of the questionnaires was done by the researchers themselves. Also, the researchers administered ten (10) questionnaires to the event stakeholders who are not part of the study area. The results were analyzed using statistics package for social science (SPSS) to examine its reliability.

Results

Data Analysis

This section analyzes data collected from questionnaire. The data were presented using table, simple percentages, mean and weighted mean as appropriate statistical tool.

Research Question 1: What are demographic characteristics of the respondents?**Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents**

| Gender | Frequenc y | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Male | 10 | 20 |
| Female | 40 | 80 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |
| Age | | |
| 20-29 years | 22 | 44 |
| 30-39 years | 22 | 44 |
| 40-49 years | 5 | 10 |
| 50 years | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |
| Marital status | | |
| Unmarried | 29 | 58 |
| Married | 13 | 36 |
| Others | 8 | 6 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |
| Religion | | |
| Christian | 35 | 70 |
| Muslim | 15 | 30 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |
| Education Qualifications | | |
| Secondary | 6 | 12 |
| Tertiary | 44 | 88 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Source: Field survey, 2019

Table 2 above showed that 10(20%) of the respondents are males while 40(80%) are their female counterparts. 22(44%) of the respondents are aged 20-29 years, 22(44%) are aged

30-39 years, 5(10%) are aged 40-49 years and 1(2%) is aged 50 years and above. 29(58%) are unmarried, 18(36%) are married and 3(6%) indicated other marital status. 35(70%) are Christians while 15(30%) are Muslims. 6(12%) had secondary school certificates while 44(88%) had tertiary school certificates. From the data one can see that female are more interested in attending events and participating in social gathering than male. This may be due to the fact that majority of them are young and unmarried usually consider such gathering as an avenue to meet their future partners and for social networking. Also, majority of the respondents were Christians because of the strong view of the Islamic religion on the activities and service available in a tourist centre. The demographic characteristics of respondents in this study are similar to the pattern observed by (Tijani, Habeeb and Umeh (2015) and Arowosafe (2017) in their various studies of tourism and hospitality activities in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: How do customers rate the facilities in event centres?

| S/N | Statement | Poor | Very Poor | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Mean |
|-----------------------------|---|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------|
| 1 | How will you rate parking Space facilities | 6 12% | 1 2% | 13 26% | 19 38% | 11 22% | 3.56 |
| 2 | How will you rate the hall Furniture and fitting | 2 4% | 2 4% | 22 44% | 11 22% | 13 26% | 3.62 |
| 3 | How do you rate the security services | 6 12% | 0 0% | 23 46% | 16 32% | 5 10% | 3.28 |
| 4 | How will you rate the toilet facilities | 3 6% | 3 6% | 26 52% | 12 24% | 6 12% | 3.30 |
| Weighted Mean = 3.44 | | | | | | | |

Table 3: Customers rating on the facilities in event centres

Source: Field survey, 2019

Responses on the customers rating of the facilities in event centres in Table 3 showed that parking space facilities (mean of 3.66), ranked highest followed by hall furniture and fitting (mean of 3.62), security services (mean of 3.40), the lowest rated facilities is toilet

facilities with (mean of 3.30). This implied that security services and toilet facilities were inadequate in most of the event centres since their mean of 3.40 and 3.30 are lower than weighted mean of 3.50.

Research question 3: What is the level of customer satisfaction with the facilities in event centre?

Table 4: Level of customer satisfaction with the facilities in event centres

| S/N | Statement | Poor | Very poor | Good | Very Good | Excellent | Mean |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|------|
| 6 | What is the level of cleanliness of the hall | 0 0% | 2 4% | 11 22% | 30 60% | 7 14% | 3.84 |
| 2 | What is the level of ventilation In the hall | 2 4% | 0 0% | 21 4.2% | 24 48% | 3 65 | 3.52 |
| 1 | What is the level of the artificial light in the hall | 1 2% | 2 4% | 26 52% | 18 36% | 3 6% | 3.40 |
| 4 | What is the level of availability Of electricity | 2 4% | 4 8% | 21 42% | 19 38% | 4 8% | 3.38 |
| 5 | What is the level of waste disposal | 9 18% | 2 4% | 22 44% | 16 32% | 1 2% | 2.96 |
| 6 | What is the level of availability of water | 10 20% | 4 8% | 20 40% | 13 26% | 3 6% | 2.90 |
| Weighted Mean = 3.33 | | | | | | | |

Source: Field survey, 2019

Responses on the level of customer satisfaction with the level of facilities in event centers in table 4 showed that participant were satisfied with the level of cleanliness of the hall (mean of 3.8%) which is higher than weighted mean of 3.37 followed by the level of ventilation in the hall (mean of 3.56) and the level of artificial lighting in the hall (mean of

3.38). On the contrary many of the respondents were not satisfied with the level of availability of electricity (mean of 3.34), level of waste disposal (mean of 3.10) and the level of availability of water (mean of 3.02). The poor toilet facilities in many of the event centres as reported by respondents are due to unavailability of water in the study areas. This finding is in line with similar study by Tijani, Habeeb and Umeh (2015) that inadequate water facilities in hostel accommodation accounted for poor toilet and bathroom conditions in their study areas. Thus, one can conclude that there is a relationship between respondents' perception of facilities in event centres and their satisfaction with the event centres operations.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges facing the operations of events centres in Osogbo metropolis.

During the course of this study, it was discovered that the event centres operating in Osogbo metropolis in Osun State in Nigeria are currently facing some challenges or issues which include bad location, poor good road condition, poor electricity supply, poor toilet facilities and inadequate security. These were the challenges stated by the respondents.

Research Question 5: What are the possible solutions to the challenges facing the operation of event centres in Osogbo?

Some of the possible solutions to the challenges facing the event centres operating in Osogbo metropolis are:

- i. Power supply should be improved upon by the appropriate authorities.
- ii. Event operators should improve on their sources of water supply where they cannot get efficient water supply from Osun State Water Operation they should make adequate provision through drilling of boreholes.
- iii. Government of Osun State should consider rehabilitating all roads that connect the event centres.
- iv. Operation of event centres need to support the efforts of Nigeria Police in areas of security by providing private guards for their business.
- v. Lastly, relevant government agency in charge of approving and regulating operation of event centres i.e. Osun State Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Physical Planning, Osun Bureau for Tourism among others should ensure that they consider the following before they approve and register any event centres(s) for business:
 - That they are located in very accessible areas.
 - That they must meet all necessary town planning standards.
 - That their sewage and refuse disposal are standard.

Conclusion

In recent years there are proliferations of events centres in Nigerian cities including Osogbo that accommodate about 14 of them. Recent study by Adebayo (2016) on the level of patronage and socio-economic contribution of event centres to Osogbo metropolis

revealed that event centres contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of Osun State in terms of provision of the following amenities and infrastructure: road, water, schools, markets, good sewage system, electricity supply among others. However, to sustain all these benefits, we must understand the needs of customers that patronize event centres(s) in the State of Osun, using Osogbo Metropolis as a case of study. To achieve this laudable aim all the event centres in the study area were identified including their customers' perception and their level of satisfaction. The study also identified the challenges confronting event centres operation and possible solutions to problems identify for smooth operation of the event centres in the study area.

Recommendations

In order to enhance the operation of event centres in the Osun State and in Osogbo in particular, the following recommendations are suggested:

- (i) Since power supply constitute the greatest challenges to operators of event centres in form of epileptic in its supply and when its available in most cases are of low current, Government can offer assistance to them in form of subsidizing the cost of acquisition of transformer for their sole usage or consider any areas that have event centres as priority anytime government is distributing transformers for the benefit of community.
- (ii) Where its possible operators of event centres should form cooperative society and register such cooperative societies with Osun State Ministry of commerce, Cooperative and Empowerment with a view to seek government support in areas of grant or soft loan to upgrade the level of their facilities in areas of water, waste disposal, security guards, access road among others.
- (iii) Relevant government agencies in the Osun State in charge of approving and regulating operation of event centres i.e. Bureau for Tourism, Ministry of Commerce, Cooperative and Empowerment, Ministry of Physical Planning among others should ensure that they consider the following before they approve and register any event centre for business:
 - That event centres are located in very accessible areas.
 - That event centres meet all necessary town planning standard in terms of space and relevant setback.
 - That event centres sewage and refuse disposal facilities are standard.

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