

Influence of Security on Fan Attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League Matches

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Abstract—The stadium transcends a field of play to cultural heritage of a club especially when there is security of life and property and a conducive environment with exciting media facilities, CCTV and adequate field of play. Football fans love watching their clubs' matches especially when nothing discourages their presence in the stadium. This study investigated the influence of security on fans' attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches. Descriptive survey research design was used and the population consists of all Nigeria Professional Football League fans. Simple random sampling technique was used to pick a state from the six geopolitical zones. 600 respondents comprising male and female fans were sampled from the ten selected vendors' stands in each selected state. A structured questionnaire on Security and Fan attendance scale (SFAS) was used. The instrument consists of two sections. Section A seeks information on demographic data of the respondents, while section B was used to elicit information on security and fans' attendance. The modified instrument which consists of 20 items has a reliability coefficient of 0.73. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significance level. The completed questionnaire was collated, coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage and inferential statistics of chi-square (X^2). Findings of this study revealed that adequate security significantly influences fan attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches. There is no sport that can develop if the facilities in use are inadequate. Improving the condition of the stadium in Nigeria is paramount to the development of the Nigeria Professional Football League. All stakeholders in the organization of the League must put into consideration the need to improve the standard of the stadium as it will help to increase the attendance of fans during matches. Only the standard ones should be used during matches.

Keywords—Adequate Security, fans attendance, football fans, football stadium, Nigeria Professional Football League.

I. INTRODUCTION

SECURITY at sports venue is paramount for the success of any sports competition. It has remained as one of the indices to measure growth of any sporting event. Before any competition is organized, the stakeholders have one thing in mind; to have a successful event with a lot of fans who at the end of the game will definitely come back again with other friends and family members. Fans are likely to be encouraged to watch matches at venue if security is adequate. This is because fans prefer watching their clubs game than listening to the result after the game. Football stadium needs to be adequate and well secure. The use of closed circuit television surveillance and security personnel must be available before, during and after the competition, both inside and outside of the stadium. This should include law enforcement agency as well

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as trained personnel employed by the stadium management.

A stadium is an important place of interest to fans. It should be warm, safe and enjoyable such that fans will always like to come back again without taking into consideration the result of the game. It must be well equipped and painted with attractive colors. It is not the pure competition between the two teams anymore that attracts a lot of fan; it is also the event character around the stadium, where the fan is entertained before during and even after the match. A range of different meals and drinks together with music acts and video shows contribute to the fans' entertainment. Modern stadium must provide closed circuit television surveillance; spectators are to be identified by the number of their seats and have their safety guaranteed [1]. The design and construction of a stadium must take cognizance of security and safety measures to athletes, officials and fans. There must be adequate entrance and exit around the stadium with a parking lounge. It is one of the factors that can influence fans' satisfaction and encourage them to come back again for future games [2]. The excitement, crowds cheering and social interaction from the stadium could also create the sense of value that fans crave [3]. It is only when the stadium is secured that fan can bring in more friends and colleagues to the stadium. This means that if security is guaranteed then more spectators are likely to become fans after a while.

Right from the entrance to the stadium to the exit, a lot of logistics need to be put in place without giving any attendee a sense of fear or threat. Some fans are used to leaving the stadium before the end of the match so as to avoid any commotion that may happen at the end of the match. Virtually all the clubs featuring in the Nigeria Professional Football League have shown lackadaisical attitude to provision of adequate security of match venues [4]. This is not surprising because most of them want to win all their home matches and once the security is not good, the away team will be more concerned about getting back home in one piece than defeating the home team. This aspect of the game needs to be addressed squarely because security of life and property of match venue is crucial to the success of the game. A lot of things can go wrong when there are lapses in security. It can also affect the officiating at times. Usually every officiating has its own peculiarity depending on the stage which the competition is, the rivalry level of the teams playing, the position on the table and a lot more. All this are put into consideration before the selection of the officials for the game. Even with all the caution put in place the last fifteen minutes of the game can be a hell for the officials if security is porous.

Nigeria Referees are scared by the unrestricted movement

of the crowd at the stadium, a situation where there is no fence to prevent the fans from spreading freely even to the field of play [5]. Some referee has tasted from the commotion; they have been beaten badly, some escaped narrowly while some harassed even outside the stadium by fans. This issue is not the responsibility of the hosting team alone, but a collective effort with the organizers. All stakeholders in sports must see the need for adequate security for a successful competition, for it goes a long way in promoting the game as a whole. Recently, effort has been made by the League Management Committee in ensuring that all clubs put in place the necessary measures which include adequate security but some are yet to meet the right standard as seen in international competition.

With adequate security at all stadia across the country, the game of football will flow naturally and all the fans will definitely enjoy the game [6]. If the security is adequate even the media personnel will be encouraged covering the games. Sometimes the media personnel are not exempted from the hooliganism when it starts. Some of them narrowly escape the stadium without their camera. It is very difficult for visiting players to display their skills adequately or score against the home team when their security is not guaranteed. This anyway does not motivate the players for any away matches. This means even the quality of the game can also be affected once players start thinking of safety instead of displaying skills. Also some fans find it difficult attending their away games due to insecurity. Furthermore, some football clubs' fans capitalized on the lapses in the security and ignite commotion that may eventually leads to abandoning the game especially when they are at the losing end.

There should be adequate provisions for the physical logistics at the game site as they contribute immensely to the safety and welfare of both participant and the fans. Procurement for adequate lighting on the field and surrounding areas goes a long way to participate a safer and more controlled event. Paradoxically all valuable dividends of sports promotion eluded the society as a result of violence, which usually led to destruction and loss of sport facilities and lives [7]. It is on this premise that, this study investigated the influence of security on fans attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches.

Hypothesis: Adequate security will not significantly influence fans' attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches.

II. METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was the descriptive survey research. The population consists of all Nigeria Professional Football League fans. 600 respondents comprising male and female fans were sampled. The instruments were administered at vendor stands. Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed in choosing the respondents for the study.

At the first sampling stage, simple random sampling technique (fish bowl without replacement) was used to pick a state from the six geo-political zones. The second stage involved the use of purposive sampling technique to select ten vendor stands from the selected states. Only vendor stands

within the city were considered. At the final stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select ten respondents in each vendor stands. Only fans that understand the content of the questionnaire were considered.

Instrument

The instrument used for the study was a self-structured questionnaire on SFAS. It consists of two sections. Section A seeks information on demographic data of the respondents, while section B was used to elicit information on security and fans attendance. The instrument which consists of 20 items has a reliability coefficient of 0.73.

Procedure

The instruments were administered at vendor stands across the selected states in Nigeria. Loyal fans were motivated to fill the questionnaire after brief information of what the research is all about. The instruments were collected as soon as the respondents finish filling it.

Data Analysis

The completed copies of the questionnaire were collated, coded and analyzed, using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency counts and percentages were used for the demographic characteristics of the respondents while inferential statistics of chi-square (X^2) was used to test the stated hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant. Out of the 600 administered instruments, 548 were analyzed.

III. PRESENTATION OF RESULT

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

TABLE I
 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	536	97.81
Female	12	2.19
Total	548	100.0

The findings of the study as indicated in Table I showed that male respondents accounted for 97.81% of the sample with a frequency of 536 while their female counterparts accounted for 2.19% with a frequency of 12 respondents. This indicates that even though there are more male fans than female, there are still loyal female fans supporting their clubs.

TABLE II
 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE

Age Range	Frequency	Percent
18 -24 Years	48	8.76
25 - 31 Years	251	45.80
32 - 38 Years	170	31.02
39 & above	79	14.42
Total	548	100.0

The findings of the study as shown in Table II revealed that respondents within 25-31 years with a frequency of 251 respondents accounted for the largest proportion of the respondents with a percentage contribution of 45.80%, while respondents within 18-24 years accounted for the least

proportion with a frequency of 48 respondents.

TABLE III
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY OCCUPATION

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Student	136	24.82
Civil Servant	101	18.43
Private Sector	127	23.18
Artisan	172	31.39
Total	548	100.0

The findings of the study as shown in Table III revealed that artisan had the highest proportion with a frequency of 172 and a percentage contribution of 31.39% followed by students with a frequency of 136 and a percentage contribution of 24.82%. The least proportion was the civil servant accounting for 101 respondents and a percentage contribution of 18.43.

TABLE IV
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CLUBS

Clubs	Frequency	Percent
Abia Warrior	36	6.75
Akwa United	30	5.48
Bendel Insur.	22	4.02
El kanemi	21	3.83
Enugu rangers	31	5.66
Eyimba of Aba	38	6.93
Gombe United	29	5.29
Heartland	35	6.39
Ifeanyi Uba	32	5.84
Kano Pillar	39	7.12
Kastina United	37	6.75
Kwara United	30	5.48
MFM FC	35	6.39
Plateau United	20	3.65
Remo Stars	26	4.75
Rivers United	22	4.02
Sunshine Star	37	6.75
Wiki Tourists	28	5.11
Total	548	100.0

The findings of the study as shown in table IV revealed that Kano pillar FC fans made up the largest proportion at a frequency of 39 which accounted for 7.12% followed by Eyimba FC at a frequency of 38 which accounted for 6.93%. Plateau united FC fans accounted for the least proportion with a frequency of 20 which accounted for 3.65%.

Hypothesis

Adequate security will not significantly influence fans attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches.

TABLE V
INFLUENCE OF SECURITY ON FANS ATTENDANCE CHI-SQUARE RESULT

N	LS	X ² (Cal)	X ² (Tab)	df	Rmk
548	0.05	324.85	7.82	3	Sig.

X² = 324.85 (df = 3); *p < 0.05

Table V shows that X² calculated value of 324.85 is greater than the table value of 7.82 at df of 3, at 0.05 level of significance. Since the X² calculated value is greater than the table value, the hypothesis is thereby rejected thus showing a significant security influence on fans attendance. This

therefore leads to the conclusion that security significantly influences fans attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

This study examined the role of adequate security on fans attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches. The finding of the hypothesis as shown in Table V indicated that adequate security significantly influence fans attendance during Nigeria Professional Football League matches. This result corroborates the findings of [8]. He reported that fans prefer a rather safe, conducive and unthreatening atmosphere within the stadium. The stadium is expected to be more than just the arena in which the games are played. The quality of the game largely depicts the satisfaction fans derived from watching football games beyond winning. While it is the highest expectation of fans to see their clubs win, they are also concerned with the quality of the game but unfortunately, the condition of some stadium always affect the quality of the game itself.

It is certain that even players of the away team will also strive better once they realize that the stadium is safe. If the stadium is adequate, fans attendance to matches is likely to increase as it increases their sense of belongings. When the stadium is adequate fans crave the stadium of their clubs as they crave for their own homes [2], [3].

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There is need for heavy investment by government and private individuals, including multi-nationals in revamping sports facilities in Nigeria. Stadia need to be built and fully equipped as a strategy to developing a product that could motivate aspiring young stars to maximize their potentials in sports. The idea of having only one camera at the stadium is not adequate, as it will be impossible to cover the main football field not to mention other arena within the stadium. Home team fans must not be able to wipe away evidence especially when guilty of hooliganism, by collecting camera from the media men since there is no CCTV camera around the stadium.

The concept of brain-drain is not only applicable to the academia but also to sports where Nigerian best legs seek green pastures abroad. It is quite understandable that local clubs might not have the financial muscle to compete with their foreign counterparts, the situation in which sign on fees, and the little stipends that club players are entitled to, are delayed does not encourage players to play in local league. The Orji Uzor Kalu administration in Abia made Enyimba F.C. a force to be reckoned with in the continent to the extent that foreigners were signed into the club as players. Near similar feat is being achieved by Ugwuanyi-led administration with Enugu Rangers. Efforts must be made to motivate players so as to encourage them to remain at the local league. Issues be-devilling local league such as undue government interference, hooliganism, poor officiating, poor pitches and violence must be addressed.

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