



# A systematic literature review of factors influencing spectatorship in sports

*Una revisión sistemática de los factores que influyen en la audiencia deportiva*

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Spectator attendance at sport events was one of the most important aspects of the economic and social structure of the sport industry. The past research often examined ticket pricing, team performance, and social media separately, and their interaction was insufficiently studied.

**Objective:** The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of these three factors systematically on attendance as well as the outcome of the combination of these three factors on fan behavior.

**Methodology:** A systematic literature review was conducted using a transparent screening protocol. After starting with 259 articles, 19 peer-reviewed studies were identified using pre-determined inclusion criteria. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify the central patterns pertaining to the aspects of pricing, performance, and digital engagement.

**Results:** The findings revealed that ticket pricing was most effective when perceived as fair and aligned with positive team performance. Team success influenced casual fans, whereas loyal fans remained consistent regardless of outcomes. Social media significantly shaped audience perceptions and decisions, particularly among younger spectators.

**Discussion:** The present study demonstrated that these factors functioned interdependently. Emotional and digital elements were found to moderate economic responses, challenging traditional models that viewed them separately.

**Conclusions:** An integrated approach to pricing, team communication, and digital strategy is essential to attract and retain sport event audiences in evolving market conditions.

## Keywords

Crowd attendance; sports event; ticket pricing; sport team performance; social media.

## Resumen

**Introducción:** La asistencia de espectadores a eventos deportivos fue uno de los aspectos más importantes de la estructura económica y social de la industria deportiva. Las investigaciones anteriores solían examinar por separado el precio de las entradas, el rendimiento del equipo y las redes sociales, y su interacción no se había estudiado lo suficiente.

**Objetivo:** El propósito del estudio fue examinar sistemáticamente los efectos de estos tres factores en la asistencia, así como el resultado de la combinación de estos tres factores en el comportamiento de los aficionados.

**Metodología:** Se realizó una revisión sistemática de la literatura mediante un protocolo de selección transparente. Tras comenzar con 259 artículos, se identificaron 19 estudios revisados por pares utilizando criterios de inclusión predeterminados. Se realizó un análisis temático para identificar los patrones centrales relacionados con los aspectos de precio, rendimiento e interacción digital.

**Resultados:** Los hallazgos revelaron que el precio de las entradas fue más efectivo cuando se percibía como justo y se alineaba con el rendimiento positivo del equipo. El éxito del equipo influyó en los aficionados ocasionales, mientras que los aficionados leales se mantuvieron constantes independientemente de los resultados. Las redes sociales influyeron significativamente en las percepciones y decisiones de la audiencia, especialmente entre los espectadores más jóvenes.

**Discusión:** El presente estudio demostró que estos factores funcionaban de forma interdependiente. Se observó que los elementos emocionales y digitales moderaban las respuestas económicas, desafiando los modelos tradicionales que los consideraban por separado.

**Conclusiones:** Un enfoque integrado de precios, comunicación del equipo y estrategia digital es esencial para atraer y fidelizar al público de eventos deportivos en un mercado en constante evolución.

## Palabras clave

Asistencia de público; evento deportivo; precio de las entradas; rendimiento del equipo deportivo; redes sociales.

## Introduction

Crowd attendance at sport events remains a vital indicator of the social, cultural, and economic health of the global sports industry. The worldwide football sport events market measured approximately USD 3.87 by 2027 (Rourke, 2023). During the 2022/2023, La Liga season 11.2 million spectators attended matches and normally watched games at 28,500 average per game (La Liga, 2023). The two Spanish clubs FC Barcelona and Real Madrid drew together more than 2.3 million spectators throughout the season, which highlights how important watching matches live remains to the sports financial structure and fan experience (McMahon, 2022). Attendances bring about direct income through ticket sales at the venue and produce secondary effects on broadcast viewership rates and sponsor visibility alongside strengthening fan loyalty (Visa-Carol et al., 2023). Living sports events continue facing strategic importance for sports organizations because of expanding digital entertainment options.

Prior studies have studied the determinants of sport event attendance, with particular focus on economic variables such as ticket pricing (Drayer & Shapiro, 2009; Rascher et al., 2007), team performance metrics (Buraimo, 2008; Pawlowski & Anders, 2012), and, more recently, digital engagement through social media (Watanabe et al., 2015; Pegoraro, 2010). These distinctive factors have been researched a lot, but their interactions or their ability to work jointly on viewers' decisions have not been thoroughly discussed. This way of looking at it makes it difficult to realize how various factors, not just one, play a role in attendance patterns. At the same time, new fan trends brought on by globalization, higher technology, and the pandemic make people reconsider why they spend on going to events.

These days, Instagram, X (previously Twitter), and TikTok are very important for how fans think, talk, and feel about their favorite teams and players (Pronschinske et al., 2012; Morgan et al., 2021). Even though people are showing more interest in sports attendance, there is still no detailed effort that brings together the effects of ticket prices, team success, and social media. These issues have been studied mostly within their own context, rather than by examining their interactions between different leagues and cultures or how their effect could change depending on the match's meaning to fans and the size of the market.

Despite the fact that many people are interested in these topics, a detailed study that links economic prices, sports results, and use of social media to attendance is not available. There are gaps in the research that show how these aspects influence each other in different sports and cultural situations and how much importance is given based on each match's significance. Therefore, this study performs a systematic literature review on sport event attendance, mainly examining the role of price, how the team does in their matches, and social media. The research focuses on this research question: What economic, performance, and digital aspects drive attendance at games, and how do they interact currently with fans? The research is performed according to the guidelines set by PRISMA to guarantee transparency and precise methods. It should be stated that although PRISMA aids in reporting and methodology, it is not the source of the study's new ideas.

This study contributes three important points that add to other studies. To begin, it unites the knowledge of sport economics, psychology, and digital communication by studying them and using them to design a broad framework of why people go to events. Next, it points out important problems in the current research, mainly in the methods used and the research settings, to guide future empirical research into causality, interaction between factors, and the breakdown of fan communities. It also helps sport organizations and event managers make pricing suggestions, planning messaging, and selecting digital strategies based on real findings to draw a crowd at matches.

## Method

### Research Design

The present work exercises a thorough methodology based on the explicit guidelines of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework (Moher et al., 2009; Page & Moher, 2017). The framework was used because of its ability to offer transparent, reproducible, and methodologically sound reporting standards. Although traditionally systematic reviews focus on



synthesizing and comparing findings to identify best practices, this research utilized an evaluative approach to systematically identify and assess various factors influencing sport event attendance. To enhance methodological rigor and transparency, the entire PRISMA procedure was supported by an online PRISMA management tool of Watase UAKE at <https://www.watase.web.id/home/index.ph>), which facilitated automated and rigorous article screening and data extraction processes.

**Literature Search and Selection Process.** An extensive search was conducted using various databases: Web of Science, Scopus, and SportDiscus to guarantee a comprehensive review of the available literature. To focus the search effectively, the authors used Boolean operators (AND, OR, and NOT) and search terms of “ticket pricing,” “sport team performance,” “sport event attendances,” and “sport events social media”. At first, 259 records were chosen from Scopus. With the aid of Watase UAKE platform, the database was checked to eradicate any duplicate records and guarantee the process was free from bias. Automated filtering of the software led to the elimination of 67 irrelevant records, since they failed to match the search requirements or did not have the right publication date. Then, a total of 22 articles were excluded for not meeting defined scientific benchmarks or falling outside Scopus Q1, Q2, and Q3 tiers. As the next step, selected titles and abstracts from 170 records were manually reviewed and 149 were discounted because they did not fit our criteria. Finally, 19 peer-reviewed articles were used for analysis after two of the articles could not be accessed. The platform Watase UAKE kept everything organized, reduced mistakes, and helped repeat the same results again and again.

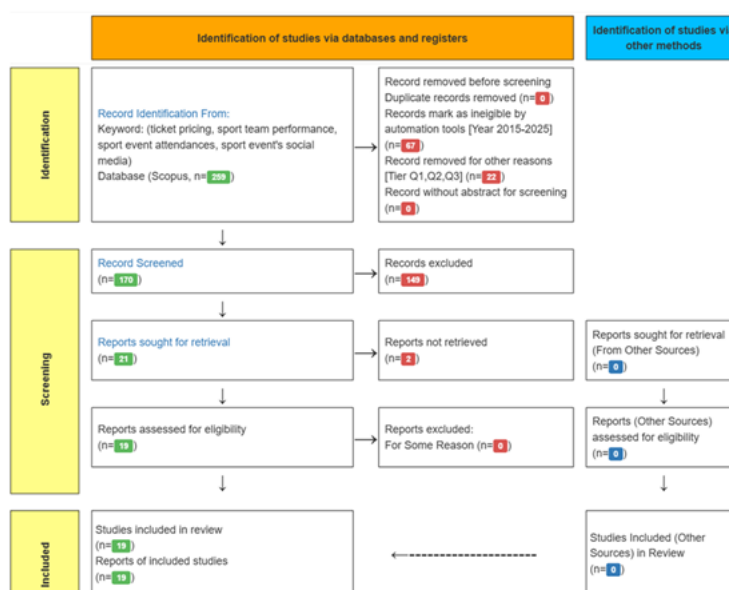
Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Type	Peer-reviewed journal articles (2015-2025)	Grey literature, editorials, conference proceedings, book chapters
Study Design	Empirical quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods studies	Systematic reviews, theoretical papers, commentary or opinion articles
Population Studied	Spectators or fans attending sports events	Studies exclusively focused on athletes, coaches, or non-sports events
Key Themes	Ticket pricing, sport team performance, sport event attendance. Sports event's social media	Studies centered primarily on infrastructural, managerial or marketing aspects not related directly to attendance
Language	English-language articles	Non-English language publications
Scopus	Q1, Q2, Q3	Non-Scopus
Geographical Scope	No geographical restriction	N/A

## Data Analysis

The systematic data extraction utilized a structured form within the Watase UAKE platform, enabling consistent and detailed collection of methodological and result-oriented data. Information obtained involved the authors, the year the study was done, where it was conducted, the approach taken, and the main outcomes about ticket prices, team results, and social media strategies. Following the thematic analysis method created by Braun and Clarke (2006), data analysis was used to find the main themes. Both the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) (Hong et al., 2018) and Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) (CASP, 2018) checklists were used by the authors to evaluate the quality of mixed-method studies and studies that used only one type of methodology, respectively. This step ensured the validity and reliability of synthesized findings (Al Ardha et al. 2024). Although this review primarily synthesized qualitative insights, future iterations or follow-up studies should expand on the mixed-method dimension by quantitatively evaluating these factors through statistical modeling or meta-analytic techniques.

Figure 1. Selection process using PRISMA Guidelines



Note: Made by the authors using the Watase UAKE platform

In the Identification phase, an initial total of 259 records were retrieved from the Scopus database using the combined keywords “ticket pricing,” “sport team performance,” “sport event attendances,” and “sport event’s social media.” From these 259 records, a series of automated and manual checks was performed. First, 0 duplicate entries were detected and removed, suggesting that no item was listed more than once in the initial dataset. Then, 67 records were automatically identified as ineligible by advanced screening tools (e.g., for publication date mismatches from 2015 to 2025 or for failing to meet minimum search string criteria). A further 22 records were excluded because they fell outside the designated tiers (Q1, Q2, Q3) or did not meet required scientific benchmarks. Zero studies were removed due to lacking abstracts. Consequently, the set progressed to 170 records for further screening. In the Screening stage, each of these 170 records underwent title and abstract assessments. Out of these, 149 records were excluded for reasons such as irrelevance to the core research questions, insufficient methodological detail, or focusing exclusively on non-sport contexts. This led to 21 records being moved forward to full-text retrieval. However, the process was hindered by 2 records deemed not retrievable—these might have been behind paywalls or no longer available for full-text. Meanwhile, no new records were introduced from other sources at this point (n=0). Thus, 19 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility, with none of them excluded at this stage (n=0 for “for some reason”).

Finally, in the Included phase, those 19 articles that satisfied all the previously established inclusion criteria constituted the final data set for the systematic review. As the diagram indicates, no additional records from outside sources were included at this juncture. Hence, the ultimate analysis is built upon these 19 articles, representing a curated, contextually relevant, and methodologically sound foundation for exploring how ticket pricing, team performance, and social media engagement jointly shape crowd attendance at sports events. In sum, the PRISMA flow diagram underscores a multi-level screening approach aimed at preserving rigor, reducing duplication, and maintaining only those studies that most accurately and thoroughly address the research objectives.

## Results

The SLR research examines 19 well-chosen empirical studies that follow the determinant criteria from previous literature about ticket prices and team performance and social media involvement. All studies and their results are exhibited in Table 2.

Table 2. Research results

Author	Year	Title	Objectives	Method	Findings
Meng et al.	2023	Sport tickets pricing strategy with home team's crowd effect	The objective is to analyze how crowd effects influence pricing decisions for sports event tickets, particularly focusing on dynamic and intertemporal pricing strategies employed by monopolistic home teams.	Intertemporal economic modeling incorporating demand elasticity and crowd effects.	The results demonstrate that a strong crowd effect and lower financing constraints encourage sports teams to adopt pricing strategies along the inelastic segment of the demand curve, optimizing long-term profits.
Chang et al.	2016	Inelastic sports ticket pricing, marginal win revenue, and firm pricing strategy: A behavioral pricing model	To understand why sports teams set ticket prices on the inelastic portion of the demand curve by including future strategic benefits in pricing decisions.	Behavioral economic modeling and theoretical analysis of pricing strategy incorporating dynamic future benefits.	Sports teams strategically price tickets inelastically to capitalize on future game success and long-term revenue.
Jiaqi Xu et al.	2019	Designing and Evaluating Dynamic Pricing Policies for Major League Baseball Tickets	To develop and evaluate dynamic pricing models for single-game baseball tickets to optimize revenue.	Comprehensive regression-based demand modeling and daily pricing reoptimization.	Dynamic pricing optimized daily could potentially improve revenue by 17.2%, driven by nuanced demand factors.
Şahin & Erol	2017	A Dynamic Ticket Pricing Approach for Soccer Games	To propose a mathematical model for dynamic ticket pricing in soccer games using time and inventory multipliers.	Mathematical modeling using fuzzy logic for demand forecasting and optimization techniques.	Dynamic pricing increased total revenue by 8.95% compared to static pricing, validating the effectiveness of the model.
Solanellas et al.	2022	An Examination of Ticket Pricing in a Multidisciplinary Sports Mega-Event	To analyze determinants of ticket pricing within a multidisciplinary sports mega-event context, specifically the World Swimming Championships.	Econometric analysis of ticket pricing determinants across multiple aquatic sports disciplines.	Different determinants significantly influence ticket prices across sporting disciplines, suggesting customized pricing strategies.
Friedman-Soza et al.	2017	Sport event attendance as a function of education: evidence from the UK	This study investigates the role of education in shaping individuals' decisions to attend sports events, using robust statistical analyses to control for various socioeconomic variables.	Linear regression on UK Time Use Survey data; controls for socioeconomic factors.	Higher educational attainment significantly increases the likelihood of attending sports events, even when controlling for important socioeconomic factors like income, age, and geographic location.
Lim & Pedersen	2022	Examining Determinants of Sport Event Attendance: A Multilevel Analysis of a Major League Baseball Season	The goal of this research is to analyze various determinants influencing attendance at Major League Baseball games, applying advanced multilevel statistical methods to game-level and team-level data.	Multilevel (hierarchical linear) regression using 14 game-level and 12 team-level variables.	Analysis confirms that specific game-related factors (such as team performance and playoff potential) and external variables (like ticket prices and stadium capacity) significantly impact attendance, demonstrating the importance of localized context.
Feng et al.	2018	Impact of international sports events on the attendance of domestic sports league games using Chinese Super League data	To investigate the impact of international sports events like the World Cup on the attendance of domestic league soccer games in China.	Empirical analysis using game-level attendance data from Chinese Super League spanning 2004 to 2011.	International events negatively affect domestic game attendance due to heightened expectations of competitive quality.
Newland & Yoo	2021	Active sport event participants' behavioural intentions: Leveraging outcomes for future attendance and visitation	The study explores the impact of participants' experiences during sports events on their future behavioral intentions such as revisit intentions and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.	Quantitative analysis of participant survey data, behavioral intention modeling.	Findings indicate a strong correlation between positive event experiences and increased likelihood of attendees recommending the event to others, revisiting the event themselves, or choosing the host destination for future visits.
Hou et al.	2024	Professional Sports Event Attendance and Construction Workers' Job Burnout: The Mediating Role of Leisure Spillover	To explore the effects of attending professional sports events on reducing job burnout among construction workers, mediated by leisure spillover.	Empirical statistical analysis using survey data from 641 construction workers.	Attendance at sports events significantly reduces job burnout among construction workers, mediated by leisure spillover effects.
Al-Buenain et al.	2024	Predicting Fan Attendance at Mega Sports Events—A Machine Learning Approach: A Case Study of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022	To develop a novel machine learning model to accurately predict fan attendance from each country at mega sports events, using the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 as a case study. The study aims to support event planning and improve the fan experience.	The study utilized a machine learning approach, specifically AutoML with 2523 models tested using Scikit Learn. Data sources included historical visitor counts, FIFA rankings, socio-	The model achieved an $R^2$ of 0.633 in cross-validation and identified team qualification as the most significant predictor of attendance. Other influential factors included geographic distance, expatriate population, mobile usage, and socio-economic variables. However, the model showed limited generalizability ( $R^2 = 0.259$ on holdout test), indicating a need for more diverse training data. Real-world



				economic indicators (World Bank), geographic data, and World Cup qualifications. Feature engineering and data cleaning were performed, and various regression models were compared with R <sup>2</sup> , MAE, and RMSE metrics to evaluate performance. The best-performing model was stochastic gradient descent (SGD).	deviations were explained by factors such as unexpected team performance, cultural proximity, and pandemic-related travel restrictions.
Zarei, Holmes & Yusof	2018	Sport Event Attributes Influencing Sport Tourists' Attendance at Sepak Takraw Event	This study aims to comprehensively investigate how specific attributes of sport events influence tourists' decision-making and attendance behaviors at Sepak Takraw events, emphasizing differences between domestic and international tourists.	Quantitative survey (n=316), Leiper's tourism attraction system framework.	The study finds that domestic tourists highly value factors such as event convenience, accessibility, and attractiveness of the game itself, whereas international tourists are predominantly influenced by cost considerations, highlighting significant market segmentation.
Morgan et al.	2021	Sport event and destination co-branding: Analysis of social media sentiment in an international, professional sport event crisis	To assess social media sentiment surrounding an international sport event cancellation and its implications for event and destination co-branding.	Sentiment analysis using Leximancer software on 5684 Twitter posts related to event cancellation.	Negative sentiment on social media during event crises disproportionately impacts the destination brand compared to the event itself.
Jiang et al.	2025	Following mega sports events on social media impacts Gen Z travelers' sports tourism intentions: the case of the 2022 Winter Olympic Games	The study examines how social media interactions related to the Winter Olympic Games influence sports tourism intentions among Generation Z travelers, identifying specific social media elements that shape their travel motivations.	Qualitative interviews (n=20), thematic analysis guided by social media engagement theory.	The research identifies critical factors such as athletes' images, venue appeal, attractiveness of winter sports, and user-generated content on social media as pivotal influences on the travel intentions of Generation Z audiences.
Cao et al.	2024	A Novel E-Social Servicescape Perspective: A Mixed-Methods Exploration of Audience Members' Interactions During Sports Event Broadcasting in a Livestreaming Media Environment	This research investigates audience interaction patterns during sports events broadcasted via livestream platforms, aiming to understand the emotional and social factors influencing audience satisfaction and engagement.	Mixed methods (24 interviews + 490 survey responses), e-social servicescape model.	Audience interactions on livestreaming platforms are significantly enhanced by perceived user similarity and real-time interactivity, leading to greater emotional immersion, belonging, nostalgia, and overall audience satisfaction.
McGillivray	2017	Platform politics: sport events and the affordances of digital and social media	The paper discusses how digital and social media platforms influence the framing, distribution, and reception of narratives associated with major sports events, highlighting potential shifts in power dynamics and message control.	Conceptual and theoretical analysis drawing on digital culture literature.	The study reveals that digital and social media platforms provide opportunities for alternative narratives to emerge, challenging or reinforcing mainstream media coverage and significantly influencing public perception of sport events.
Pai et al.	2025	The Effects of Tourists' Experiences of Sports Events on Their Social Media Content Generation: Mediating Roles of Flow and Attachment	The research aims to explore the relationship between tourists' experiences at sports events and their subsequent social media activities, specifically examining the roles of flow and emotional attachment as mediators in this process.	Survey (n=651), structural equation modeling (SmartPLS), experience economy model.	Results show significant effects of escapist and aesthetic experiences on tourists' feelings of flow and emotional attachment, which substantially enhance their willingness to generate and share content on social media platforms.
Küster Boluda, et al.	2024	Social media impact on international sports events related to the brand Spain: a comparison between inner versus outside events	To analyze how social media affects international perceptions of Spain through sports events, comparing domestic and international event impacts.	Social media analytics and sentiment analysis using ANOVA across 1.7 million posts related to international events.	Social media significantly influences international perceptions of brand Spain, with varied effects from different event types.

Du et al.	2020	The Effects of Social Media on Sporting Event Satisfaction and Word of Mouth Communication: An Empirical Study of a Mega Sports Event	To investigate the effects of word-of-mouth communication via social media on event satisfaction and communication behavior during the Summer Universiade.	Quantitative analysis using t-test, Pearson's correlation, and ANOVA on survey data from 572 university students.	Social media-driven WOM significantly enhances event satisfaction and spectator engagement.
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Research results indicate that audience behavior development depends on multiple economic psychological and digital factors interacting together. Ticket pricing established itself as a primary economic factor which significantly affected the attendance levels at sporting events. Economic theories which predict uniform price elasticity do not hold true according to the reviewed studies demonstrating that consumer reactions are affected by specific situational elements. Several studies like Meng et al. (2023); Chang et al. (2016) show that match demand mostly falls into the inelastic portion of demand curves for emotionally important and significant events. Research by Jiaqi Xu et al. (2019) posit significant profit improvements from price changes that occurred daily using real-time analytical data. Research has shown that ticket prices convey more than economic worth since they create symbolic messages which represent premium value along with special advantage and equity. According to Şahin and Erol (2017), dynamic pricing models boosted revenue but they warned that pricing transparency and fairness needs proper management to prevent negative consumer responses. Advanced research reveals how operational decisions affecting revenue performance must harmonize with sustained customer faithfulness to produce enduring business success.

Several research studies demonstrate team performance as a solid indicator for athlete attendance rates. Studies on team foundation support the conclusion that successful teams capture more spectators who demonstrate greater intensity through emotional attachment strong team pride and enthusiasm (Guo, 2024, Chang et al., 2016). Fan identity and loyalty levels served as moderators that shaped the way performance levels influenced attendance numbers. According to Lim and Pedersen (2022), immediate performance results significantly impact casual fans but highly identified fans keep attending games no matter how successful or unsuccessful their teams become. The multifaceted nature of performance impacts is reflected through spectator interest enhancements that result from contextual factors which include intensity of rivalries combined with historical match importance and narrative-driven storytelling. Organizations in the sports industry must acknowledge different levels of fan commitment because adjusting their marketing approaches results in higher attendance numbers.

Modern social media engagement turned into a major contemporary force which altered the way spectators behave and make decisions during events. The reviewed studies demonstrate how social media strategies serve as an effective tool for enhancing fan engagement when they develop team community sentiment along with event excitement and athlete emotion connections (Jiang et al., 2025; Pai et al., 2025). Young spectators acknowledge Instagram and TikTok and X as platforms which turned passive viewing to interactive audience interaction leading to major event attendance impact. Pegoraro (2010) together with Watanabe et al. (2015) postulate that social media delivers more than marketing promotional value since it determines how fans perceive events while influencing their experiences as well as their attendance choices. Social media creates a double-edged effect on perception damage and attendance intentions because negative sentiments spread during disasters or controversies effectively reduce both metrics (Morgan et al., 2021). Therefore, social media requires strategic management.

The literature demonstrates how ticket pricing and team performance and social media actions together determine attendance behavior rather than working independently. Team performance and effective social media engagement combined effectively reduce fan reaction to price increases (Meng et al., 2023). The use of efficient digital communication platforms helps fans stay connected throughout times of team underperformance together with pricing disagreements (Du et al., 2020; Newland and Yoo, 2021). Multiple research findings confirm that complete spectator attendance prediction requires examination of economic elements with psychological and digital network effects.

## Discussion

This systematic review critically analyzed multiple factors influencing spectator attendance at sports events, explicitly addressing the research question formulated in the introduction: "What economic, performance, and digital aspects drive attendance at games, and how do they currently interact to influence fan behavior?" Economic theory, psychological ideas, and digital trends are all well combined in the study's findings. The economic dimension, primarily through ticket pricing strategies, emerges as a foundational determinant of spectator attendance. While economists often count on price elasticity, our review shows that emotions and the feeling of fairness are major moderators for people's rational shopping decisions. Indeed, the findings indicate that people attend sporting events, even if they have to pay more when the games matter most (Chang et al., 2016; Meng et al., 2023). It demonstrates that people's behavior when choosing events is not just about money; instead, it is affected by loyalty, the importance of selected events, and the perceived importance of those events. Therefore, sports organizations should handle dynamic pricing and ensure they are transparent to maintain customers' trust for years to come.

As for team performance, the review posits that team attendance is impacted by both team success and how hard it is to obtain. Although winning attracts fans, the results prove that this impact is controlled by fans' degrees of identification (Lim & Pedersen in 2022). Casual fans exhibit high sensitivity to short-term success, whereas committed supporters maintain attendance regardless of immediate outcomes, highlighting an important distinction for marketing strategy. Looking at it critically, focusing only on the achievements of a team for fans overlooks the different reasons why people become supporters, stressing that different tactics are needed. In order to ensure people keep coming back, organizations ought to concentrate on forming a loyal community and personal links.

Social media has become very important in shaping what fans decide and improving the way they attend events. This dimension reveals that digital engagement does more than amplify traditional marketing—it actively shapes emotional connections and fan communities (Morgan et al., 2021; Pai et al., 2025). Based on our critical analysis, handling social media narratives can help reduce the tendency of team problems and higher-priced tickets to harm the brand. Too, unresolved crisis situations or negative Internet comments may reduce how many people turn out for an event. That is why sports organizations have to use digital strategies with active communication, real-time replies, and content made for fans from different groups.

An important critical insight from this review is the recognition of interconnectedness among these factors. Previously, attendance determinants were largely studied independently, creating gaps in understanding their interaction effects. The present analysis identifies a robust interplay, where effective digital engagement can alleviate price sensitivity and moderate the impacts of poor team performance. Thus, the theoretical integration of economic, psychological, and digital dimensions represents a significant advancement in understanding attendance behavior, calling for future empirical studies employing comprehensive models that can quantitatively assess these interactions, potentially through structural equation modeling (SEM) or conjoint analysis.

Nevertheless, there are notable limitations in these studies, mainly because their findings mostly relate to North America and Europe. Because studies usually use cross-sectional designs instead of following participants over time, it makes it difficult to decide on causal links. More research should aim to overcome these weaknesses by working with a variety of cultures and regions, using long-term designs, and making use of modern digital techniques to better note shifting fan habits. In summary, this discussion critically underscores that sustainable growth in sport spectator attendance requires a holistic approach that synthesizes fair and strategic ticket pricing, nuanced appreciation of team performance impacts, and sophisticated digital engagement strategies. Such an integrative perspective provides deeper theoretical and practical insights, informing both academic research and sports management practices moving forward.

## Implications

The results of this study offer actionable insights for both management practices and academic research into sport event attendance. Event organizers need to treat pricing, the performance of the team, and





success on social media as dependent parts of one system. To illustrate, when prices go up with good team results and uplifting digital content, it could seem more appropriate. This shows how Drayer and Shapiro (2009) and Rascher et al. (2007) pointed out that how fair buyers think the price is and how the price is given can influence how they react, and that the significance of an event changes people's responses. Should the performances slump, additional usage of social networks and perks for regular visitors can encourage people to come. Loyalty and fan identification, as theorized by Wann and Branscombe (1993) and further expanded by Funk and James (2001), suggest that psychological attachment may override pricing concerns in some fan segments. Managers can use their understanding of how important each of these factors is to come up with different marketing strategies for each group. When we compare, tech-savvy fans usually care more about what's offered digitally, whereas older fans are sensitive to the value of their purchase and how well an offer works. To achieve this, future managers should merge dynamic pricing, following fans' moods in real-time, and let artificial intelligence take care of creating the right digital content.

Finally, for practitioners in sport event marketing, the findings show the need to recognize structural along with demographic differences between their fan segments as part of their operational procedures. When younger viewers are pleased with the quality of stories they watch online, they do not care about the price. Because of digital technology, this demographic now forms their identities, follows their favorite trends, and belongs to groups on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. Access to chat rooms, content shared by ordinary people, and online relationships with sports clubs and stars help strengthen the experience and fascination of going to live sports events. Trending topics and activity from other users on social media often convince young people to take part in certain events. Because of this, young people become much more involved in building and promoting the main events covered. The promotion strategies which casual fans respond to should consist of standard promotions and price discounts to lure them to events in areas that have minimal entertainment competition. By using different marketing techniques and efficient listening tools, companies can succeed by applying segmentation. If social media platforms are used well, they help celebrities appear in public and attract more people during seasons when their shows get less support. Digital storytelling can help attract and keep young spectators, as good digital content helps eliminate problems related to ticketing prices and match attendance.

## Conclusions

This systematic literature review has identified three dominant factors influencing sport event attendance: ticket pricing, team performance, and social media engagement. These factors intersect across economic, emotional, and digital domains, highlighting that sport consumer behavior is shaped by a complex interplay rather than isolated determinants. This synthesis provides a deeper understanding of how sports organizations can strategically align pricing strategies, team-related communications, and digital engagement tools to drive attendance.

## Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on sport consumer behavior by advocating for an integrated model that considers emotional loyalty, pricing perceptions, and digital interactivity. It invites scholars to apply behavioral economics, social identity theory, and digital engagement frameworks in future research. Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for sports marketers, event organizers, and club managers. To maximize attendance, they must go beyond traditional variables and adopt a multi-pronged strategy that combines value-based pricing, loyalty programs, and emotionally resonant digital storytelling.

## Limitations

While the study adhered to the PRISMA guidelines and employed the Watase UAKE platform for transparent and systematic screening, it is not without limitations. First, the final set of 19 articles—although analytically robust—fell slightly short of the 20-article benchmark suggested for literature review comprehensiveness. Second, most studies reviewed were geographically concentrated in Western contexts, limiting global generalizability. Third, the diversity of research methods among the articles made comparative synthesis more descriptive than meta-analytical.



## Future Research Directions

Future studies should aim to replicate and extend this review by accessing broader datasets, incorporating gray literature, and applying mixed-methods approaches to validate interaction effects among variables. There is also a pressing need to explore underrepresented contexts such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and to include diverse fan profiles based on gender, age, and socioeconomic status. Experimental and longitudinal designs are particularly encouraged to assess causal relationships and behavioral shifts over time.

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