



The effect of Covid-19 epidemic on the industry of a Sub-Saharan Country: a perspective on sports industry in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

We investigated the impact of Covid-19 epidemic on the Nigerian economy and its Sports Industry. Thorough review of literature on empirical, conceptual, and theoretical studies on Covid-19 and Sports Economics was conducted. We examined the situation of Covid-19 and Sports Economics in Europe and America, and highlight the situation in Nigeria. Although scarce literature was found on the field of Sports Economics in the Nigerian context, over 60 articles were downloaded from recognized sources and analyzed in the field of Sports Economics and Covid-19 and careful selection of articles was made on recent and relevance basis and it is concluded that Covid-19 epidemic has negatively impacted global economies including that of Nigeria. The global Sports Economies including Nigeria was hard hit by the pandemic especially in terms of employment directly or indirectly considering the mono-economic nature of the Nigerian economy and incapacity of Sports Industry and Sports Economics in the country. It is however suggested, considering the huge potentials of the Sports Industry in Nigeria in job creation for youth and earnings that adequate funding/investment and aggressive transformation of the sector should be carried out.

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, Nigeria, sports industry, economic impact of epidemic

ABSZTRAKT

Kutatásunk során a Covid-19 járvány Nigéria gazdaságára és sportiparára kifejtett hatását elemeztük, a kapcsolódó szakirodalom áttekintésével. Megvizsgáltuk a sportgazdaság Covid-19 járvány alatti helyzetét Európában és az Egyesült Államokban, majd kiemeltük a nigériai speciális viszonyokat. Bár a sportgazdaság nigériai vonatkozásában kevés szakirodalom áll rendelkezésre, több mint 60 tudományos közlemény elemzésére került sor. Ezek alapján megállapításra került, hogy a Covid-19 járvány nemcsak a globális, de a nigériai gazdaságot is negatívan érintette. Ez különösen jelentős volt a sporthoz kapcsolódó direkt és indirekt foglalkoztatás területén, tekintettel a nigériai gazdaság egy-szektorú jellegére. Vizsgálataink alapján szerzők javaslatként fogalmazzák meg, hogy figyelembe véve a nigériai társadalom korfáját, jelentős befektetések lennének szükségesek a sportiparba, mely a szektor átalakításával is együtt kellene, hogy járjon.

KULCSSZAVAK: Covid-19, Nigéria, sportgazdaság, a járvány gazdasági hatása

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Introduction

Over the past two years, the Covid-19 epidemic has transformed people's daily lives and the way the economy works around the world. In addition to a much more significant increase in the proportion of people working in home-office than before, the service sectors and the related industrial background have shrunk significantly. At the same time, unemployment has risen.

Studies and data on the effects of the epidemic have appeared in the media and in the scientific literature, mainly in relation to developed countries, the North Atlantic (*e.g.* Canada, EU, USA) and the Far East (*e.g.* China, Japan, Korea). However, these changes have also had a significant impact on sub-Saharan African countries, one of the largest in terms of both population and economic performance, Nigeria. Government restrictive measures taken to curb the epidemic have also had a significant impact on people's lifestyles. There was no possibility of community events, so *e.g.* to attend sports events or to play sports in the community.

A number of earlier investigations have confirmed the importance of physical activity and healthy lifestyle (Kith et al. 2014, Balatoni et al. 2019), thus many studies were also conducted on how lockdowns due to Covid-19 influenced health behavior changes of people. Constant and his co-authors (2020) in their study found that during the lockdown, most people were engaged in unhealthy behavioral changes as a result of Covid-19. The change in leisure habits also significantly affected the use of various services, such as sports-related shopping and consumption habits.

Sport industry represents amongst the lucrative sectors of many developed economies (Parnell et al. 2020, Ratten 2020). The industry contributed to Nigeria's GDP in 2020 only 0.005 percent (Usman 2020). With high optimism (Biodun 2019), and desire to take sports in Nigeria to the next level through grassroots development, the Federal Government stated that sports could contribute over three percent to Nigeria's GDP in the future. Nigeria's GDP was estimated at 432,30 billion United States of America Dollars (USD) in 2020. The value of the Gross Domestic Product of Nigeria is accounted at 0,38% of the global economy (World Bank 2020).

Corona-virus epidemic continued to have an unprecedented impact on sport industry to compete with the rest of the industries (Parnell et al. 2020, Ratten 2020). The world pandemic index from the virus keeps changing. In Americas and Europe where sports business is in favorable position, the number of infection are higher combined together followed by South Asia and Africa recorded currently (Ali 2021). With the highest numbers recorded from the two most profitable regions in sports economics, growing fear and uncertainties in the sporting world could never be over emphasized. Stringent measures could be adopted including partial sporting fans ban in the stadium or limiting number of spectators. This could further be validated observing the fact that European countries – Hungary inclusive – have re-introduced the wearing of face mask in an enclosed environment for all sectors



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in sports, transportation, education, banking, *etc.* (Ali 2021). This measure could not be unconnected to the growing surge of the disease in anticipation of the fourth wave. Many vaccination centers across these countries are operational currently administering additional doses to people on directives from respective Governments. Additionally, with winter season in play, sports industry across the globe has many concerns because it may be impacted negatively in unimaginable ways.

Unemployment is a growing concern for most Governments in Africa as in other parts of the world. For Nigeria, with an increasing young population and being the 7th most populous nation in the world with over 200 million people (World Bank 2020), with limited resources and undiversified source of revenue, this is a ticking time bomb for the economy. Therefore, harnessing and exploiting any source or means of reducing unemployment numbers is crucial to the economy.

Based on the above, we investigated how the Covid-19 epidemic affected Nigeria's sports economy. In our analysis, we relied on published literature and statistical data related to the given topic.

Short Guide to Nigeria

Nigeria is located in the West African region with over two hundred local tribes with the three major as Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo. English language is the country's official language. It is Africa's most populous nation and 7th position in the list of world most populous countries. The country's population is over 200 million with significant number of young population (World Bank 2020). In 2020, the population with age bracket 0-14 years accounted for 43,49%, 15-64 years at 53,77% and 65years above at 2,74% respectively (Statista 2021). The country with its abundant young population, made its name in the world of sports as it won its first Olympic gold medal in football men's category in 1996 against Argentina. Since then, it has been appearing in World cup finals back to back with the exception of 2006. The last World cup stage they appeared was in Russia 2018 where they reached to the knockout stage and currently building up to the Qatar 2022 World cup in November; Nigeria is among the top 10 countries due for playoff in March to seal the final ticket in African category.

The Economy of Nigeria

The Nigerian economy is said to be classified into three categories. The primary comprises agriculture and natural resources while the secondary as processing and manufacturing and finally the tertiary which represents the service and more recently the entertainment sector. The agriculture is majorly subsistence and



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modern systems of farming. The natural resources include mining and oil exploration from northern to southern regions of the country. However, the manufacturing industries co-exist with other micro, small, and medium enterprises to provide manufacturing solutions to the economy. The economy is also associated with processing foods and beverages, animal feed processing and other general processing in food and non- food commodities. In the service sector, banking and insurance dominated and contributes significantly to the output (Sanusi 2010).

More recently the entertainment sector of the economy is equally growing and making essential contribution to the entire growth where movie industry, cinemas, comedies growing both on and offline. An increase in number of the domestic airline operators in the country is observed in the last decade. Operating in domestic routes and some both domestic and international. The aviation sector is growing in Nigeria and this is not possible without the contribution of its consumers. The ever increasing population in the country makes it possible for airliners to survive in this competitive business environment. Another sector which is promising and most economically viable and operational in Nigeria is auto assembly. For decades, Nigeria have had automobile assembly plants for Peugeot motors and more recently this year, Nigeria is to partner Hungarian aircraft maker Magnus aircraft manufacturing industry to set aircraft assembly plant in Nigeria according to Aviation minister (Thisday Newspaper 2021). This partnership may not be unconnected to the recent procurement of 20 military aircraft from the same Magnus Aircraft earlier this year (Növekedés 2021).

Although Nigeria's economy is described as mono economy due to over dependency on oil exportation paying less attention to other sectors. This claim can be further validated by the studies conducted (Al-Ghwell 2020, Bjørnland 2000, Oladipo – Fabayo 2012, Awofeso – Irabor 2020). In the year 2020, Nigeria's ranking in the global oil production stood at 6th place according to Organizations of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Statista 2021).

The country's GDP is valued at 432,30 Billion USD in 2020 (World Bank 2020) and it is further projected to hit 510,59 billion US Dollars to 958,49 billion US Dollars between the years of 2022 to 2027 respectively (O'Neil, 2022a). The main GDP share of the Nigerian economy comes from Services, Industry, and Agriculture. According to the World Bank source in 2021, Services accounted the highest with 46,39% Industry with 28.22% while Agriculture accounted for 24,14% respectively (O'Neil, 2022b).

Covid-19 and its Impact on the Economy

There is no doubt that Covid-19 epidemic has had many impacts on the global economies in various sectors which consequentially affected the global GDP



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considering individual economies. Many studies were conducted globally to measure the effect of Covid-19 on the economy. Amongst them was the study conducted by (Kolahchi et al. 2021), where they found that with closing down of manufacturing organization, drop in travels and oil consumption, stock market crash, drop in mining activities, tourism and airline companies were hit hard globally. Another study conducted by Aduhene – Osei-Assibey (2021), in Ghana suggested that increasing cases of Covid-19 negatively affect employment in agriculture, industries, and healthcare. They further concluded that the country's economy was hard hit by the pandemic and on the recovery mission. Similarly Priya and coworkers (2021) concluded that Covid-19 has catastrophic implication on global energy consumption as prices fall due to lower demand.

Covid-19 impacts on the economies are visible and obvious worldwide. Within shortest period of time stock market crashes on daily basis, factories, super and hyper markets, pubs, eateries, higher colleges and universities all shut. Individual consumers had no access to make daily consumption purchases freely (Singh – Singh 2020). Based on the report from McKinsey, economy of the world will go through couple of scenarios. The first instance would be the rise of unemployment, bankruptcies will pressurize systems of banking; high liquidity and lower rate of interest may have insignificant effect on demand; recession will set in and only sees recovery towards end of fourth quarter of 2020. In the second instances, retrenchment and insolvencies will reinforce recession; crisis in banking will escalate damaging the global financial systems. Monetary and fiscal policies would be inadequate to block possible recession until 2021 in the second quarter (Açıkgöz – Günay 2020).

The Impact of Covid-19 on the Nigerian Economy

High focus on mono economic system of Nigeria on crude oil business signified serious challenge for the country's revenue source as a result of depleting crude oil prices globally (Al-Ghwell 2020, Bjørnland 2000, Oladipo – Fabayo 2012, Awofeso – Irabor 2020). The falling value in the global oil price in the market during Covid-19 epidemic sees Nigeria's GDP growth in negative (Awofeso – Irabor 2020). Increased Government's internal and external borrowing further escalates more problems to the economic growth. The country has been servicing debts consecutively. Every fiscal year, debt servicing prove to be a serious challenge and it will continue to keep increasing as Government's borrowings also increases (Aluko – Arowolo 2010, Awofeso – Irabor 2020). For the past couple of years, Nigeria's debt has risen three times from 10.9 trillion Naira in the year 2015 to 28 trillion Naira in the last quarter of 2020 which is equivalent to almost 25 billion and 68 billion USD, respectively. Additional borrowing to finance budget deficit was also in play and if successfully implemented, the debt ratio would increase to about 32 trillion Naira (78 billion



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USD) by the end of 2021 fiscal year. Coronavirus epidemic has caused the world economic growth to a standstill and that affected Nigeria's economy to negative exposures and shocks as a result of price fall in the global oil market.

The pandemic provided unfavorable conditions for the economy but it, however, presents an opportunity for the country's economic managers to aggressively pursue economic diversification. It is another window of opportunity to checkmate and get rid of all the governance excesses so as to restructure the public sector into a more goal and profit oriented. Most recently, the country's national oil company – Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) – was reformed to be more profit-oriented and for the first time in the company's 44-year history, profit was declared as the country's President and also serving in the capacity of petroleum minister announced (The cable 2021). If this positive trend continues, productivity and improved economic balances could be realized (Andrew et al. 2021).

Economic calamities in Nigeria were caused due to global oil price falls and the Covid-19 shocks. It has not only led to price falls but equally led to decreased demand of the oil in the global market. Decreased movement, decreased economic activities due to shutdowns were some of the factors among many that led to this. Although the Government introduced many support measures to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME's) and Individuals through the Central Bank via grants, soft loans, and other crisis impact reduction measures. Even though the coverage of the support was never sufficient considering the entire population, significant 3.5 trillion Naira (equivalent to 8,5 billion USD) was targeted for these measures in addition to other sectors all in a bid to support the economy from further crisis.

Business owners and other economic activities were delayed and actors were forced or rather afraid to freely conduct their routines to prevent themselves from infections (Ozili 2021). Significant percentage of Nigeria's revenue comes from oil and gas sector. The data available in 2019 estimated that 47 billion dollars were generated from the sector. Another data from the same source in 2020 also suggested that due to the epidemic, the drop in crude prices, demand, and oil exportation by Nigeria was dropped to a significant level (Statista 2021). In his study Henry (2020) suggested that due to the outbreak and consequent lockdown free movements of individuals were stopped due to restrictions. The consequent action led to increased hardship to the significant portion of the population whose survival depends on their daily work to earn living. Also Marshal (2020) understood that Nigeria being an important player in the world economy – especially in oil and gas – is vulnerable, even to a monumental proportion, being a nation of a single-product economy.

The Nigerian economy is also import-driven for most of consumable and non-consumable goods, to heavy duty machineries in Agriculture and Construction, sporting equipment, security and IT gadgets, automobiles and aviation and so on. All of these needs and wants are mostly financed by the limited foreign reserve earnings which were estimated that 80% of its revenue is generated through crude oil and gas



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and around 40 percent of total budgetary income. Before the pandemic, the country's budget for 2020 was estimated to generate a whopping 8,42 trillion Naira (20 billion USD) with the budgetary expenditure of 10,6 trillion Naira (26 billion USD) and 2,45 trillion Naira (6 billion USD) is accounted to be from servicing the debt. Due to the Nigeria's over reliance on oil revenue, the Covid-19 epidemic gave the country a blow in a face as price of oil dropped globally. There were decreases in synergy to what Government can implement. Despite growing pressures, interventions into the economy became critical and difficult due to limited resources (Ejiogu 2020).

Price wars between Saudi Aramco and Russia's Gazprom in addition to Coronavirus-induced recession, decreased tourism, hospitality, and transportation influenced the fall of the price of oil in a global market (Christopher et al. 2020). In their report (World Bank 2021) predicted two possible outcomes associated with Covid-19. The predictions are; the fate of the economic output if the virus contamination escalates and when the virus would be contained. If the virus continues to escalate across Nigeria adding numbers to the existing cases, the country would fall into unwanted recession. The growth and development point of view of the country would be further jeopardized due to Covid-19 epidemic. Also Proshare Confidential (2020) accounted that in in the first quarter of 2020 a fall of -0,23% points were seen for the economic growth rate in comparison to the first quarter of year 2019, however, -0,68% points were accounted for when compared to the fourth quarter of 2019. All these were as a result of economic activities standstill during the virus. In their report OECD (2020) concluded that the huge financial demands to shield the unfortunate consequences on health, economy and social scale, serious gap is created on financing sustainable development goals.

Sports and Sports Economy during Covid-19

Sports industry with diverse specialty, more specifically the soccer sector which is the most widely patronized and popular across the globe, has been substantially affected by the effect of globalization in the last decade (Mason – Duquette 2005, Anil 2019). Nowadays, soccer is a global franchise that recruit players and technical and non-technical staff from across the globe between numbers of clubs from one country to another or from one region to the other. Foreign leagues and domestic cups competitions are been held every season which requires player manpower to compete (Beech – Chadwick 2004, Horne – Manzenreiter 2004, Anil 2019). The worldwide popularity of soccer in major European leagues and other leagues recorded and the pleasure obtained from it by the soccer fans across the globe results in remarkable income. In the season of 2009/2010, total proceeds generated in the European soccer industry surpasses 16 billion USD a figure more than what was generated in 2007/2008 season with 11% increase even with the global



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economic meltdown (Anil 2019). Basically, in soccer three main sources of revenue generation are identified as media broadcasting, commercials, and ticketing (Anil 2019).

Like any other businesses, the most vital aim for soccer and other sport managers nowadays are increasing the income generation and wealth status of the teams to the elite level so as to get player signing advantage over non-elite clubs and many other advantages. This is further validated by the recent event where top executives of the biggest European clubs formed a failed alliance to create parallel European competition to counter the traditional UEFA Champions league due to the pinch of Covid-19 on the club's financial positions. The attempt was made to increase financial revenue of the big clubs as Covid-19 epidemic dwindle their financial capabilities (Anil 2019). Having in mind, match day stadium capacity status depends on ticketing, merchandizing, timing and media, in-depth analysis on the factors influencing stadium full capacity attendance is needed. Soccer is more than mere entertainment in Germany - it's an economic powerhouse (Biscaia et al. 2013). The German soccer league, the German Bundesliga, earned €4,01 billion (approximately 4,5 billion USD) during the 2016-2017 season. Revenues during this period grew a whopping 368% from €1,09 billion in the 2003-2004 season. The transfer fee payable from club to club will leave one thinking what exactly spectators derive from attending soccer events (Deutsche Fußball Liga 2018).

Soccer is indeed above entertainment going by the fact that it produces millionaires. Big players like Cristiano Ronaldo with over 500 million dollars net worth having various brand ambassadorship deals and celebrity endorsement deals and others knocking at their doors (Settimi 2021). Prior to Covid-19 epidemic, sports industry was not affected by economic hardships. Hardly can one find first tier clubs fall into administration. The sports industry has witnessed a sustainable growth at professional level as seen in the growth rate at English and French leagues in soccer markets (Sanchez et al. 2019). Grix et al. (2020) suggested the use of more technology in sports consumption due to Covid-19 possible disruptions.

The popularity professional sport is gaining in decades is making it among the major entertainment business, its earnings in the US accounted to 69 million USD in the year 2017, considering the report by (PwC Sports Outlook 2018), overtaking the novel Hollywood movie industry. Soccer is the leading sport segment accounting 43% of the total earnings. Most of the revenue in professional sports are accrued from seasonal leagues, although some competitions are played and enjoyed every four calendar year, such as the Olympics, World cup, European cup while some are two calendar year such as African Nations cup which is currently knocking at the door in early January 2022; all generate a high turnover from corporate sponsorship, attendance and other TV rights. Although soccer is universally recognized and accepted, leagues in Europe create most of the earnings. In the global sports earnings, American football (NFL) and Baseball (MLB) combined accounted for 25% and this



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numbers compared to soccer alone are said to be far below. Nevertheless, in the yearly events and competitions, the NFL and the MLB in USA, although not popular in Europe and other regions, generates the highest revenue. This will not be possible without the massive stadium capacities and the enthusiasm of the American people in that sport categories (Sanchez et al. 2019).

For the first time in history, in 2020, the Covid-19 epidemic has given sports a blackout and still yet to recover fully. A development that was not witnessed even during World Wars. All Sports activities were cancelled but in a few countries before completely stopped as well (Tovar 2020, Thomas 2020). The Covid-19 epidemic has brought an era witnessing the complete shutdown of sports – without any war taking place – something very unfamiliar in general. Witnessed for the first time, the Olympic Games and Euro 2020 that were initially planned to take place in year 2020 were postponed to 2021 due to the pandemic. For a very long time the weekly rituals of match days across European leagues all stopped and the sports media outlets were left with no option than to only broadcast replays. These measures taken caused financial pressure for the German league to the extent some bigger clubs in the league donated some funds to the lower level clubs to ease their financial constraint due to Covid-19 (Thomas 2020).

The role of soccer and its influence on spectators has changed in recent days. It has gone much further than just being an entertainment. Soccer has been transformed into a profitable global venture and an avenue for investments. The media broadcasts and modern technologies necessitate it to become a massive event industry, where spectators can enjoy the games of their favorite clubs and teams from every part of the world in various tournaments (Mihaylov 2012). The live broadcast in the media and online streaming nowadays overcome the capacity constraint of the stadiums which has been a prior problem and every person can gain access to watch the event from distance at comfort. Sports industry, especially soccer, do not offer one single product, service, or entertainment. They offer sport bundle or package which comprises the team itself, competitions, clubs, players, services, events, fitness, halls, leisure, snacking, bar, advertising, merchandising, and other commercial activities (Dolles – Soederman 2005, Dolles – Soederman 2012).

Impact of Covid-19 on Nigeria's Sports Economy

Economic recession being referred to as Covid-19 epidemic recession or the great shut-down has constituted a major global recession with the associated economic consequences. Recession comes into play when negative accumulation of two or more economic performances occurs (growth) estimated by gross domestic product (GDP) and other macroeconomic performance indicators, unemployment and inflation inclusive (Investopedia 2021). The commencement of the coronavirus



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recession term dates back to the crash of the global stock 20th February, 2020 in addition to the IMF report in April that the so called G-7 nations or countries were heading into a deep recession as well as notable slows in growth in emerging economies (IMF 2020).

It is with no doubt that Covid-19 disrupted many activities in different industries such as manufacturing, entertainment, service, sports, *etc.* However, the most-hardest-hit industry affected by the Covid-19 epidemic due to lockdowns and movement restrictions and still yet to recover fully is sports industry. We observed a total collapse of sporting activities from across the world at the initial stage of the epidemic ranging from soccer, baseball, basketball, volleyball, tennis, rugby, Formula 1, to mention but few. This is however not without economic consequences.

In addition to these, transfer markets was stopped which close many employment opportunities to the youth in the domestic and international leagues in soccer. Front and back staff employees working in many sport facilities are affected as well. In other sporting events such as Olympics, the Nigerian athletes' performances were also affected due to the failure to observe Covid-19 protocols in Tokyo and the whole team was disqualified. Also looking at the sports economics, the merchandizing such as sport gears and wears, ticketing, media, advertisement, transportation, restaurants, healthy foods and drinks consumptions for athletes all associated with sports were all declined causing many direct and indirect jobs to be lost and rendering thousands of people unemployed. All these issues will further stagnate the sports industry in Nigeria. But with the growing optimism about the sport industry that it is projected to contribute 3% of Nigeria's total GDP (Biodun 2019), proper investment by the Government, private and foreign investors may turn the situation more favourable to the Nigerian sport economics.

In Nigeria, over 60% of the populations are youths and majority of these youth are without gainful employment due to limited opportunities. Many of them are equally vulnerable and out of any significant social welfare system. The sports industry is identified to be one of the easiest routes for the youths to be absorbed economically as future professional players. However, with these negative impacts Covid-19 is associated with, there is no doubt that the unemployment rate will further escalate putting the young population at a more disadvantaged position (Timi 2021).

Sports Economics in Nigeria in one aspect is mainly on marketing of sports merchandize or goods and services straight to the final sports consumers by sporting merchandize brands like Adidas, Puma, Nike, Reebok, and others. In the other aspect, marketing and sales of other consumer and industrial goods or services using sporting platforms in relation to multinational companies operating in the country in food and beverages and telecommunication industries such as Coca-Cola, Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN), Etisalat, Airtel, and GLOBACOM that may engage in corporate sponsorship in sports programmes thereby promoting their products capitalizing on wider audience during the sporting events (Akarah



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2014). Also as described by (Dolles – Soederman 2005, Dolles – Soederman 2012), sports nowadays provide a bundle or package to the consumers. Around the sporting facilities, various economic activities are taking place ranging from small businesses to media and so and so on.

Sports business in Nigeria would gain its economic position only if it is viewed as profit oriented rather than just leisure, entertainment to the consumers and the producers (Akarah 2014). With the abundance of young aged population (Statista 2021), and population of over 200 million inhabitants (World Bank 2020), in the country the sports industry is a promising and a niche market where considering other part of the world more specifically in Western Europe where sports economics contributes to their GDP, Nigeria will have no other option – considering the increasing population and mono-economic nature of the country – but to diversify and penetrate aggressively into the sector.

Conclusion

It is concluded that Nigeria is a mono-economy state and the impact of Covid-19 affected almost all sectors of the economy having serious damage on the budget financing. The country had to rely on increased external borrowings which in adverse increases debt service ratio which will affect the economy negatively in the future. We conducted a thorough review on the impact of Covid-19 on unemployment on Nigerian sports industry. Although, sports industry represents among the most attractive and rewarding for global entrepreneurs (Parnell et al. 2020, Ratten 2020). The reverse could be the case in the Nigerian sports climate with poor investment from Government and foreign investors, as it contributed to Nigeria's GDP in 2020 only 0,005% (Usman 2020) out of total worth of Nigeria's GDP at 432,30 Billion USD in 2020 (World Bank 2020). As suggested by Ratten et al. (2021), that all sporting event's related marketing and sales was suspended and the future is not certain due to Covid-19.

It would be important for the Nigerian Government to heavily invest in Healthcare in-order to address the current Covid-19 situation and any possible future outbreak. Most recently another case of new variant called Omicron was discovered in the country triggering UK and Canada and Saudi Arabia to place ban on entry by Nigerians. Also important that Nigerian economy should be diversified to tackle economic challenges such as unemployment associated with Covid-19 and any other epidemiological outbreak in the future. Looking at how sports industry is highly profitable in the developed world, it is highly economical that adequate funding and investment both from domestic and foreign be done in the sport industry to enhance the Nigerian economy. Due to scarce literature in this field in Nigeria, it is highly suggested that more empirical studies on sport economics should be conducted.



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