

Factors Influencing Spectator Attendance in Sports: A Comparison Between Kedah FA and Johor Darul Takzim Fans (JDT FC)

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ABSTRACT

One of the biggest draws for people watching a game at any sporting facility or stadium is the scenery. The quality of the sport scape will influence the enjoyment of viewers attending the match; this study focuses on the sport scape factors influenced by KEDAH FA and JDT FC fans' attendance. The purpose of this study is to identify the differences in sport scape characteristics that influenced attendance between Kedah FA and Johor Darul Takzim fans (JDT FC). A total of 380 questionnaires were handed out to Kedah FA and JDT FC supporters. The instrument's questionnaire for this study was based on the sport scape variables and attendance motivation. The results demonstrate a significant difference in attendance motivated by sport scape variables between Kedah FA and Johor Darul Takzim (JDT FC) fans ($p < 0.05$), with JDT FC fans having a higher mean of 3.10 compared to Kedah FA fans who had a mean of 2.68. According to the survey, JDT FC fans are more motivated to attend the match due to the high quality of the sporting environment. This study agrees that sport scape features will drive spectators to visit the stadium or sports facility; nevertheless, future research could focus on other variables such as satisfaction.

Keywords: *Football Team, Spectator's Attendance, Sport Scape*

INTRODUCTION

Both the sporting setting and community efficiency were major predictors of audience satisfaction. As a result, the game or sport in question becomes increasingly popular. Football has become one of Malaysia's most popular sports, with a large number of fans and supporters (Aycan, Kiremitci, Demiray, & Gencer, 2014). The motivation of spectators and supporters, as well as the media and sponsors, is key to the success of football in Malaysia (Aycan et.al, 2014). Spectators' perceptions of game-related interactions, such as opponents, overall performance, and atmosphere, as well as the service environment, which includes facility employees, access, and spaces, influenced service quality at the stadium and influenced spectator attendance, according to Zhu, Pyun, and Manoli (2021).

Furthermore, Cho, Lee, and Pyun previously discovered that high-quality services had a considerable impact on match sponsorship in the present and future. Football clubs and teams, on the other hand, rely on the media as well as fan attendance, particularly in obtaining sponsorship and funding (Aycan et.al, 2014).

Previously, the term “fans” refers to a group of people who have a strong emotional attachment to a sport, a team, or a player (Pizzo, Baker, Na, Lee, Kim & Funk, 2018). Fan attendance has quickly become a significant source of revenue for football clubs; hence people must attend games (Aycan et.al, 2014). Furthermore, fans act as spectators and as a moral compass for community members as well as a source of cash for sports clubs and federations (Funk, 2017). As a result, when determining and ensuring the attendance of spectators at each match, the sport scape features must be in good working order as fan attractions (Funk, Pizzo & Baker, 2018). Spectator assessments of the physical facility revealed that the typical sport scape substantially underestimated spectator enjoyment (Funk, 2017). As such, sport scape aspects like seating and refreshments have been identified as being strongly linked to spectators’ desire to stay inside a stadium (Aycan et.al, 2014). Aycan et al. (2014) discovered that signboards were markers of customer contentment and desire to attend games in the Malaysian football scene. However, because there is a limitation on addressing additional sport scape variables with the spectators’ attendance this study was carried out to compare sport scape factors in influencing spectator attendance between two local football fan teams. Additionally, little research on sports scape elements influencing spectator attendance in Malaysian Super League football matches has been undertaken thus this study was conducted between the fans of the Kedah FA and Johor Darul Takzim FC teams.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted between March 2020 – July 2020. This study is adopting the quantitative research method by using a survey by questionnaire. A total number of 380 respondents voluntarily answered the questionnaire. This study was conducted by using the cluster sampling method. According to the Kedah and Johor stadium statistic total number of fans attending each match is equal to Kedah FA (10,000) while Johor Darul Takzim FC (12,000) total population is equivalent to 22,000 and according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling table the total sampling will be 370 respondents, however, the research had rounded up the respondents to 380 to encompasses any invalid or missing questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into 3 parts which include, Part A for the demographic profile of the respondent, Part B about sport scape factors with 17-items adopted and adapted from Measurement and management of the sport scape (Wakefield, 1996) and Part C is about spectator’s attendance with 17-items adopted and adapted from Fan motivation for attendance to men’s division in college soccer matches (Whitey, 2013). The questionnaire contained a Likert scale question ranging from 1 to 4 (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-agree and 4- strongly agree).

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the mean difference between Kedah FA and JDT FC based on the sport scape factors overall.

Table 1: Group statistics table for Kedah FA and JDT FC (N=380)

Factor	Team	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sport Scape	Kedah FA	190	2.688	.526
	JDT FC	190	3.100	.537

Table 2 show the significant difference between Kedah FA and JDT FC based on the sport scape factors overall.

Table 2: Independent Samples Test for Kedah FA and JDT FC (N=380)

Factor	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig. (2-tailed)	Lower	Upper
Sport Scape	0.92	0.000	-.51916	-.30437

Table 3 show the mean difference between Kedah FA and JDT FC based on the sport scape factors which include the scoreboard, aesthetics, signboards, accessibility, location, and parking.

Table 3: Group statistics table based on sport scape factors for Kedah FA and JDT FC (N=380)

Factors	Team	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Scoreboard	Kedah FA	190	2.5526	.67836
	JDT FC	190	3.0184	.59622
Aesthetics	Kedah FA	190	2.6447	.62687
	JDT FC	190	3.1868	.57559
Signboards	Kedah FA	190	2.7842	.66925
	JDT FC	190	3.2868	.60691
Accessibility	Kedah FA	190	2.7224	.59614
	JDT FC	190	3.0711	.58039
Location	Kedah FA	190	2.7039	.58603
	JDT FC	190	3.0763	.57514
Parking	Kedah FA	190	2.6368	.61050
	JDT FC	190	3.0079	.64545

Table 4 show the significant difference between Kedah FA and JDT FC based on the sport scape factors including the scoreboard, aesthetics, signboards, accessibility, location, and parking.

Table 4: Independent Samples Test for Kedah FA and JDT FC (N=380)

Factors	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig. (2-tailed)	Lower	Upper
Scoreboard	22.632	.000	-.59462	-.33696
Aesthetics	3.412	.000	-.66350	-.42071
Signboards	.447	.000	-.63151	-.37376
Accessibility	1.260	.000	-.46737	-.23000
Location	4.182	.000	-.48950	-.25524
Parking	6.950	.000	-.49779	-.24432

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that there is a substantial difference in how sport scape elements influence spectator attendance, particularly between Kedah FA and JDT FC supporters. In comparison to Kedah FA fans, the overall results reveal that JDT FC fans are more prone to attend because of the quality of the sports scene supplied by the stadium. The JDT FC fans still have a higher mean than the Kedah FA fans based on the separated aspects in sport scape such as the scoreboard, aesthetics, signboards, accessibility, location, and parking. The findings are comparable to those of a recent study (Funk et al, 2018), which

discovered a positive association between sport scape factors and football supporters' attendance. Moreover, a study by Heerden (2016) also revealed that there is a strong link between spectator pleasure, motivation, and attendance and the overall sport scape, as well as its sub-dimensions which include its accessibility, facility aesthetics, quality of electronic display, seating comfort and cleanliness.

As important as that, Binjwaied, Richards, and O'Keeffe's (2015) also found that Stadium service, non-numbered seating arrangements, stadium environment, and, less substantially, lack of respect amongst rival fans and non-availability of online tickets are the most significant elements influencing fans' attendance. From the result as well, it was clearly shown that the fans of JDT FC were more prone to attend a match compared to the Kedah FA fans due to the sports scape features offered. As such JDT FC fans were more likely to adore and focus more on the sports scape features before attending a match. This study echoed the findings of Mohd Aznan, Mohd Kassim, Amir, Md Yusof, Miswan, Amir (2020), who found that a facility's accessibility and physical dimensions have an impact on the number of visits.

CONCLUSION

The effect of sports scene elements on fan attendance at a football match is investigated in this study. Comparison research was conducted on two Malaysian football supporter teams, Kedah FA and JDT FC. The findings show that different sports scene elements have different effects on spectator attendance. The results revealed that JDT FC fans are more inclined to attend a game because of the high quality of the stadium's sport scape, which includes the scoreboard, aesthetics, signboards, accessibility, location, and parking. In this regard, the stadium's attendance of football clubs must remain high. It was also proposed that the future researcher broaden the scope of the study to include a larger number of football team supporters.

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