

DESIGNING A NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED SPORTS MARKETING MODEL FOR SMALL VENUES

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Abstract

In recent years, attention to small neighborhood-based venues as a key element in the development of sports, physical activities, and social interactions within local communities has increased. Managers of professional and university sports organizations must effectively address challenges such as high costs, intensely competitive markets, growing fan dissatisfaction, severed relationships, and the rapid growth of new technologies to survive in the sports business environment. The objective of this study was to design a neighborhood-based sports marketing model using mixed marketing theory. This research employed a descriptive-correlational study design with structural equation modeling. The research population consisted of coaches and active professionals in small sports venues, with 256 participants in the study in 2001. Participants completed a questionnaire on marketing small sports venues. The data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares method in SmartPLS. The results revealed that all marketing variables, including process, pricing, positioning, product, place, promotion, and public relations, had a direct and significant impact on mixed marketing and subsequent economic and social outcomes. In other words, this model was validated, and marketing components had a significant influence on the economic and social outcomes of small neighborhood-based venues. The findings of this study can enhance marketing strategies and decision-making processes for managers of small venues, ultimately leading to better engagement and participation of local communities in sports activities.

Keywords: Sports Marketing, Small Venues, Neighborhood-based, PLS.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In recent years, attention to neighborhood-sized venues has increased as a significant factor in the development of sports, physical activities, and social interactions within local communities.

These venues have become valuable resources for improving health, youth development (McCullough et al., 2020), wellbeing (Zhang et al., 2021) and community cohesion by providing suitable spaces for sports and recreational activities on the doorstep. However, the construction and development of urban sports venues can have positive or negative impacts on various dimensions of urban life.

The proliferation of sports venues and venues has a growing influence on the urban space and the surrounding commercial and residential areas. Some of these effects include the traffic and environmental impacts, light pollution, noise, of sports venues on their surroundings (Hyun, 2022).

Managers of professional and university sports organizations must effectively address challenges such as skyrocketing costs, highly competitive markets, fan dissatisfaction and disengagement, and the rapid growth of new technologies to survive in the sports marketing environment (Veselinovic et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the growing movement of sports marketing has had significant effects on global sports development, generating substantial economic circulation, extraordinary potential for job creation, attracting foreign financial resources, extensive advertising aspects, and broad political, cultural, and social benefits for stakeholders in this industry (Gladden & Sutton, 2009).

Social Influence

In the context of social psychology, any intentional and unintentional efforts to (Gass, 2015) change in an individual's ideas, feelings, or actions induced by other individuals, whether physically present or imagined, expected, or just inferred, is referred to as social influence (VandenBos, 2015).

Social influence includes two types of informative and normative (Gass, 2015). Informational influence happens when we rely on others for advice or expertise, especially under tumultuous circumstances. On the other side, normative influence stems from our desire to blend in and be accepted by society. Both types of social influence can affect our decisions, but being able to distinguish between them is essential for dealing with social circumstances successfully.

In the context of management, consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence (CSII), which measures how much other people's opinions affect a person's purchasing decisions, has been used to analyze social influence.

The CSII is linked to a number of consumer activities, particularly those that involve impulsivity and numbing of unpleasant feelings, including smoking and drinking (Silvera et al., 2008). Social influence can manifest in various ways:

Social Norms (Asada & Ko, 2019): People often look to others for cues on how to behave in a given context. In sport venues, social norms can shape spectators' behavior, such as chanting, cheering, or wearing team merchandise. When individuals observe others engaging in certain behaviors, they are more likely to conform and adopt similar actions.

Social Facilitation and Group Dynamics (Kim et al., 2020): Sport event consumption is a context where can affect one's behavioral decisions. As prevalent leisure and daily conversation topics that are effective for social facilitation and in-group formation.

The presence of others can enhance or inhibit individuals' performance and engagement. In sport venues, the excitement and energy generated by a crowd can positively impact athletes' performance and create a more engaging atmosphere for spectators.

Social Comparison (Abdolmaleki et al., 2018): Individuals tend to evaluate themselves by comparing their attitudes, abilities, and behaviors to those of others. In sport venues, spectators may compare their level of enthusiasm or loyalty to that of fellow fans, leading to increased

engagement and identification with the team.

More recently, it has been demonstrated that consumption patterns of the sample in selecting and consuming products were inclined to a dignifying pattern. Also, personal factors (tendency to be uniqueness) and social factors (attention to the information of social comparison) had a positive impact on dignifying consumption.

In the field of consumption without attention to the role, personal factors (tendency to be uniqueness) and social factors (affectability from others and attention to the information of social comparison) had a negative impact on this consumption pattern (Abdolmaleki et al., 2018).

Marketing in Sport Venues

Marketing strategies in sport venues aim to attract, engage, and retain spectators while enhancing their overall experience. Here are some key elements of marketing in sport venues:

Branding and Identity: Sport teams and venues cultivate a unique brand identity to differentiate themselves from competitors. Through logos, slogans, and visual elements, they create a sense of belonging and loyalty among fans.

Fan Engagement (Yoshida et al., 2014): Sport venues employ various marketing tactics to engage fans and create memorable experiences. This may include interactive activities, fan contests, halftime shows, and promotional events to increase fan participation and enjoyment.

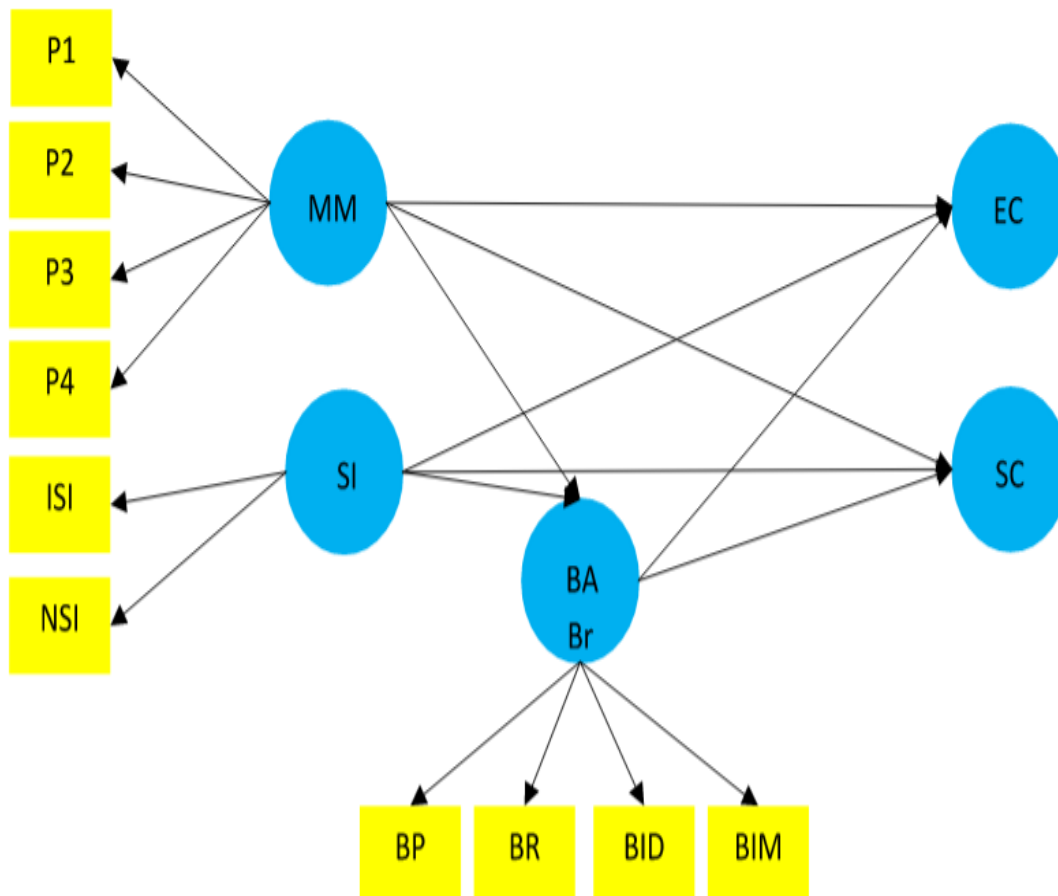
Sponsorship and Partnerships (Cornwell, 2020): Sport venues often form partnerships with corporate sponsors, leveraging their brand influence and financial support. Sponsors gain exposure through signage, advertisements, and promotional activities within the venue, while the venue benefits from financial resources and enhanced fan experiences.

Digital Marketing: With the rise of technology, sport venues utilize digital platforms to connect with fans. Social media campaigns, mobile apps, and online ticketing systems enable direct communication, fan engagement, and personalized marketing efforts.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) (Cornwell, 2020): Sport venues employ CRM strategies to build and maintain long-term relationships with fans. This involves collecting and analyzing fan data to deliver personalized experiences, targeted marketing campaigns, and exclusive offers.

By leveraging social influence and marketing strategies, sport venues can create a vibrant and engaging environment that fosters fan loyalty, enhances the spectator experience, and drives revenue generation. These efforts contribute to building a strong fan base and sustaining the long-term success of the team and the venue.

We propose a new model and an alternative model for 4Ps model in marketing.



P1: Process, P2: Pricing, P3: Position, P4: Products, SI: Social Influence, ISI: Informational Social Influence, NSI: Normative Social Influence, NMM: mix marketing, EC: Economic consequences, SC: Social consequences; BA: Brand Awareness, BP: Brand perception, BR: Brand recall, BID: Brand identity, BIM: Brand image.

Figure 1: proposed Model

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is a descriptive-correlational study with a structural equation modeling design (Alavizadeh, Mohammadzadeh, et al., 2020; Alavizadeh et al., 2021; Alavizadeh, Sepahmansour, et al., 2020). The statistical population of this study consisted of coaches and active professionals in small sports venues, with 300 participants being coaches and active professionals in small sports venues in 2022. The sampling method used in this study was non-random convenience voluntarily sampling. After examining the distorted questionnaires, a total of 256 participants remained, and their data were analyzed.

The participants completed the Small Sports Facility Marketing Questionnaire. This researcher-developed tool consists of 80 items: 16 items for the product subscale, 8 items for the pricing subscale, 23 items for the process subscale, 10 items for the position subscale, 16 items for the social consequences subscale, and 7 items for the economic consequences subscale.

The items are rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not useful) to 5 (essential). The validity and reliability of this questionnaire were also assessed in this study.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this questionnaire was 0.795 for the entire questionnaire and 0.930 for the product (0.720), pricing (0.930), place (0.130), promotion (0.830), public relations (0.910), process (0.930), position (0.910), social consequences (0.820), and economic consequences (0.690) subscales.

The other questionnaire was the modified Brand Awareness Survey Questions for sport facilities (BASQ-SF).

BASQ-SF has 60 items and four subscales of brand perception (BP), brand recall (BR), brand identity (BID), and brand image (BIM). The face validity of this tool was confirmed by 12 expert professors in sports management. Convergent validity, composite reliability, and discriminant validity were also reported, indicating that all of them were confirmed. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS-26 and SmartPLS-3 software.

FINDINGS

The findings are presented in two parts: descriptive and analytical. Descriptive findings including mean and standard deviation, lowest and highest scores are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Economic consequences	1	5	4.155	0.656
Social consequences	2	5	4.103	0.572
Mix Marketing	-	-	-	-
Process	1	5	4.298	0.503
Pricing	2	5	4.077	0.534
Position	1	5	4.417	0.502
Products	1	5	4.174	0.447
Brand Awareness	-	-	-	-
Brand Perception	2			
Brand Recall	1			
Brand Identity	1			
Brand Image	1			
Social Influence	-	-	-	-
Informational Social Influence	1			
Normative Social Influence	1			

To examine the fit of the proposed model, the validity and reliability of the assumed model were confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The goodness-of-fit indices (Table 2), summary of results (Table 3) and correlation coefficients (Table 4) of the assumed model are presented below.

Table 2: The Hypothetical Model Indices

Fit indices	SRMR	NFI	RMS_Theta
Proposed value	< 0.12	> 0.80	< 0.12
Observed value	0.082	0.895	0.102

Model fit: The results of the research demonstrated that the goodness-of-fit indices of the assumed model were at an acceptable level. It is indicating that the data statistically fit the factor structure and theoretical foundation of the seven latent variables and three observed variables in this study.

Table 3: Summary of Results

Latent variable	Indicator name	λ	α	CR	AVE	p
Economic consequences	EC	0.37	0.83	0.85	0.67	0.01
Social consequences	SC	0.32	0.91	0.9	0.59	0.01
Process	P1	0.37	0.93	0.89	0.72	0.01
Pricing	P2	0.17	0.72	0.87	0.71	0.06
Position	P3	0.18	0.91	0.83	0.61	0.05
Products	P4	0.26	0.83	0.8	0.57	0.01
Brand Perception	BP	0.18	0.74	0.78	0.66	0.01
Brand Recall	BR	0.29	0.79	0.7	0.68	0.01
Brand Identity	BID	0.32	0.85	0.88	0.58	0.01
Brand Image	BIM	0.24	0.71	0.86	0.48	0.01
Informational Social Influence	ISI	0.34	0.74	0.89	0.55	0.01
Normative Social Influence	NSI	0.36	0.89	0.81	0.63	0.01

Unidimensionality of indicators: The standardized factor loading (λ) of the marketing variables was only the lower pricing variable, which was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. These results provide sufficient evidence to confirm the unidimensionality of the selected indicators in each respective construct, except for pricing.

Therefore, it can be stated that the selected indicators are appropriately chosen for all the relevant constructs, except for pricing.

Composite reliability (CR): The CR of all constructs is above 0.70, indicating very good reliability for all variables in this model. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all constructs is also above 0.70, indicating desirable internal reliability for these constructs.

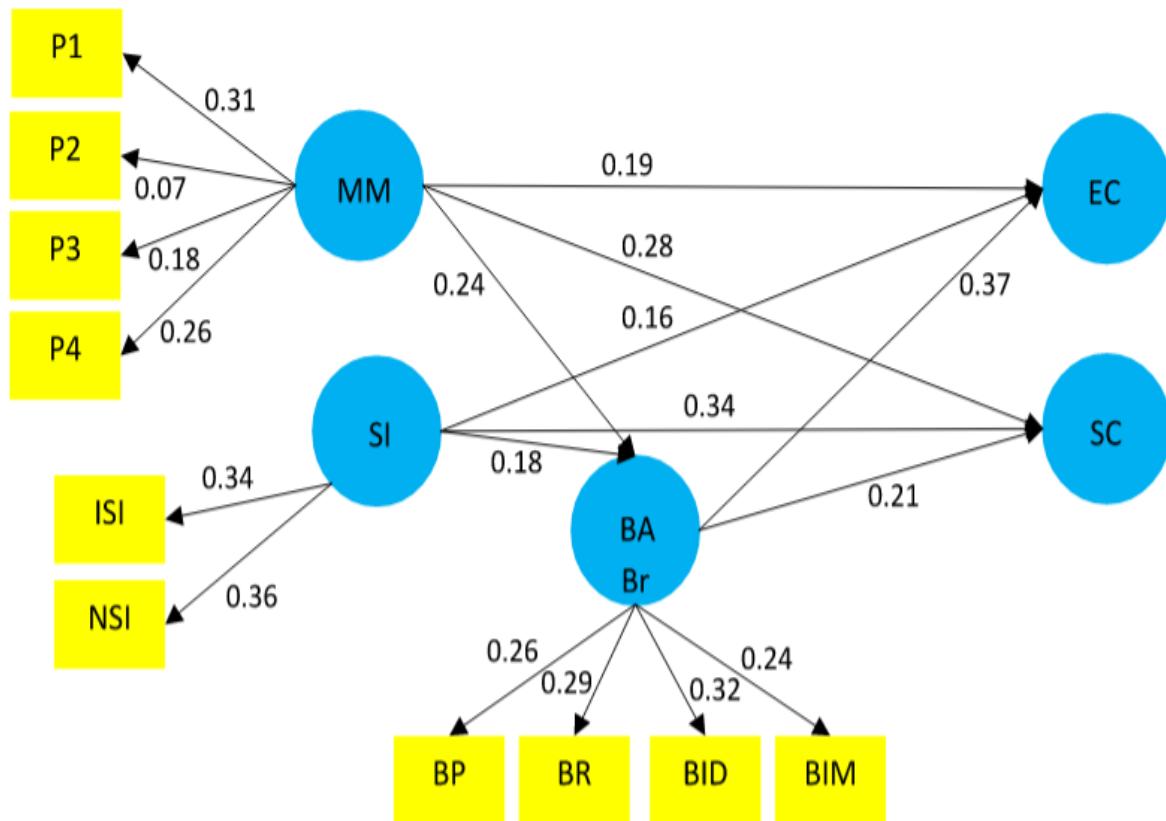
Convergent validity: The Average variance extracted (AVE) for all research constructs was above 0.50, indicating that the research constructs in the measurement model of sports marketing in small sports venues have appropriate convergent validity.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficients and AVE

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
EC	0.82											
SC	0.64	0.77										
P1	0.69	0.22	0.85									
P2	0.27	0.43	0.27	0.84								
P3	0.39	0.45	0.34	0.42	0.78							
P4	0.49	0.28	0.45	0.51	0.64	0.75						
BP	0.33	0.44	0.45	0.62	0.51	0.66	0.81					
BR	0.38	0.21	0.60	0.24	0.65	0.36	0.63	0.82				
BID	0.56	0.43	0.64	0.54	0.32	0.71	0.62	0.52	0.76			
BIM	0.52	0.52	0.23	0.37	0.23	0.46	0.47	0.58	0.48	0.69		
ISI	0.39	0.66	0.59	0.38	0.39	0.27	0.31	0.22	0.54	0.46	0.74	
NSI	0.40	0.62	0.65	0.47	0.48	0.56	0.63	0.53	0.36	0.24	0.32	0.79

Discriminant validity: In general, the square root of the AVE for each construct ($0.69 < AVE < 0.85$) was greater than the correlation between constructs ($0.22 < R < 0.71$). This result indicates that the selected indicators for each construct share a high percentage of the common variance of that construct with other constructs in the measurement model. Therefore, the discriminant validity of the constructs in the measurement model of the research was confirmed.

Based on the obtained results, the research hypotheses were examined.



P1: Process, P2: Pricing, P3: Position, P4: Products, SI: Social Influence, ISI: Informational Social Influence, NSI: Normative Social Influence, NMM: mix marketing, EC: Economic consequences, SC: Social consequences; BA: Brand Awareness, BP: Brand perception, BR: Brand recall, BID: Brand identity, BIM: Brand image.

Figure 2: the Results of Path Analysis of the Model

Direct effect	λ	SD	T	p
Mix Marketing → Economic consequences	0.19	0.04	7.65	0.01
Mix Marketing → Social consequences	0.28	0.02	10.33	0.01
Mix Marketing → Branding Awareness → Economic consequences	0.61	0.07	38.51	0.01
Mix Marketing → Branding Awareness → Social consequences	0.45	0.06	22.58	0.01
Social Influence → Economic consequences	0.16	0.03	6.27	0.01
Social Influence → Social consequences	0.34	0.05	11.93	0.01
Social Influence → Branding Awareness → Economic consequences	0.55	0.09	36.34	0.01
Social Influence → Branding Awareness → Social consequences	0.39	0.07	13.18	0.01

Finally, based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that mixed marketing variables had direct ($\lambda = 0.19$, $t = 7.65$, $p = 0.01$) and indirect ($\lambda = 0.61$, $t = 38.51$, $p = 0.01$) significant impacts on EC; mixed marketing variables also had direct ($\lambda = 0.28$, $t = 10.33$, $p = 0.01$) and indirect ($\lambda = 0.61$, $t = 38.51$, $p = 0.01$) significant impacts on SC. In addition, social influence variables had direct ($\lambda = 0.16$, $t = 6.27$, $p = 0.01$) and indirect ($\lambda = 0.55$, $t = 36.34$, $p = 0.01$) significant impacts on EC; finally, social influence variables also had direct ($\lambda = 0.34$, $t = 11.93$, $p = 0.01$) and indirect ($\lambda = 0.39$, $t = 13.18$, $p = 0.01$) significant impacts on SC. In other words, the proposed model has been validated, and mixed marketing and social influence components have had influential effects on the economic and social consequence by branding awareness of small neighborhood sports venues.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to verify the mixed marketing model based on products and services, pricing, location, promotion, public relations, processes, and place on the economic and social consequences of small neighborhood stadiums. These gyms play an important role in promoting physical activity and strengthening social connections in local communities. However, these gyms often face challenges in attracting and retaining customers, as they may lack effective marketing strategies appropriate to their unique characteristics.

The results of this research showed that the mixed marketing model has an effect on the economic and social consequences of small neighborhood stadiums. This finding is consistent with the researches of (Caliskan et al., 2021; Risal et al., 2016).

In this model, it was found that the best model with marketing mix factors cannot cover the disappointment of the final product. Other factors are those that increase and support customers' ultimate enjoyment or decrease and harm them; Therefore, it is not surprising that the marketing mix factor that comes to the fore in small neighborhood sports stadiums is product and service. Recently, consumers prefer personalized products instead of standard products. The opportunities offered by small neighborhood gyms provide the convenience and benefits of offering personalized and customized products and services to their customers.

Especially with the widespread use of the marketing model, the stages of product production begin to differentiate. In addition, customer experiences have been transferred to a dedicated environment instead of traditional gyms. Among marketing strategies, promotion is the least affected factor of small neighborhood sports stadiums. Personalized advertising can be done by interpreting big data. Again, instant advertising and personal communication channels are used differently in the gym.

The marketing model for small neighborhood sports stadiums should focus on developing attractive and diverse sports offerings that respond to the interests and needs of the local community. These promotions include offering a variety of sports activities, skill levels and age groups to ensure inclusion and maximize participation. Pricing strategies should be designed to strike a balance between affordability for the local community and sustainability for the location.

Flexible pricing options, such as membership packages, discount rates for regular customers, and special promotions, can be implemented to attract and retain customers while ensuring a steady revenue stream. Regarding pricing, it can be explained that when people spend money on something, they evaluate the content of the product or service and, finally, their level of satisfaction, that is, whether it has met their expectations or not.

There are important considerations regarding the location and access to the sports stadium. Neighborhood sports facilities should be conveniently located in the neighborhood, easily accessible by public transportation, or within walking distance. In addition, efforts should be made to create a welcoming and safe environment that encourages community members to visit and participate in sports activities.

Additionally, the location, physical appearance, and amenities of the gym contribute to the overall customer experience. Clean and well-maintained facilities, modern equipment, comfortable seating, and accessible parking are factors that can significantly influence the perception of place quality and encourage repeat visits.

Effective promotion is necessary to increase awareness and attract customers to stadiums. Using traditional and digital marketing channels can help reach a wider audience. Cooperation with schools, community centers, and influential people on social media can also be effective in spreading this news and creating interest in sports.

Public relations, staff, and coaches play an important role in creating a positive experience for customers. Friendly and knowledgeable employees who are interested in sports and provide excellent customer service can contribute to the success of gyms. Investing in employee training and creating a supportive work environment can help increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The article explores the impact of social influence and branding awareness on both social and economic consequences in neighborhood-based sports small venues (Smith et al., 2022). It delves into the idea that the success and sustainability of these venues are heavily reliant on the social dynamics and branding strategies employed. From a societal point of view, the research emphasizes how social influence plays an essential role in determining how people behave and make decisions in their communities (Hu et al., 2019).

Social cohesiveness and a closer feeling of community are fostered when neighbors are persuaded to play sports in intimate settings by their peers or local authorities (Quinn et al., 2019). Higher social contacts, better physical health, and higher communal pride are some of the social effects of such impact.

Additionally, the value of branding awareness in neighborhood-based sports small venues is highlighted by our findings. By building a distinctive and appealing image for these locations, effective branding strategies may draw in more visitors and encourage a feeling of identification and loyalty among attendees and participants (Bahrami et al., 2021).

Raising brand recognition may result in more people visiting the venues, more involvement, and even possible collaborations or sponsorships, all of which can have an immediate economic effect on the local community as a whole (Vieira & Sousa, 2020).

The article's discussion of the economic ramifications is on the possibility of generating income and stimulating the local economy (Humphreys, 2019). Higher attendance rates, ticket sales, item purchases, and sponsorship possibilities can result from effective branding and growing social impact (Loh et al., 2019).

This surge of activity can have a good effect on nearby companies, provide employment, and advance the neighborhood's general economic growth. The article does concede, though, that there may be both advantages and disadvantages to social influence and branding awareness. Negative social influence can result in exclusion or discrimination, whereas good social impact can deepen communal relationships (Gatouillat et al., 2020).

Similar to how good branding may draw in more customers, it can also fuel gentrification or commercialization, which can drive out longtime locals or alter the neighborhood's identity (Buhalis & Park, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The paper concludes by highlighting the relationship between branding awareness and social influence, as well as how these factors affect the social and economic outcomes of neighborhood-based sports venues. In order to guarantee the long-term viability and inclusion of these venues within the community, it emphasizes the significance of developing good social dynamics, putting successful branding tactics into practice, and taking into account any potential ramifications.

Local sports venues may flourish as essential elements of a lively and cohesive neighborhood by comprehending and utilizing the power of social influence and branding. Designing a marketing model for small neighborhood sports stadiums requires careful consideration of the 4Ps marketing model variables, including product, price, place, and process.

In addition, considering the role of social influence and marketing awareness and examining benchmark variables related to economic and social outcomes, it is very important to ensure the sustainability and positive impact of such places.

By implementing an effective marketing model, these venues can attract a diverse customer base, increase community involvement, and contribute to the overall well-being of the neighborhood.

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