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### Socio-Economic Impacts of Event Centres on the Well-Being of Host Community in Ado- Ekiti, Nigeria

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#### Abstract

This research works which focuses on the “socio-economic impacts of event centers on the wellbeing of host community in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria” tends to discover benefits derived by host community from various event centers as well as its impact on the economy development as a whole. Data for the research work were obtained from the event management, host community as well as the clients/customers of the events centers. A survey design was used and data analyzed using inferential statistics of percentage and frequency in determining the significance of hypotheses formulated. The major findings of the study show that various events centers have impact on the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community. The study recommends that more events centers should be established within Ekiti-State and Nigeria as a whole to improve the socio-economic wellbeing of other environment, it also encourage government at all levels to establish events centre at various area of the state for other citizens to be able to have access to event centers. The study sees event centers as means of creating more employment opportunity for the society as it has become a global and national activity in the current century.

**Keywords:**1 Socio-economic,2 Event Center,3 Wellbeing,4 Tourism, 5Host Community

#### Introduction

Within the growth directions of the tourism industry, which currently represents the fourth largest industry in the world in terms of export, events act as catalysts for attracting visitors and image-makers, creating destination profiles, positioning destinations in the market, and providing competitive advantages (Bowdin et al. 2006). Their significance prompted a new subject type known as event tourism, described by Getz (1997) as: “1) the systematic planning, development, and marketing of events as tourist attractions, as catalysts for other developments such as infrastructure and economic growth, as image builders, and as animators of built attraction and destination areas; event-tourism strategies should also cover the management of news and negative events; 2) A market segment consisting of those individuals who travel to attend events or who can be motivated to attend events while away from home.” The term “event tourism” was coined in the 1980s, and it formalized the link between events and tourism (Getz, 1997).

According to Getz (1997), it is not possible to establish a universal, standardized definition of events. Indeed, one of the most frequently quoted definitions of events, offered by Ritchie (1984), explicitly emphasizes this role by describing them as “major onetime or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short or long term”. This definition is taken as embracing the other subcategories of events, including community festivals and mega-events, as Goldblatt (2002) defined events as a “planned culture, sport and political and business occasion: from mega-events like Olympics and world fairs to community festivals; from programs of events at parks and attractions to

visits by dignitaries and intergovernmental assemblies; from small meetings and parties to huge conventions and competitions.”

Tourism in the past has been based only on the accommodation and hospitality sector, transportation sector and entertainment sector with visitor attractions, such as theme parks, amusement parks, sports facilities, museums etc, taking the centre stage. This focus diverted the minds of everyone to those areas until event organizers and event managers realized that there is an area that was yet to be tapped into and this realization gave birth to the event tourism industry.

Although, people had always travelled not only for leisure purposes or for relaxation, there had also been those who had travelled for entertainment and business purposes, either to a meeting, conference, workshop, event, etc, and these people or tourists had contributed to the growth of the destinations they had visited directly or indirectly, and at large developed the event tourism industry as a whole. Baker et al, (2000). One will agree that tourism whether on a large scale or low scale, in no small measure affects the host community.

One of the biggest concerns for people in host community' was the fact that events activities and programmes always creates lot of challenges for the host communities which include traffic jams, overcrowding in public transport, noise, crimes and other vices etc, especially when such event is not well organised, hence event manager should always consider the host community when planning for their events and ensure adequate positive impact on the host rather than the challenges involve

## **Review of some Literature on the Subject Matters:**

Tourism, Event centre, Socio-economic Impact, HOST Community

### **2.1 Concepts of Tourism**

Different definitions of tourism have emerged as a result of the growth and changes in tourism related activities. The simplest definition that has been accepted for a long time according to Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2008) “the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work or residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs”.

Over the years, people have always been involved in different kinds of events when they have tried to mark either a special moment or happening in their lives. Even now that the world has gone more global with media and high technologies taking over everything and has made a lot of people lose interest in common norms and beliefs, there is still a need for social events to earmark the indigenous nature of lives. In recent times, events have become a central part to the way of life of people as there has been increment in leisure and disposable incomes which has led to the rapid growth of public events, celebration and entertainment.

Event tourism is a systematic, professional planning, development, and marketing of festivals and special events as tourist attractions, image-makers, catalysts for infrastructure and economic growth and attraction. Tourism management deals with tourism development based on analyzing the behavior and motivation of all kinds of tourists. (Getz 2017)

### **2.2 Meaning of Event Centers**

The event centers has become a commonplace in most industrialized countries that sometimes people fail to think about what has made these activities possible. Critically examining tourism, one will see that it affects all of our lives and it intermingles with the entirety of a host community, region, or country. (Cooker et'al. 2008)

The creation of events in recent times has led to the formation of a strong and viable event centers with its own key players such as practitioners, suppliers and professional associations. The industry has been greatly affected by rapid globalization of markets and communication and this has also structured the formation of the industry.

Another factor that has affected the industry is the increasing governmental regulations and policies which have left the industry operating in a complex and demanding environment (Harris and McDonnell 2011).

Due to the increasing competitiveness amongst host communities and tourists destinations, attention has been drawn to special interest markets in order to gain advantages and also to meet up with economic, social and environmental goals.

### **2.2.1 Types of Events**

An event can be described as a public assembly for the purpose of celebration, entertainment, education, marketing or reunion. Getz (2017), states that “events are temporary occurrences, either planned or unplanned, and they usually have a finite length which is normally fixed or publicized for planned events”. And they can be classified or categorized in different ways on the basis of their size, form and content. Examples of the various types are: special events, hallmark events, mega events, festivals, fairs and exhibition, expositions and shows, meetings and other business and educational events, sports events, art events.

#### **a. Special events**

Special events has been described as specific rituals, presentations, performances or celebrations that are well planned and carried out to mark special occasions or achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives. These special events range from national days and celebrations, important civic occasions, unique cultural performances, major sporting fixtures, corporate functions, trade promotions and product launches.

#### **b. Hallmark Events**

The term ‘hallmark’ literally refers to a symbol of quality or authenticity that differentiates some goods from others, or pertains to a distinctive feature. Hallmark events are major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short term and/or long term, and such events rely on their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention. (Ritchie 2014).

#### **c. Mega Events**

Different definitions and meanings have been given by different researchers concerning the word mega event. Donald Getz defines mega events as those events that yield extraordinary high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, or economic impact for the host community. Marris (2017) states that mega events can be defined by reference to their volume of visitors, cost or psychology. Other authors stressed the economic impacts of the events in their definition rather than costs, size or image. For example, Vanhove and Witt (2017) acknowledged that a mega event must be able to attract worldwide publicity

### **2.3 Impacts of Events Centers on Host Communities**

There are lots of impacts of events centers on a host community, these impacts can be positive and negative impact. However, it is the responsibility of the event’s organizers or managers to keep the positive impact higher than the negative by identifying and predicting beforehand these impacts, and then trying to manage them so as to arrive at the best results for all the parties involved which in turn gives overall positive impacts.

One way of achieving this goal, is to develop and maximize all the foreseeable positive impacts, and counter potential negative impacts. Proper planning which involves awareness and intervention should be engaged in order to address these possible negative impacts. This will therefore help the event manager to achieve a positive balance sheet and thereafter communicate it to the various stakeholders which will at the end result in the overall success of the event. More emphasis is often placed on the financial aspects probably, because it accounts for the justification of the budget goals and expenditure.

However, the ‘double bottom line’ of social and economic measures should not be underestimated because events cannot be achieved in isolation without the socio-economic involvement through the host community. For instance, social and cultural benefits play a vital role in the assessment of an event’s overall impact.

### **Social and cultural impacts**

Society and culture are two concepts that can hardly be separated. While a society is a community or a broad grouping of people who have common traditions, institutions, activities and interest, culture represents the practices of a society; its customary beliefs, social roles and material objects that are transferred or passed

down from generation to generation. In this context therefore, the potential effects or impacts of events or tourism as a whole on the culture of a society are major concerns for the host community, event managers/organizers and other stakeholders in the event/ tourism industry. This is because events often attract visitors or 'outsiders' into a host community or 'society' and then, there is a possibility that the society can be influenced by changing its culture (Cook et'al. 2010) .

Event and event tourism although could impact socio-culturally on a host community by way of strengthening the regional values or traditions, and it also has the potentiality of introducing social and cultural costs to the host community. Despite the fact that a host-guest interaction is improved through joint participation in festivals and events, it can also be strained by events and tourism in general (Getz 2017)

Major events can sometimes create unintended consequences which can hijack the agenda and determine the way the public perceives the event if not managed properly. Such consequences can be in form of substance abuse, bad behavior by crowds and the increase in criminal activities. Events can also impact on the social life and structures of communities in various ways. An example of which can be car traffic which may impede the access to resident's homes, loss of amenities, cost inflation of goods and services, which can raise housing markets thereby impacting on the low-income groups. (Allen et'al. 2010)

### **Economic Impacts of Event Center**

The event centers is growing very rapidly and contributing nearly to the GDP (Boella, 2000). In the last decades the event centers has got much importance of vigorous process of expansion.

Consequently, the event centers is expanding globally and promoting its growth in a changing multicultural environment. Hospitality is being built at regional, national and global levels. Internationally oriented hospitality industry with different companies competes also locally and regionally. A great number of indicators show the sign of economic growth predicted by the International Monetary Fund and this growth will be distributed unevenly in developing countries (6.4 %) and (2.2 %) in advanced nations.

Event centers constitute many subsectors; hotels and restaurant is one of most source of economic growth. Revenue generation has been an important contribution to the Nigerian economy. The government generates huge amount of revenue from the activities of the various sectors that make up the event centers. Revenue is generated in the form of company tax, registration fees, monthly/quarterly subscription; Value Added Tax (VAT) among others.

The owners of the various event centers generate profit. As earlier mentioned the event centers is that sector of the economy mostly concentrated by the private sector. Most of these organizations are either owned by individuals, family or franchise. Hence profit on investment is generated.

Event centers contribution to taxation was put on government revenue from levies on the event centers (registration and other charges) recorded 1.149 m in 2004, considered grossly inadequate as compared to over 100 m in 2009 and company tax generated by the hospitality sector which recorded 313m in the year 2005. (National Bureau of Statistics, as cited by Ijeoma, 2010)

Event centers generate finance for infrastructure development and generally increases citizen's welfare. It has also influenced they Nigerian aviation industry with the coming in of capital flights associated with oversea trip and an expansion of the same industry which had Nigerian Airways for a monopoly between the periods of 1985 to 1992 (Bankole, 2002:80).

### **2.4 The host community**

Host communities or tourism destinations tend to brand themselves by providing some form of tourism core product for which they will be known. And one way of doing this, is to have some particular form of event which has been described as temporary attractions. (Gilbert and Wanhill 2008).

There are specific event styles and fashion pertaining to specific communities and only these are receptive to them. Therefore, for event managers and planners to be able to host and carry out successful events, they must first and foremost get a good understanding and also interpret these basic concepts and forces behind the events.

Climate change is one major factor that is currently affecting the hosting of events and for this reason, there has been an increasing worldwide interest and commitment to sustainability and the protection of the environment. Another factor is globalization, which is due to the fact that global networks now make it possible for the world to be seen as a global village. This factor has now made it difficult for local cultures to maintain their uniqueness and identity. For instance, local festivals and celebrations now see the international products and streamlined television production as big competitors because of the raised expectations accustomed to them by the audience. Another factor is technology, which has impacted much on how the audience receives events and also on how the events are created and delivered. In the process of planning events these days, event software programs and templates play a major role in reducing the planning time and also enables the event managers to work on several events at the same time. (Allen et'al 2011)

### **2.5 Some Event Centers in Ado-Ekiti**

1. AB Emporium Hotel and Event Centre, Housing Rd, Ado Ekiti
2. AB Hotel And Suite Ilesanmi Hall
3. Amazing Grace Events Centre
4. Catholic Event Center
5. Damlek multipurpose hall and event center, beside Five O's filling station Afao Road Oke-Ila Ado-Ekiti
6. Devine Success Events Center
7. Fajuyi Town Hall, 54 Market Road, Ado Ekiti
8. IRS Event Center And Hotel
9. Motif Funland Stage Event Center
10. Multipurpose Hall, The Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti
11. Prosperous Royal Hotel And Resort Conference Centre
12. Summit Conference and Event Centre, Housing Estate Ado Local Government, Ado Ekiti

For the purpose of this study, the following questions were proposed to get the view of various stakeholder involved in the events programs and its impact on the host community

### **Research Questions**

1. Do activities of event centres in Ekiti-State have socio-economic wellbeing impact on the host community?
2. Is socio-economic wellbeing of host community a responsibility of the event centers management?
3. Are there any challenges or problems facing event centers toward impacting on the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community?
4. Is there any way forward for both host community and event centers management toward achieving the socio-economic wellbeing of the host community?

### **The hypothesis for the study includes:**

1. There is a relationship between event centers management and the host community socio-economic wellbeing for successful events programs
2. It's not the events center managements responsibility for the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community
3. There are some challenges/problems facing various event centers in Ekiti-State toward impacting on the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community
4. There are possible way forward for both host community and events center toward achieving the socio-economic wellbeing of the host community

### **Material and Methods**

Thus, 160 questionnaires were administered to various event stakeholders. A total of one hundred and fifty five (155) questionnaires were returned, representing 96.9%. Inferential statistics of percentage and frequency are used to analyze data collected. Findings were discussed as well as implications to event center are highlighted.

### Data collection

The study adopted an observational rapid field survey procedure as recommended by Malgosiaet al., (2013) which included combining data from survey, documentation, and information from key players, interviews and questionnaire. The questionnaires were centered on three main areas – Event centers, socio-economic, and Host community. 160 questionnaires were administered to the event centers management other stakeholders which cut across Event managers, Clients/Customers, individuals within the host community and government officers. The study conducted Cronbach Alpha which found to be 0.601 that is 60% of the appropriateness of the questions

### Results and Discussion

Table 1 provides statistical information with regards to the respondents Sex, Age, Marital Status, Educational Qualification and Years of contact with various event centers at their various environments within the study area in Ekiti-State

Table 1 Respondents Sex, Age, Marital status, Educational Qualification and years of contact with event centers

S/N	Purpose Classification	Frequency	Percent (100%)
1.	Respondents Sex		
	male	63	40.6
	Female	92	59.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100%</b>
2.	Respondents age-Group		
	20 – 25	56	36.1
	26 – 30	68	43.9
	31 and above	31	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100%</b>
3.	Respondents Marital Status		
	Single	40	25.8
	Married	115	74.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100%</b>
4.	Respondents Educational Qualification		
	NCE	33	21.3
	HND/OND	45	29.0
	B.Sc/B.ED	55	35.5
	M.sc and other	22	14.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100%</b>
5.	Respondents Years of contact with various event centers		
	1 – 5	54	34.8
	6 – 10	79	51.0
	11 above	22	14.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey 2020

Table 1 show that 40.6% of the respondents were male while 58.4% of the respondents were females. It also shows the age of respondents that were administered with questionnaire, 36.1% of the respondents fell between ages 20-25, 43.9% of the respondents fell between age 26-30 while 20.0% fell between 31 and above. This implies that majority of people that is involve with events are adults. The marital status showed that 25.8% of the respondents were single while 74.2% of the respondents were married. This can be seen as a result of most events stakeholders are adults. The educational qualification showed that 21.3% of the respondents hold N.C.E, 29.0% of the respondents hold HND/OND while 35.5% of the respondents hold B.Sc/B.ED and 14.2% represent people with M.sc and other qualification. It also showed that 34.8% of the respondent fell between 1-5years, 51.0% fell between 6-10years while 14.2% fell between 11 and above years of contact with various event centers.

The study carried further analysis on the socio-economic impacts of selected event centres on the wellbeing of host community in Ekiti-State. Table 2 provides these details.



Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total 100%
Do activities of event centres in Ado-Ekiti have socio-economic wellbeing impact on the host community?	43 (27.7%)	78 (50.3%)	3 (1.9%)	21 (13.6%)	10 (6.5%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Is socio-economic wellbeing of host community a responsibility of the event centers management?	24 (15.5%)	31 (20.0%)	11 (7.0%)	39 (25.2%)	50 (32.3%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Are there any challenges or problems facing event centers toward impacting on the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community?	64 (41.3%)	34 (21.9%)	27 (17.4%)	19 (12.3%)	11 (7.1%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Is there any way forward for both host community and event centers management toward achieving the socio-economic wellbeing of the host community?	43 (27.7%)	67 (43.2%)	10 (6.5%)	16 (10.3%)	19 (12.3%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Events centers provide an avenue to host community in the area of globalization and general social exposure	49 (31.6%)	64 (41.3%)	11 (7.1%)	17 (11.0%)	14 (9.0%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Do various event centers within Ado-Ekiti provide employment opportunities to the host community through their activities?	33 (21.3%)	60 (38.7%)	19 (12.3%)	22 (14.2%)	21 (13.5%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Event centers create community happiness amongst their host through various events activities.	54 (34.8%)	46 (29.7%)	12 (7.7%)	21 (13.6%)	22 (14.2%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
The negativity effect of events center on the host community supersede its positive impact	32 (20.7%)	22 (14.2%)	11 (7.1%)	56 (36.1%)	34 (21.9%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Event centers contribute to the community development service of their host through their various event activities	42 (27.1%)	53 (34.2%)	11 (7.1%)	26 (16.8)	23 (14.8%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>
Events center improve their host community quality of life and their standard of living	77 (49.7%)	43 (27.7%)	6 (3.9%)	16 (10.3%)	13 (8.4%)	<b>155</b> <b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field Survey 2020

Table 2 revealed that activities of event centres in Ekiti-State have socio-economic wellbeing impact on the host community with (78.1%) agreed and strongly agree to this view point. This means events center within Ekiti-State contribute to the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community. The import of this result is that other areas of the state without event centers should encourage the creation of one within their community to benefits from their various impact on host.

The table also revealed that socio-economic wellbeing of host community is responsibilities of the event centers were found to be false with 57.4% disagrees and strongly agreed with the point of view. This implies that event center does not have the sole responsibility for the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community although they have some responsibility toward the host. The result further revealed that there are some challenges or problems facing event centers toward impacting on the socio-economic wellbeing of their host

community, i.e. the exact amount of benefits to be provided for the host cannot be quantify therefore making it a problem of balancing the positive effect on the host community. This means that there should be a written agreement between the event centers and the host community to determine the exact of benefit to be provided by the event centers to their host.

More so, the study result revealed that Events centers provide an avenue to host community in the area of globalization and general social exposure with 72.9% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed with this view point. This could be attributed to the fact that events followed the trend of globalization in performing their activities and in turn expose the host community to latest in the world of technology, sciences and entertainment. As a result of this, many small communities within the state have the exposure and knowledge of globalization in the world of entertainment.

The result also revealed that event centers within Ekiti-State provide employment opportunities to the host community through their activities with 60% respondents strongly agree and agreed. This implies that another impact of the events centers to the socioeconomic wellbeing of their host community is the provision of employment opportunity, such as security guard, event planners, logistic and many more. In addition, 64.5% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that Event centers create community happiness amongst their host through various events activities, and the more excitement an environment is the more social and economic development will progress in the community.

The table also revealed that Event centers contribute to the community development service of their host through their various event activities with 61.3% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed to this view. This implies that events centers perform social corporate responsibility required of them to their host community from the revenue generated from their activities. The results import that various event centers helps to improve the quality and general standard of living of their host community.

It can be conclude that the hypothesis which states that there is a relationship between event centers management and the host community socio-economic wellbeing for successful events programs is found to be true and accepted based on the fact that the majority of stakeholders in the events activities with (50.3%) believe that any event centers who failed to contribute to the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community cannot have successful operations of their activity. Also the hypothesis which stated that It's not the events center managements responsibility for the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community was found to be true and accepted with 57.4% respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the view hence host community should not entirely depends on the events centers for the completely development of socioeconomic wellbeing of their community. It's just a responsibility to provide some development and improve the standard of their host and not their entire duty to completely oversee the wellbeing of their host community and government still has the sole responsibility of that. Other hypothesis which state that there are some challenges/problems facing various event centers in Ekiti-State toward impacting on the socio-economic wellbeing of their host community was found to be true and accepted with 41.3% respondents strongly agreed. Furthermore, there are possible ways forward for both host community and events center toward achieving the socio-economic wellbeing of the host community was found to be true and thus accepted which is consonance with respondents view' 43.7% agreed to this.

## **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The linkage between the events centers, economic and social wellbeing on host community should not be overlooked since it can have significant positive (or adverse) effect on the continuity of the relationship between the host and the event centers. For successful relationship between the host and various event centers, events centers management, host community, customer/client and the government should always put the interest of various stakeholders at heart.

The findings of this study have some policy implications that would contribute to economic development of various host community as well as state and nation at large. The following recommendations are hereby made:



1. The government needs to intervene in some certain situation that may involve hostility between host community and the events centers management
2. There is a need to review an agreement between the events centers management and the host community for proper estimation of the due needed to be contributed by various event centers towards the economic and social wellbeing of the community at which they operates.
3. Government on all level should venture into even centre business to be able to provide service for less privilege citizens who might not have the fund required by the most private event centers.
4. Every management members of the various event centers should be aware of their corporate social responsibility to their host community in order to act accordingly.
5. More events centre needs to be cited in various part of Ekiti state and not just some certain areas for even distribution of economic and social wellbeing of other community as it has been indicated from the research that event centers contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of its host community

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