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Conceptual Model for Effective Sports Marketing in Nigeria

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Abstract

Effective sports marketing in Nigeria was defined to be sports activities designed by the Nigeria sports sector to meet the sports needs and wants of sports consumers through exchange processes that are aimed at generating revenue that will boost the Nigeria economy. The Federal Republic of Nigeria Economic Transformation Blueprint on Nigeria Vision 20:2020 seeks to improve the standards of her citizen and place the country among the Top 20 economies in the world with a minimum GDP of \$900 billion. The conceptual model for effective sports marketing in Nigeria identifies sports producers that are influenced by economic factors, propellants that are influenced by the sports market mix and sports consumers that are influenced by psychological factors and notes that; if the Nigeria government hands off the funding of sports and provides an appropriate legal and regulatory environment for private capital investment as well as cultivate an effective technology transfer programme to fast-track local production of sports, recreation and entertainment equipment/facilities, the sports sector would aid in the attainment of the Vision 20:2020 goals.

Key Words: Sports Market Mix, Sports Consumers, Nigeria Economy, Economic Development Mix, Vision 20:2020

Introduction

A conceptual model is a descriptive model of a system based on qualitative assumptions about its elements, their interrelationships and system boundaries (<http://www.businessdictionary.com>).

The http://www.ozcoasts.org.au/conceptual_mods noted that, conceptual models are concise and visually stimulating illustrations that use symbols or drawings to depict the important features, processes and management challenges in a particular environment and that, this is accomplished using the most current knowledge or understanding of that particular environment and, is presented in a way that is easy to understand.

Sports marketing consists of all activities designed to meet the needs and wants of sports consumers through exchange processes. Shilbury, Quick and Westerbeek (1998), Pitts (1998) and Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (2000) noted that sports marketing has developed two major thrusts; the marketing of sports products and services directly to consumers of sports, and marketing of other consumer and industrial products or services through the use of sports promotions. In Nigeria for instance, sports marketing would be said to be the marketing of sports products and services directly to consumers of sports by sports goods manufacturers such as Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Puma and so on while on the other hand, it could be the marketing of other consumer and industrial products through the use of sports promotions as is the case when Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola, Cadbury, MTN and so on sponsor sports programmes thus advertising their firms or wares.

Akara (2007) defined effective sports marketing in Nigeria to be; sports activities designed by the Nigeria sports sector to meet the sports needs and wants of sports consumers through exchange processes that are aimed at generating revenue that will boost the Nigeria economy.

Sports marketing trends in Nigeria

Akara (2010^a) noted that the Nigeria government is the sole proprietor and financier of sports and as such, there is low competition in the aspect of marketing sports as a product, especially in relation to the sports market mix using the four Ps (product, price, promotion, place) and the attendant competition that would arise if other stakeholders were to be involved in the funding and organization of sports. Akara (2009) had earlier noted that the consumption level of sports as a product which can be determined by the number of fans and spectators, sports goods users that go to recreation

centers and other places where sports events take place in order to satisfy their needs and wants is quite high in view of the fact that the average Nigerian has a passion for sports whether as spectator, competitor or recreational outlet.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria Economic Transformation Blueprint on Nigeria Vision 20:2020 (2009) in its executive summary states that; “Vision 20:2020 is an articulation of the long-term intent to launch Nigeria onto a path of sustained social and economic progress and accelerate the emergence of a truly prosperous and united Nigeria. Recognizing the enormous human and natural endowments of the nation, the blueprint is an expression of Nigeria’s intent to improve the living standards of her citizens and place the country among the Top 20 economies in the world with a minimum GDP of \$900 billion and a per capita income of no less than \$4000 per annum.”

In this regard, the mission statement is; “by 2020, Nigeria will have a large, strong, diversified, sustainable and competitive economy that effectively harnesses the talents and energies of its people and responsibly exploits its natural endowments to guarantee a high standard of living and quality of life to its citizens.”

It thus emphasizes that the Nigerian economy must grow at an average of 13.8% during the time horizon, driven by the agricultural and industrial sectors over the medium term while a transition to a service-based economy is envisaged from 2018. It becomes imperative to note that as part of the broad objectives, the Vision 20:2020 hopes to achieve as part of its economic dimension, “a globally competitive economy that is resilient and diversified with a globally competitive manufacturing sector that is tightly integrated and contributes no less than 25% to Gross Domestic Product.”

The Conceptual model

The development of the conceptual model for effective sports marketing in Nigeria is hinged on the following excerpt from the Nigeria Vision 20:2020 blueprint: “Sports and recreation beyond providing relaxation also create opportunities for people to participate in physical activities for fun and health, through organized competitions and events, while at the same time helping to address and tackle social issues through positive engagement. When applied effectively, sports, recreation and entertainment programmes promote social integration and foster tolerance, helping to reduce tension and generate dialogue. In addition, if well harnessed, they have the potential to

create business opportunities and employment, thereby enhancing income and reducing poverty.”

Thus, the conceptual model for an effective sports marketing and development in Nigeria identifies the sports marketers to be the sports producers comprising of sports goods manufacturers (Nike, Adidas, Puma, Reebok, Slazenger and so on), Corporate Organisations (MTN, GLOBACOM, Vmobile, Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola, Shell and so on), Private Bodies (Ibru Organisation, Dangote Group of Companies and so on) and individuals that are willing to be involved in the sports market sector. The consumers include, sportsmen and women who are expected to use the sports apparels and equipment, spectators and fans who pay money to use the facilities to get entertained and purchase such other goods and services available as well as participants in recreation who need sports equipment and apparels. In other for the sports consumers to derive satisfaction as well as have their needs and wants met by the sports producers, propellants have been identified that will help determine the sport market process and evaluate the sports market process to assess the extent to which the sport market process is effective and hint on areas to be developed so as to make the sports market sector effective.

The propellants include the sports market mix (Four Ps) comprised of the product (sports) consisting of the sports events whether indoor or outdoor events, price as determined by the organizing bodies, promotion which entails advertisement and the place which are the various stadia (market). The interaction between the government through policies and roles, registration modes, tax rates expected to be paid by the sports marketers and such other rules that may cover the conduct and organization of the product with the sports marketers and sports consumers and, the feedback arising there-of are determinants of the sports market process which lead to an evaluation of the entire sports market process. Grantham, Patton, York and Winick (1998) stated that evaluation is the process of determining the extent to which an organization has achieved its stated objectives. They further highlighted the goals of evaluation to include;

1. To determine how effective a program is in meeting predetermined goals and objectives.

2. To provide comprehensive information about the full range of the programs achievements and outcomes, as well as possible areas of weakness and inadequacies.
3. To measure the quality of a program, based on accepted standards and criteria.
4. To appraise the quality of organizational management, such as performance of staff or effectiveness of policies and procedures.
5. To provide feedback for improving programs once executed and recommending a direction for future reference.
6. To provide information for internal and external marketing of program achievements.

The interactive nature and processes of sports are buttressed by Keegan (1999) when he explained that Maslow's theory of human motivation helps to explain the cultural universals as he hypothesized that people's desires can be arranged into a hierarchy of five needs and that as an individual fulfills needs at each level, he or she progresses to higher levels. Maslow's theory thus tends to explain that while the producer of the product (sports) delivers the product with a view to using it as a revenue source, in exchange, the consumers are willing to be involved in the exchange process by spending money so as to share in the social interaction process where the sports events take place and derive satisfaction from the exchange process (esteem) towards self-actualisation (satisfying immediate wants and needs) (Bernstein, Clarke-Stewart, Roy, Scrull and Wickens, 1994; Keegan, 1999). Thus, Maslow's theory of human motivation is the fulcrum on which generating revenue that will boost the Nigeria economy and helping to actualize the Vision 20:2020 through the conceptual model is hinged

Conclusion

The Vision 20:2020 seeks to stimulate domestic and foreign trade in value adding goods and services as well as foster strong linkages among all sectors of the economy. Toward this end, it identifies the production of textiles, wearing apparel and leather as part of the industrial prongs in stimulating the economy. The conceptual model for effective sports marketing in Nigeria also identifies the role of the sports goods manufacturers as part of the sports producers.

Towards the actualization of this, Akarah 2010^a recommended that corporate, private organizations and individuals should be allowed to invest in the sports market sector by building their own stadia and organizing sports competitions while the Nigeria government should hands-off the funding and administration of sports and; in place implement policies that will attract foreign investors into the sports market scene. He further noted that if this is done, sports goods manufacturers will be attracted to set up regional, zonal and branch offices that would create employment opportunities as well as enhance the remittance of taxes and tariffs that will further help to boost the economy of the nation.

It is thus expected that if sports marketing is effective in Nigeria through the establishment of sports goods manufacturing outlets, apart from creating employment in this sector and contributing to the revenue base of the economy, sports equipment will become more readily available and at affordable prices that will help in equipping primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary institutions with sports equipment that will assist in effectively teaching the contents of the curriculum and increase participation in school sports while acting as booster to developing positive attitude to physical education as a subject, resuscitating involvement in evening games by students thus helping to provide athletes and sportsmen who will make sports a worthwhile venture as well as rekindling participation in recreational activities that will further enhance the health and fitness status of the Nigerian citizenry. In the realization of this goal, the Nigeria Vision 20:2020 identifies that, the key policy thrust for infrastructural development will be to encourage private sector partnership in the provision and maintenance of sports infrastructure and development.

This Vision 20:2020 goal had been buttressed by Akarah (2007, 2009, 2010^a) when he espoused that effective sports marketing in Nigeria could be a parameter for generating revenue that would help boost the Nigeria economic base through adopting and implementing the sports market mix in the sports sector with the active involvement of corporate and private organizations as well as other stakeholders.

Achieving the Nigeria Vision 20:2020 feat would seem to be an uphill task especially given the fact that the blueprint states that “Nigeria currently ranks 158 out of 177 economies on the Human Development Index (HDR 2008), despite her rich cultural endowment and abundant human natural resources.” Perhaps, it is in a bid to help attain an economic diversification away from its

mono-product, oil-dependent economy that Akarah (2010^a, 2010^b) stated that; if sports as a product were to be more accessible, the Nigeria government would generate revenue that would boost the Nigeria economy and assist in the attainment of the Vision 20:2020 plan if it includes sports marketing in its economic development mix.

Recommendation

Given the passion of the Nigerian citizenry for sports, the conceptual model for effective sports marketing notes that in order to improve the Nigeria economy base through the sports sector, government should provide an appropriate legal and regulatory environment for private capital investment as well as cultivate an effective technology transfer programme to fast-track local production of sports, recreation and entertainment equipment/facilities.

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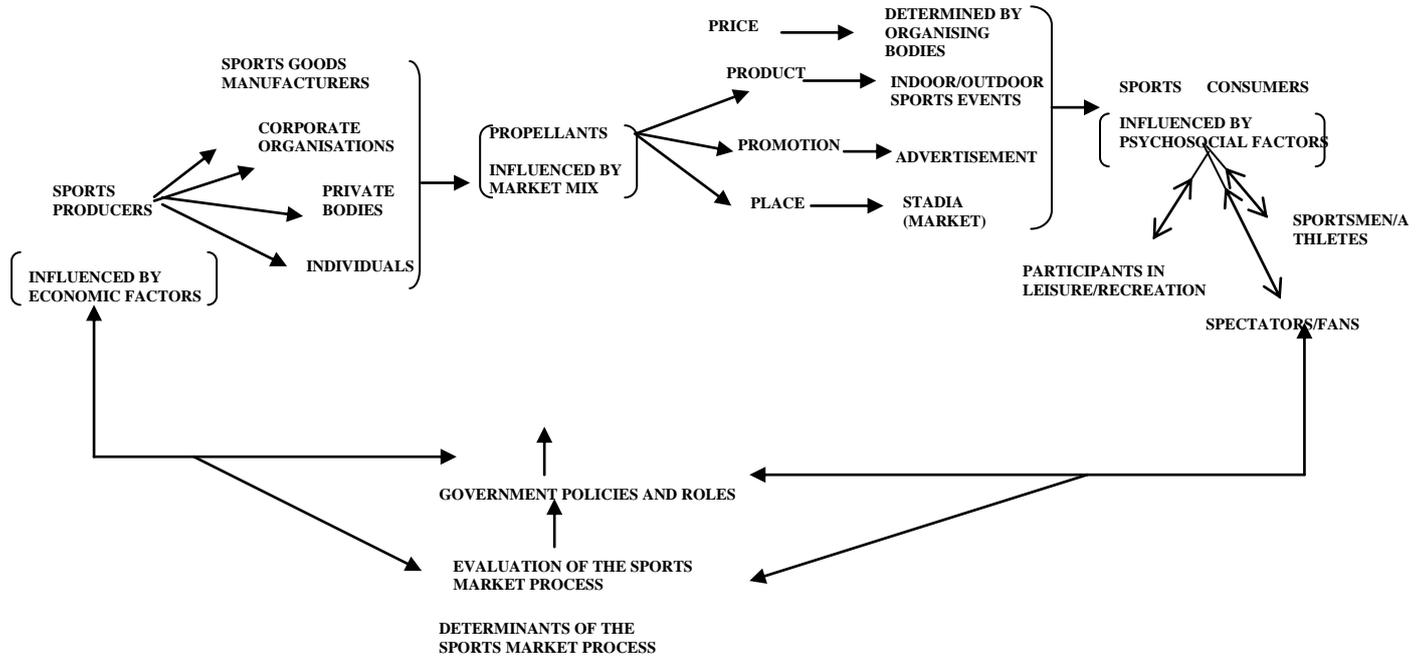
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Source: Akarah, E.