CARNIVAL EVENTS AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which carnival events influence sustainable economic development in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of the study, a null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Literature review was carried out based on the variables of the study. A survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 774,824 adult residents. Multi-stage sampling procedure comprising of stratified and purposive sampling techniques were adopted to select the senatorial districts, local government areas, as well as one thousand (1000) respondents drawn from the six local government areas for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a four point likert scale type instrument title "Carnival events and Sustainable Economic Development Questionnaire (CESEDQ)". The instrument was validated by two experts, one from the department of Measurements and Evaluation and the other from the department of Environmental Education, in the Faculty of Education, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient reliability method was adopted to test the consistency of the test instrument. The instrument was administered personally by the researchers with the help of three trained research assistants. To test the hypothesis, simple linear regression was used. The result revealed that carnival events significantly contributed to sustainable economic development. Based on the result of the findings, it was recommended among others that Government should fully participate in all major carnival events and carnival events should be taken to a new level to clear the negative perceptions of people about the events.

Introduction:

Economic development focuses on quality improvements and the introduction of new goods and services for the general wellbeing of the citizens. When quality improvement and the

introduction of new goods and services cut across all sectors of the economy, economic development is achieved. This achieved development would be sustainable if it meets the needs of present generation with the potentials of not compromising the needs of the future generations. Government has the mandate to promote the wellbeing of the people and the nation and its people. This is why it is necessary for government to encourage economic diversification. Involvement in tourism activities is a form of diversification because tourism not only satisfy human wellbeing but also attracts money to the economy. Carnival events is a form of tourism activities.

Calabar carnival which is the only active festival that has received maximum support from the state government has been sadly described in some quarters as a conduit pipe for siphoning money and the promotion of sex tourism. Also, the carnival is believed to gulp a lot of money which some people see as waste on needless trips abroad to import costumes for the carnival in the name of cultural exchange. As it is with most Nigerian government projects, Attah, Agba & Nkpoyen, (2013) revealed that there is no published account of expenditure and return made after many years of hosting the carnival.

Esu, Arrey, Basil and Eyo (2011), stated that carnival events are part of an instrumentalist discourse in which they are viewed as important tools in tourism, regional development and also destination marketing. Carnivals are invariably modified by tourism, which leads to much reflection. Carnival events have thus become important destination products and are being used as part of development strategies that bring business and tourism.

Literature review:

Carnival events and sustainable economic development

Carnival events are part of an instrumentalist discourse in which they are viewed as important tools in tourism, regional development and also destination marketing. Carnivals are invariably modified by tourism, which leads to much reflection. Carnival events have thus become important destination products and are being used as part of development strategies that bring business and tourism (Boigens & Rogerson, 2015). Most destinations around the world have found the value of these carnival spectacles as useful tools of advancing tourism development (Nurse, 2004).

The carnival in Rio de Janerio, Brazil in 2015 attracted an estimate of 977,000 tourists and generated US$431.9 million from travellers' spending (Atchison, 2015). In Nigeria, the Calabar Carnival Festival, an annual event in 2007 attracted close to one million spectators (Esu et al, 2011). This biggest street party is being used as a strategic business venture aimed at empowering the citizens of Cross River State and Nigeria as a whole. Scholars (Rolle, 2016; Richards & Wilson, 2014; Muresherwa, Machisa & Steyu, 2017) agree that through planning

budget allocations most destinations have recognized the value of carnivals and festivals. These events, according to Richards and Wilson (2004) are believed to improve the image of the areas where they are hosted as well as stimulate sustainable economic development and attract tourists and investment.

According to Santoo and Massiano (2014) with the increase in number of events hosted in several countries, one of the fastest growing segments of tourism globally is believed to be that of carnival events. This is also validated by Slabbert and Viviers (2013). The staging of events has become an important motivator of tourism and has contributed to the development and marketing of most destinations around the world. The role and impacts of planned events of any nature have been well documented and those are significant in enhancing the destinations competitiveness and economic development.

In a study carried out by Muresherwa, Machisa and Steyu (2017) titled "residents' perceptions of the impacts of a carnival in Cape Town", carnival events were observed as a significant factor in tourism development. The target population of the study was Green Point residents that resided within two-kilometre radius from where the event was started and ended. For this study, 318 residents participated. Residents were interviewed in homes and flats situated on both sides of the street. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 24 whilst open ended questions were examined using constant comparative method and presented on concept maps indicating conceptual categories.

The study indicated that carnival events have economic benefits such as creating jobs, enhancing local business by increasing turn over and attracting tourists to the area. They study concluded that cultural events such as carnivals have contributed to the development of cultural tourism as large number of tourists are attracted to the hosting community. The Cape Town carnival has seen as exponential increase in the number of attendees to the event and the city can use the event with other home-grown events with cultural underpinnings to advance tourism development to the City of Cape Town. This helps to promote cultural exchanges between residents of the hosting area and visitors (Ezeanu, 2016). Carnival festivals or cultural tourism are noted to bring several benefits to the hosting community, and these cannot be underestimated since they enhance the image value of the destination, create jobs and promote skill development. Thus, home-grown cultural events such as carnivals have major positive impact on the host community.

Getz (2008) documented that hallmark events such as carnival have other important roles including community building, urban renewal, cultural development and fostering national identities. Esu et al (2011) added that events such as carnival are important attributes of destination marketing and hence can be used to increase visitor numbers as well as reduce tourism seasonality.

A study on host community perceptions of the impact of events by Fredline, Jago and Deery (2006) reported that the Grand Piix and the Melbourne Moomba festival in Australia were perceived as having a substantial community level benefit with less negative impacts. Some of these benefits included creation of employment opportunities and social capital type benefits such as the promotion of good values and giving residents an opportunity to have fun with their families and friends.

Arcodia and Whitford (2007) study on cultural events and carnivals established that there are other important positive impacts often associated with the staging of events and many of which may directly benefit local population. These scholars further highlighted that events benefits include the development of facilities and infrastructure, entertainment and social opportunities, and a sense of pride and identity brought about by playing host to a major event.

Esu, Arrey, Basil and Eyo (2011) carried out on analysis of the economic impacts of cultural festivals: the case of Calabar carnival in Nigeria study. The research objectives were: (1) to examine the spending pattern of the visitors on the day of the carnival and also get an overview of the accommodation and transportation pattern during their stage in the state; (2) ascertain the economic impact of the carnival and tourism benefits of the event in positioning the region.

The target population of the study consisted of all spectators and participants who participated in the adult carnival that took place in 2008. It comprises all spectators from the age of 20 years and above and who were band member found at the carnival route watching the float and participant who were band members. The cross-sectional survey design was used in collecting data. The convenience sampling design was adopted for the study. A total of 500 respondents participated.

The data were analyzed using the statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) software. The findings revealed that the staging of the Calabar carnival attracted so many visitors which led to increase in the demand for accommodation. Finding indicated that social and economic development converge around the concept of improving the wellbeing of country's citizens leading to a higher standard of living, provision of employment and economic empowerment. The direct spending of spectators in the destination in terms of accommodation, food, entertainment, communication, gifts and local transportation during the event showed that money had been injected into the economy of the city and by extension in Cross River State. This expenditure would not have been carried out by the people involved, if the Calabar carnival did not hold. This amount directly and indirectly affects the economy thereby leading to flow-ins that generates employment, income and value added.

Again, the study indicated spectators' spending on accommodation, entertainment, food, communication, gifts, transportation and other services utilized during the carnival. The money

spent by visitors on the mentioned domains of products and services of institutions and individuals constitute the direct effect of the festival in the destination. The businesses used the money to purchase goods and services employed in the production of further goods and services from other sectors of the economy. For examples, hotels, buy food and beverage, electricity and water, etc. This has indirect effect on economic development. The induce effect is the income that accrues to residents in the form of salaries, wages, rent and interest. Therefore, the results of the study supported the claim for the use of event tourism as a catalyst for the economic development of destination.

Carnival event is categorized under event tourism. Getz (2008) defines tourism event as the systematic planning, development and marketing of festival (and special events) as tourist attractions, development catalysts and image builders for destination areas. According to Marincola, (2006), events have become increasingly significant component of destination marketing and are often used to increase visitation and reduce seasonality of tourists flow. The increasing appeal of events as an additional element in the tourism destination marketing mix is evident throughout the world (Hall, 2012). Events are rapidly increasing in popularity as a means of attracting attention to geographical locations (destination).

Major events such as carnival festival stimulate the local area for sustainable economic development and 'showcase' the region to the world, promoting potential future tourism and business activity. These are some of the reasons for the increasing private and public support for events based on sustainable economic development strategies. There are other important positive impacts often associated with the staging of events, many of which may directly benefit the local population. These include the development of facilities and infrastructure, entertainment and social opportunities, and a sense of pride and identity about by playing host to a major event (Shone & Parry, 2005).

According to Dwyer, Mella, Mistilla & Mules (2000) averred that the benefits attracted to carnival as a tourism event has created a platform for organizers and destination marketers who now use historical and cultural themes to develop annual calendars of events to attract visitors and create cultural images in the host destinations by holding events in community settings. Events provide an opportunity for local communities to develop and share culture. This created a sense of value and a belief (by individuals) in the community; it also provides opportunities to exchange experiences and information. Ideally, events give tourists the opportunity to see how local communities celebrate their culture and how this affects community development.

Essien and Anthony (2019) investigated carnival activity and economic development of youth in southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria: implication for environmental adult education. It was hypothesized that there is no significant influence of carnival activities on economic development in Cross River State. The survey research design was considered most appropriate for the study while a multi-stage sampling procedure (purposive and simple

random sampling techniques) was adopted for the study. The study was drawn from the population of study and consisted of 544 respondents drawn from the study area. Tourism activities questionnaire (TAQ) was used for the study. Data obtained were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The result of the study in this regard found that carnival activities are making important contributions and influence to sustainable economic development. Nkpoyen, David & Bassey (2013) emphasized that carnival activities enhance the cultural promotion and affirmed that average revenue from carnival activities exceed $500 million. The result of the study supports Adam (2011) that the carnival industry generates significant economic returns and activities in other sectors of the economy such as entertainment, media and hospitality and retail sector.

Jimmy (2005) added that on sustainable economic level, carnival generates business opportunities for singers, song writers, choreographers, costume builders and designers, make-up artists and musicians. Importantly, carnival activities drive growth and development of small and medium enterprises. As commented by Quebec Carnival Commission (2015), carnival activities generate economic benefits such as wealth creation, intellectual property rights, industries, employment, foreign exchange earnings and private sector development and social benefits like social integration, education, community spirit, etc.

The study by Essien and Anthony (2019) concluded that globally, tourism has emerged as an important inexhaustible and sustainable economic development alternative to the crude oil. With the instability and the cascading prices of the crude oil in the international market, many states have now realized the significance of tourism industry in providing the required revenue for sustainable economic development. The state has enjoyed considerable revenues and development as a result of the promotion of tourism activities. Esu et al (2011) stated that from the Obudu ranch resort in the north, to the Agbokim waterfalls and wildlife, Safari in the central are a host of tourism destinations and activities including the carnival. Based on the study findings, it was recommended that the Calabar annual carnival should be decentralized and extended to other zones and local government areas of the state, the enable them to showcase their tourism potentials.

Nnadozie (2014) conducted a study on the impact of Calabar carnival fiesta on economic development of Calabar metropolis, Cross River State. The research design adopted for this study was the survey research design. The design was adopted based on its economical nature. The purposive sampling technique was adopted to select all the carnival bands (Bayside, Freedom, master's Blaster, Sea Gull and Passion 4). The simple random sampling technique was adopted in the selection of five hundred (500) respondents. In testing the hypothesis in the study, the independent t-test statistical analysis was used in testing and analysing the hypothesis.

The result from the testing and analysis of the data in Nnadozie (2014) study revealed that the calculated t-value of 9.655 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.960 when tested at 0.05 level of significance with 498 degree of freedom. This implies that there was a high impact of Calabar carnival fiesta on the economic development of Calabar metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Adam (2011) in Esu et al (2019) commented that for many of the countries, particularly those that boasts of the world's largest carnival celebration (such as Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, Nigeria and the Caribbean), carnival is intertwined into the very fabric of the society and is considered one of the most important culture exports. Global industry reports indicated that within the past decades, carnival's visitors' arrivals have grown by 90 percent since the late 1990s and continue to grow annually (Nwachukwu, 2017).

Government reports in different countries indicate that on average, revenues from carnival activities exceed $500 million. The carnival industry also generates significant economic activity in a range of sectors in the local economy such as entertainment, media, hospitality and retail sectors. Carnival therefore, has grown over the years into a viable and sustainable global economic industry supported by talent, expertise, skills and knowledge that are almost exclusively global (Adam, 2011).

Socio economically, carnival generates business opportunities for singers, song writers, choreographers, costume builders and designers, makeup artists and musicians, etc. Carnival has driven the growth and development of micro, smaller and medium enterprises, many of which are skills-based services. These range from entertainment services related to cultural art forms such as dance, to the production of local crafts, cuisine and the display of folk arts such as playing drums lined with goats' kins, the orchestration of steel pans and portrayal of traditional carnival characters (Jimmy, 2005).

Cultural festivals are the largest forms of eco-cultural infrastructures. They include all the different cultural celebrations and costumes (social and religion) of our various environments. These festive periods are very special. In most cultures, they are seasons of exchange of pleasantries, a period to express love and affection, a season to merry with loved ones. Some of these festivals include various carnivals such as Calabar carnival, Abuja carnival. Others are FESTAC in Lagos, the war canoes and boat regatta of the Ijaws of the Niger Delta, the several yam festivals, traditional music, folk and dance, Ojude-Oba festivals in Ijebu-Ode, the Eyo festival of Lagos in Egbaland, the popular Argungu fishing festival in Kebbi State, the Cross River State masquerade and dance, etc. (Ukpere & Wabah, 2018).

Statement of the problem

The economy of the state has decayed in that the issue of sustainable economic development has been a serious concern to policy makers and other concerned stakeholders in Nigeria

generally and Cross River State in particular. Sustainable economic development poses a challenge due to the monolithic nature of the national economy and the persistent lack of commitment to focus development strategies on the part of the people who are supposed to be prime beneficiaries of development outcomes. However, these development strategies have failed to translate the dividends of Nigeria's economic reforms into measurable benefits for citizens in various areas of the nation especially in Cross River State.

Tourism is a sector which has the potential to bring about great development. The past governments in Cross River State had recorded successes in tourism sector like influx of visitors into the state during the Calabar Carnival event. The state benefitted and there was a rise in the small-scale business sector, and these helped to boost the economy of the state. One would have expected a continuous rise, but the reverse is what we are witnessing, like closure of some tourism sites and activities while others are gradually becoming less functioning.

Although, the present state government has made efforts to revive the sector by introducing zero taxation on small scale business amongst others, yet there is low level of socio-economic wellbeing of people evident in high unemployment rates, poverty rates, low income generation and high level of criminal activities in Cross River State.

In this circumstance, what could be done to ensure sustainable economic development in the state? What are the activities that can boost sustainable economic development in Cross River State? With these questions in mind, the researchers are poised to find out if carnival events have any influence on sustainable economic development in Cross River State.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of carnival events on sustainable economic development in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to, determine the extent to which carnival events influence sustainable economic development in Cross River State.

Research question

A research question was raised to guide the study. Thus, how do carnival events influence sustainable economic development in Cross River State?

Statement of hypothesis

Based on the purpose and research question put forth for the study, a hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. Thus, Carnival events do not significantly influence sustainable economic development in Cross River State.

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Methodology:

The research design adopted for the study was survey. To obtain a representative sample, multistage (stratified and purposive) sampling procedure was used. The state was stratified into the existing three (3) senatorial districts (southern, central and northern) while the purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the local government areas with tourism sites in each strata. these local government areas were Akamkpa, Calabar Municipality, Ikom, Obanliku, Ogoja and Yakur. Precisely two LGAs in each senatorial district were selected. Five (5) members of staff of the tourism commission from each of the six tourism and staff each system (30) from 12 mostly used hotels in the LGAs (60), 10 members of staff from the Cross River State Tourism Commission and one hundred and fifty (150) persons from each L.G.A visited in the three senatorial districts (i.e 150X6=900). Total respondents were 60+30+10+900=1000 respondents. Therefore, the sample was 1000 adult citizens.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for this study was "Carnival Events and sustainable Economic Development Questionnaire (CESEDQ)." A 18 items questionnaire was divided into 3 sections. Section a elicited responses on the respondents demographic information data such as senatorial districts and LGA. Section B elicited responses from respondents' view on Carnival Events. It consists of 8 items designed in a structural 4 points modified likert scale instrument of strongly agree up to strongly disagree. The items assessed the opinion of adult men and women as it related to carnival events. Section C consists of 10 items designed on a four point rating scale of SA to SD, the items assessed the opinion of adult men and women on sustainable economic development.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Hypothesis of the study:

Carnival events do not significantly influence sustainable economic development of Cross River State. The independent variable in the hypothesis is carnival events, while the dependent variable is sustainable economic development. Simple linear regression was used to test the hypothesis. The summary of the result of analysis is presented in Table 2.

The result of the analysis presented in Table 2 showed that R = .242 which that there is a significant influence of carnival events on sustainable economic development in Cross River State. That is, the higher and better the carnival events, the better the sustainable economic development. Moreso, the R^2 = .059 which implies that the variation on sustainable economic development can be explained by 5.9% contribution of carnival events. Although the percentage contribution is very small, a careful look at the analysis of variance (F= 62.059, p< .05) is less than p(.05). This implies that there is a significant influence of carnival events on sustainable economic development in Cross River State. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2
Simple linear regression analysis of carnival events and sustainable economic development

Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F-ratio	sig.	R	R^2
Regression	1667.538	1	1667.538	62.059	.000[b]	.242	.059
Residual	26816.453	998	26.870				
Total	28483.991	999					

*Significant at 0.05 level, df = 998

Discussion of findings:

Carnival events and sustainable economic development.

The hypothesis stated that carnival events do not significantly influence sustainable economic development of Cross River State. The result of the analysis presented in Table 2 revealed that there is a significant influence of carnival events on sustainable economic development in Cross River State. The significant influence of carnival events on sustainable economic development in Cross River State is due to the Sig. value of .000, which is less than the acceptable value of .05. This could be seen as a form of showcasing the various development strategies that could bring in investors and tourists. The rich natural endowments of the state are showcased too. Small and medium scale businesses also flourish during the period of these events. Government also repair bad roads, provide infrastructures, and link up with other business sectors, thereby making the state comfortable for visitors.

The result of the finding of this research is in line with the work of Muresherwa, Machisa and Steyu (2017) titled residents' perceptions of the impacts of a carnival in Cape Town, where carnival events were observed as a significant factor in tourism development. The target population of the study was Green Point residents that resided within two-kilometre radius from where the event was started and ended. For this study, 318 residents participated. Residents were interviewed in homes and flats situated on both sides of the street. The collected data were analysed through the use of SPSS version 24 whilst open ended questions were examined using constant comparative method and presented on concept maps indicating conceptual categories.

The study indicated that carnival events have economic benefits such as creating jobs, enhancing local business by increasing turn over and attracting tourists to the area. They study concluded that cultural events such as carnivals have contributed to the development of cultural tourism as large number of tourists are attracted to the hosting community. The Cape Town

carnival has seen as exponential increase in the number of attendees to the event and the city can use the event with other home-grown events with cultural underpinnings to advance tourism development to the City of Cape Town.

This is supported by a study on host community perceptions of the impact of events by Fredline, Jago and Deery (2006) reported that the Grand Piix and the Melbourne Moomba festival in Australia were perceived as having a substantial community level benefit with less negative impacts. Some of these benefits included creation of employment opportunities and social capital type benefits such as the promotion of good values and giving residents an opportunity to have fun with their families and friends.

The finding also agreed with Essien and Anthony (2019) who investigated carnival activity and economic development of youth in southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria: implication for environmental adult education. It was hypothesized that there is no significant influence of carnival activities on economic development in Cross River State. The survey research design was considered most appropriate for the study while a multi-stage sampling procedure (purposive and simple random sampling techniques) was adopted for the study. The study was drawn from the population of study and consisted of 544 respondents drawn from the study area. Tourism activities questionnaire (TAQ) was used for the study. Data obtained were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The result of the study in this regard found that carnival activities are making important contributions and influence to sustainable economic development.

The findings agreed with Jimmy (2005) that on sustainable economic level, carnival generates business opportunities for singers, song writers, choreographers, costume builders and designers, make-up artists and musicians. Importantly, carnival activities drive growth and development of small and medium enterprises.

Conclusion

The study concentrated on carnival events and sustainable economic development in Cross River State, Nigeria. The result obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis in the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between carnival events, with sustainable economic development.

The need to mobilize people towards active participation in carnival events has become imperative in sustaining the economy of Cross River State which in turn will help to improve the standard of living of the citizens.

Recommendations

The results obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypotheses guide the researchers to make the following recommendations:

1. Government should fully participate in all major carnival events.
2. Carnival events should be taken to a new level to clear the negative perceptions of people about the event.
3. Appropriate levels of awareness concerning carnival events should be created by government and NGOs to enable indigenes tap into this area.
4. Individuals should be encouraged to display their talents in the areas of carnival events.

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