

Poor emergency response plan and crowd control as determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria

¹Gloria O Nwankwo, ²Dr. Glory N Amadi

¹ Ph. D., Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

² Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Abstract

This study was carried out to find out if poor emergency response plan and crowd control are determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. The population was 2,160 which constituted of football organizers, football club officials, football Association members, football referees, members of football supporters club, coaches, players and sports writers. The sample size was 1,080 respondents representing 50% of the population. The multi-stage procedure, self-developed, structured validated questionnaire and six Research Assistants were used for the study. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method. The instrument had a return rate of 95.8% which was used for the analysis. The generated data were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The study findings revealed that poor emergency response plan and poor crowd control are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Recommendations were made which include security personnel in Nigeria football league competitions should include safety professionals who can give safety moments and get professionally involved during emergencies like fire incident exit route control, evacuation of all sorts etc. The adequate emergency response plan should be a paramount aspect of any football event.

Keywords: emergency response, plan, crowd, control, risks, determinants, football league organization

Introduction

The popularity of football as a game is not in doubt (Nwankwo, 2014) [6] it could be asserted that football has the largest spectatorship in the sports industry. It has become among other sports and entertainment industry in which the producers and the consumers are highly involved physically, mentally, socially and emotionally (Oranaboka and Nwankwo, 2006). It has become a human activity with inherent risks.

Risk according to international standards organization (ISO) (1800) (2007) is the likelihood of occurrence of undesirable events with serious consequences while Stricoff (1996) [10], referred to it as a function of probability and consequences. The risk in this study is conceptualized as the tendency of occurrence of events with serious consequences.

Risks are better managed proactively hence the need for adequate emergency response plan. The emergency response plan is accident and disaster preparedness (Nwankwo, 2014) [6] while the Pakistan meteorological department (2010), and Appalachian University (2014) conceptualized it as the provision of resources and information needed to evaluate the human and environmental impact of the event. In this study, an emergency response plan is a preparedness to react to a sudden unwanted event to ensure the safety of the victim of the incident.

Poor emergency response plan could most likely result in poor crowd control. Elliot, Frosdic and Smith (1997) [3, 13], smote that the potentiality disaster exists where large crowd congregate. Crowd control has been a safety issue in football venues and other events that attract a crowd (Fuller and Ward, 2008) [4]. In describing crowd control, Thornburg (1998) [12], likened crowd behaviour to water that must be carefully

directed to flow naturally and smoothly. Crowd control according to Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RMCP) (2009), is to use specialized squads to keep the crowd at bay or disperse the crowd. This study conceptualized crowd control as the ability of authorized personnel to keep the crowd at bay during events and disperse the crowd safely especially during riotous incidents.

This study aimed at empirically establishing the determinants of risk associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined if:

1. The poor emergency response plan is a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
2. Poor crowd control is a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria Football League Organization in South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. Is poor emergency response plan a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria.
2. Is poor crowd control a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria Football League Organization in South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria?

Methods

The cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study. The population was 2,160 which consisted of football Association members, Football Club Officials, Football Referees, Players, Coaches, members of Football Supporters

Clubs and Sports Writers while the sample size was 1,080 respondents representing 50% of the population. The multi-stage procedure, self-developed, structured validated questionnaire and six Research Assistants were used for the study. The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method. The instrument had a return rate of 95.8% (1,020 respondents) which was used for the analysis. The generated data were analysed using mean and standard

deviation. A criterion mean of 2.5 was used as a benchmark for taking a decision.

Results

Research Question I

Is poor emergency response plan a determinant of risks associated with football organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

Table 1: Poor emergency response plan as a determinant of risks associated with NFL organization (N=1,020)

S. N	Item	X	SD	Decision
1	Inadequate security personnel	2.94	0.90	Accepted
2	Ineffectiveness of security personnel	2.83	0.89	Accepted
3	Inadequate medical personnel	2.97	0.90	Accepted
4	Inadequate evacuation vans	2.85	0.88	Accepted
	Grand total	2.89		Accepted

Table 1 indicates that inadequate security personnel (\bar{x} = 2.94, Sd = 0.90), ineffectiveness of security personnel (\bar{x} = 2.83, Sd = 0.89), inadequate medical personnel (\bar{x} = 2.97, Sd = 0.90) and inadequate evacuation vans (\bar{x} = 2.85, Sd = 0.88) with a grand mean of 2.89 are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The standard deviation shows the agreement of respondents opinion since their responses are closely related.

Research Question 2

Is poor crowd control a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria?

Table 2

S/N	Item	X	SD	Decision
1	Poor personality of personnel at the gate	2.85	0.94	Accepted
2	Inadequate seats for participants	2.97	0.92	Accepted
3	Inadequate evacuation strategies	2.83	0.91	Accepted
4	Lack of safety tips	2.88	0.92	Accepted
	Grand mean	2.90		Accepted

Table 2 reveals that poor personality of personnel at the gate (\bar{x} = 2.85, Sd = 0.94), inadequate seats for participants (\bar{x} = 2.97, Sd = 0.92), inadequate evacuation strategies (\bar{x} = 2.83, Sd = 0.91), and lack of safety tips (\bar{x} = 2.888, Sd = 0.92), with a grand mean of 2.90 are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The standard deviation which shows a close relationship in the response of the respondents indicates agreement in their opinion.

Summary of Findings

The poor emergency response plan is a determinant of risk associated with NFL organization in the area of study. Poor crowd control is a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in the area of study.

Discussion of Findings

The finding that poor emergency response plan is a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league

organization (table 1) is envisaged because emergency response plan which should be a necessity in planning events that involve crowd is yet to receive required attention as far as Nigeria football league organization is concerned. This finding is an in agreement with Tablot and Jakemann (2009) [11], who asserted that in order to respond to certain unwanted events, organizations need a holistic and integral planning, aim not only at minimizing and avoiding escalation but also providing the capability to adapt and strengthen. They recommended agent-specific and all hazard approach strategies for emergency response plan. Earlier Elliot (2004) [2], asserted that the death of spectators watching soccer matches has encouraged the expectation that sports venues should develop the capacity to manage crisis incident.

The finding that poor crowd control is a determinant of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization (table 2) is not surprising because it is a common knowledge that there is potential for disaster where a large crowd congregate. this finding agrees with Elliot Frostdick and Smith (1997) [3, 13], who posited that the potential for disaster exists where large crowd congregate particularly where such gathering occurs within artificial complexes and structures. It also agrees with Warne (1997) [13], who postulated that it has been identified that large crowds of people can be difficult to handle and particularly in the case of some football crowds.

Conclusion

Base on the findings of this study, it was concluded that poor emergency response plan and poor crowd control are determinants of risks associated with Nigeria football league organization in the area of study.

Implications of the Study to Safety

The findings of the study have serious implications for the safety of football events especially the organization of Nigeria football league in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The finding that emergency response plan which is accident and disaster preparedness is either inadequate or ineffective implies that there is a great potential for disaster in Nigeria football league in the South-South geopolitical zone and the participants have little or no hope of rescue in time of emergency. Poor crowd control which is also a finding of this study also implies that safety is not guaranteed in football environment in the area of study.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations were made:

Security personnel in Nigeria football league competitions should include safety professionals who can give “safety moments” and get professional involved in emergencies like fire incidents, exit route control and evacuation of all sorts.

The emergency response plan should be a paramount aspect of any football event. This should include a risk assessment to ascertain the required control measure and emergency response plan that should be put in place.

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