Stratege in operating and managing an amusement park, the experience of cross river state

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1.0   Introduction

Theme parks represent a relatively new concept of tourist's attraction and strives to create a fantasy atmosphere of another place and time. Many designer and product development specialist concentrate on one dominant theme with possible sub-themes. He also mentioned that visual and vocal statements primarily communicate the theme as well as in vogue other sensory organs like seeing and touching. In many theme attractions such as hotels, restaurants and other theme recreation and tourist facilities, theme is reflected through the architecture, landscaping, costumed personnel, rides shows, food service, merchandising and any other service that contributes to the guest's experience (Mill, 1990). Duke's Park was initiated at the time of Governor Donald Duke in the creation of Urban Development Authority where a given scope of operation is to beautify the environment, create an amusement park for social happening. In that respect, the creation of amusement park (Duke's Park) in Ogoja Local Government of Cross River State came into being in the year 2004.

1.2   Enhance guest experience

Amusement park is a group of entertainment, attraction, tides and other events in location for the enjoyment of large number of people. Amusement park can be informed of landscaping, building and attraction that are base on one or more specific theme or stories. Patrons in the entertainment industry will seek for more original and innovative experiences such as duke's park. These encounter may relate to the type of adventure sought (natural,

man-made or performance), the time setting (past, present or future), and consumer participation level in the experience (observes, passive, performers or active performers), Benedict (2001).

Finally, these enhanced experience will be more interactive as learning and entertaining will be blend together. Technology provide an opportunity to many operators in the amusement park and attraction industry to offer these types of experience (Editorial, 2006).

1.3.   The Impact of Demographics

First, amusement park will continue to cater for families as a major visiting unit, however, they also should monitor carefully change in consumer demographics as contemporary and future trend will create new markets for amusemen park and attraction industry (Eckardt, 2005). Second, the average age of the population is increasing globally as fertility rates fall and more and more people live longer. In more develop regions of the world, the over 65 population has risen from 8 percent to 14 percent during the period 1950 – 2000. The over 65 percent age group is projected to represent 26 percent of the population by 2050 (AARP, 2003). Consequently, amusement park will feature more stories with respect for elderly. They need to present image of active, healthy, strong and dignified older people. (DeL Rosso, 2000).

1.4.   Facilities

E.R.A. (1998) List some of the facilities offered within amusement parks include; Accommodation, hotels and other tourist facilities, provide service so that tourist can stay overnight during their travel. Other facilities necessary or tourism development include tour and travel operations, restaurants, retail outlets, souvenir shops, financial facilities and

service, tourism information office, public safety facilities and service of policy and fire

protection (Era, 1998).

1.5.   Facilities/features of theme parks

i.   **Roller Coaster:**

Loops can only be place on a flat straight section of the horizontal tract. Cork-

screw can only be place on a flat, straight section of vertical track.

ii.   **Shops:** One of the greatest source of income you can achieved with a well-place

shop or stall. The provide instant cash returns and also keep the visitor happy.

iii.   **Stalls:** Stall can be a very lucrative method of gaining cash. They can also upset

visitors who feel that they are being conned in some way. Try to match the cost of

each game with the chance of winning and the price if they do so.

iv.   **Mechanic:** Mechanics should be hired when a rides first starts to show sign of

breaking down. When a break down, do not wait for the mechanic; tell him to fix the

rides by questioning him, selecting the wrench and selecting the broken rides.

v.   **Guards:** Guards only need to be hired if bikers start appearing in the park. Bikers are

attracted by two things. Liter and fast rides. Biker will become nuisance when

entertainment begin to get heat up and rides start breaking down a lot faster than

normal.

vi.   **Signposts:** Signposts are useful things for guiding the visitor around the park. When

a visitor pass a signpost and see something they like, they will walk in the direction

of the signpost points. Each signpost can point to one ride (white sign), one sloop (red sign), or the exit (blue sign) Era, 1998).

1.6.   Strategies

The biggest, most important strategy for making your theme park a success is to use a cyclical/circular/oval park design. If you make your park a grid like the streets of a city, you have no control over where people go, and you can't predict what people will do. When they off your huge, awesome roller coaster happy as can be, will they be passing by your gift shop where they will be willing to spend $200, or your Balloon World where they will only spend $12? Will people in your park get to the coffee shop and speed up as their first stop in your park, speeding up how fast they get through it and thus replaced by another guest with a fresh wallet faster, or as their last stop where its effect is worthless? On their way into your park, guests should see signs to the first big ride in your park no matter which side they come in. and every guest in the park should ride that ride, so maybe you should even have two or even three or four of them, depending on what it is. That said, your first ride should not be your Roller coaster, because unfortunately it doesn't go through guest fast enough that all your guests can go on it as their first ride, you can only one of them in this version of the game, and it will interrupt your cyclical design because nothing can be built under its tracts in this version of the game.

2.0.   Method of data collection

Mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative were adopted; the research data was collected from two main sources, the primary and secondary sources. The primary which involves

gathering data through interview, survey and questionnaire, the aim of the primary information was to gain an insight into the problem under investigation. The secondary sources include data already existed. These forms the main sources for literature, and it help the researcher to develop knowledge and gather more information on the subject matter.

Indepth interview, it entails the collection of semi structure or unstructured data through interviewer interviewing verbal interaction or conservation. It provides opportunity for respondent to talk freely and in details on the subject of interest. According Obikeze, (1990) respondents are encouraged to talk freely of their experience, belief and their attitudes as they relate to the research problem. Interview was held with some knowledgeable people who serve as key informant, with the range of key stakeholders and interests involved with amusement park operating and managing (urban development staff, ceremonies holders and visitors, photographers, stall owners. The data collected from field through questionnaires will be analyzed using simple percentage and hypothesis will be tested using the chi-square technique. Chi – square test is an important extension of hypothesis testing and it is used when it is wished to compare and observed an expected distribution.

3.0. Result and discussion of the findings

The data presented below are based on the responses gotten from the field through interview and questionnaire stated above.

Table 3.1: Distribution of respondents by sex

Sex	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	17	56.67
Female	13	43.33

Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey December, 2014.

From the table above, we can see that out of the total of 30 respondents, 17 are male, constituting 65.67% and 13 are female constituting 43,33 of the population sample.

Table 3.1.1: Distribution by Age

Age	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
10 – 20 years	6	20
21 – 30 years	11	36.67
31 – 40 years	8	26.67
41 years and above	5	16.67
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey Dec. 2014.

From table 3.1.1, we can see that out of the respondents, 6 falls within the age range of 10 – 20 years, 11 of them say they are 21 – 30 years, those who tick 31 – 40 years are 8, while the remaining 5 says there are 41 years and above.

Table 3.1.2: Distribution of respondents by marital status

Marital status	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Single	20	66.7
Married	10	33.3

Divorce	-	-
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey Dec. 2014.

From the table 3.1.3 above, we can see the distribution of marital status of respondents. 20 of the respondents are single, 10 are married, and none of the respondents is divorced.

Statement 1

To use the amusement park as a tool to improve the livelihood of the communities through tourism development.

Tourism activities as with any other types of economic development bring about change for economic, social, cultural and spatial structure of the settlement where it takes place. It is mostly regarded for generating income and development. Encouraging the entrepreneurial activity and eventuality leading to improvements in the economic structure of the region. It also increases revenue of the local destination (Benedict, 2001).

Table 3.2.1: Responses to statement 1

Responses	Frequency of responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	15	50.00
Agree	5	16.67
Disagree	3	10.00
Strongly disagree	4	13.30

| Undecided | 3 | 10.00 |
| Total | 30 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey Dec. 2014.

From the table 3.2.1, we can see that 20 (66.7%) of the respondents either Agree or strongly disagree with statement 1, while 7(23.3%) of the respondents says they disagree with statement 1. The remaining 3(10%) says they are undecided.

Statement 2:

When the local residence is been educated and sensitized on the benefit of amusement parks would increase their involvement?

Table 3.2.2: Responses to statement 2

Responses	Frequency of responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	4	13.3
Agree	10	33.3
Disagree	9	30.0
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Undecided	5	16.7
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey Dec. 2014.

From the table 3.2.3, we can see that 14(46.7) of the respondents strongly agrees/agrees with statement 2 while the remaining 11(36.7%) says they disagree with the statement.

Statement 3:

The presence of amusement park creates employment opportunity for the local residence.

Table 3.2.4: Response to statement 3

Responses	Frequency of responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	20	66.7
Agree	7	23.3
Disagree	1	3.3
Strongly disagree	2	6.7
Undecided	-	-
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey Dec. 2014.

From table 3.2.4, we can see that 27(90%) of the respondents agrees or strongly agree with the statement 3 which states the presence of amusement park creates employment opportunities for the local residence, while 3(10%) of respondents disagree with the statement.

Test of Hypothesis

As stated in chapter three, the researcher adopted chi – square (X^2) test in weighing the impact of amusement park development in Ogoja. For the purpose of the study, hypothesis is formulated:

Ho_1:   There is no significance relationship between tourist attraction and the communities.

Ho_2:   There is no significance relationship between amusement park and economic growth.

Responses in table 3.2.1 were used

The data collected from respondents are tabulated and the total of the responses are given in table 4.3.1.

Table 3.3.1: Frequency observed

Variables	Male	Female	Total
SA	8	6	14
A	4	5	9
D	2	2	4
SD	3	-	3
U	-	-	-
Total	17	13	30

Source: Field survey Dec. 2014.

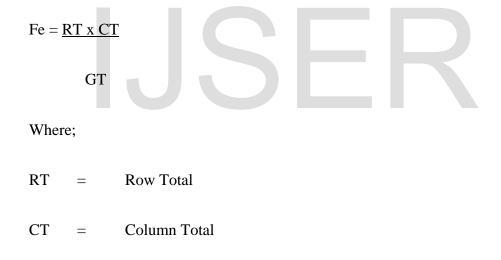Degree of freedom (df) = (R – 1)(C – 1)

Where; R   =   Row

       C   =   Colum

$$df = (5 - 1)(2 - 1)$$

$$= 4 \times 1$$

$$df = \underline{4}$$

At 10% level of significance

Decision Rule:

Reject the null hypothesis (Ho) if the computed chi – square is greater than the tabulated value and accept the alternative hypothesis and if not, reject the alternative hypothesis (Hi) and accept the null hypothesis (Ho).

To get the expected frequency (fe), the formula is

$$Fe = \frac{RT \times CT}{GT}$$

Where;

RT   =   Row Total

CT   =   Column Total

Table 3.3.2: Frequency Expected

Variables	Male	Female	Total
SA	7.9	6.0	14
A	5.1	3.9	9

D	2.2	1.7	4
SD	1.7	1.3	3
U	-	-	-
Total	17	13	30

Source: Field survey Dec. 2014.

Table 3.3.3: Computation of chi-square

S/N	Fo	Fe	Fo – fe	$(fo – fe)^2$	$(fo – fe)^2/fe$
1.	8	7.9	0.1	0.01	0.012
2.	4	5.1	-1.1	1.21	0.23
3.	2	2.2	-0.2	0.04	0.01
4.	3	1.7	1.3	1.69	0.99
5.	0	0	0	0	0.00
6.	6	6.0	0	0	0
7.	5	3.9	1.1	1.21	0.31
8.	2	1.7	0.3	0.09	0.05
9.	0	1.3	-1.3	1.69	1.3
10	0	0	0	0	0
	Total				$X^2=2.9$

Source: Field survey, 2014.

It can be observed that the calculated chi – square value is 7.79, while the table value is 2.9.

Therefore null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative is rejected.

Hypothesis Two

Ho1:   There is no significant relationship between tourist attraction and communities.

Ho2:   There is no significant relationship between amusement park and economic growth.

Responses in table 3.2.2 where used.

The data collected from the respondents are tabulated and the total of responses are given in

table 4.3.4

Table 3.3.3: Frequency Observed

Variables	Male	Female	Total
SA	2	2	4
A	4	6	10
D	6	3	9
SD	2	-	-
U	3	2	5
Total	17	13	30

Source: Field survey Dec. 2014.

Degree of freedom (df) = (R – 1)(C – 1)

Where;

R =   Row

C =   Colum

df = (5 – 1)(2 – 1)

At 10% level of significance

Table value = 7.779

Decision Rule

Reject the null hypothesis if the computed chi – square is greater than the tabulated value and accept the alternative hypothesis and if not, reject the alternative hypothesis (Hi) and the null hypothesis (Ho).

To get the expected frequency (fe), the formular is

Fe = <u>RT x CT</u>

GT

Where;

RT =   Row Total

CT =   Column Total

GT =   Grand Total

Table 3.3.4: Frequency Expected

Variables	Male	Female	Total

SA	2.26	1.73	4
A	5.66	4.33	10
D	5.10	3.9	9
SD	1.13	0.86	2
U	2.83	2.16	5
Total	17.00	13.00	30

Source: Field survey Dec. 2014.

Table 3.3.5: Computation of chi – square

S/N	Fo	Fe	Fo – fe	$(fo - fe)^2$	$(fo - fe)^2/fe$
1.	2	2.26	-0.26	-0.0676	-0.02
2.	4	5.66	-1.66	-1.66	-0.29
3.	6	5.10	0.9	0.81	0.15
4.	2	1.13	0.87	0.7569	0.69
5.	3	2.83	0.17	0.0289	0.01
6.	2	1.73	0.27	0.0729	0.04
7.	6	4.33	1.67	2.7889	0.64
8.	3	3.9	-0.9	-0.81	0.20
9.	0	0.86	0.86	0.7396	0.86

| 10 | 2 | 2.16 | -0.16 | -0.0256 | -0.01 |
| Total | | | | | $X^2=2.19$ |

Source: Field survey, 2014.

It can be observed that the calculated chi – square value is 3.22, while the table value is 7.779. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

Interpretation of Results

In this research, two hypotheses were tested using chi – square (X^2). The first hypothesis, the alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis rejected. This implies that amusement park development has a significant relationship with community. Tourism activities as with any other types of economic development bring about change for economic, social, cultural and spatial structure of the settlement where it takes place. It is mostly regarded for generating income and development, encouraging the entrepreneurial activity and eventuality leading to improvements in the economic structure of the region. It also increase revenue of the local destination (Benedict, 2001).

Also in the second hypothesis, the null hypothesis was accepted and the alternative hypothesis rejected, the null hypothesis suggests that amusement parks will not provide employment opportunities for the local residents.

Summary of Findings

The study concentrates on the strategies for developing amusement parks in Ogoja Local Government Area of Cross River State. The objectives of the study was to analyse the problems facing the management of amusement parks in Ogoja Local Government Area to identify how development of amusement park will help grow the Nigerian economy, and make recommendations on how amusement park owned enterprises should be implemented.

At the end of this study, it was observed that amusement parks have a significant relationship with community and removing the problem of amusement park development, they would have high visitor experience. Amusement park enterprises faced with problem such as poor economy of the country which negatively affects government owned enterprises, poor economic condition created another problem which is inefficiency of government enterprises, and poor management.

Therefore, before the government of Nigeria will consider amusement park development, it should consider more basic questions such as; can the fundamental problem of amusement park enterprise as mention above be tackled and corrected? If so why should a country adopt a policy that will lie some of it citizens off their job? When such questions are considered, the government decision will yield better result.

The second hypothesis should that amusement park enterprises will not always make it more efficient as other measures can be taken to improve efficiency and effectiveness whether in the private or public sector enterprises.

Conclusion

Amusement parks are faced with some problems and these problems makes the amusement park enterprises inefficient and ineffective in most cases. Many of the enterprises are not sufficiently responsive to rapidly changing requirement of a dynamic economy like the Nigerian economy. Some of the problems facing public sector in Nigeria are; political interference, out model personnel practices, lack of delegation, etc. it is a fact from this study that amusement park public sector enterprise in Nigeria are not functioning very well due to some of these problems.

Very little maintenance to the park was very obvious. Trash and food debris is being common around food vendor areas. Most table and chair would be sticky and dirty. Employee and service; it is sad to say that most employees are rude and had almost no knowledge of what they were doing related to their job. For example, after waiting in a long line for a turkey leg, the cashier tells you they ran out of turkey legs. When many in line heard that they would leave the line.

Theme park will become more integrated with other tourist and leisure facilities. In addition to rides, shows, shops, and restaurants, future theme parks will offer supporting facilities like on-line booking facilities, hotels, night entertainment, and transport services. Some theme parks will experience an incremental development of theme park to fully service resort, offering sophisticated amusement recreation, themed experience blended with accommodation, recreation, entertainment, retail, and food services. (MTR Corporation, 2006).

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