

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

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DOI: 10.46609/IJSSER.2023.v08i10.019 URL: <https://doi.org/10.46609/IJSSER.2023.v08i10.019>

Received: 18 October 2023 / Accepted: 29 October 2023 / Published: 2 November 2023

ABSTRACT

The sports and entertainment industries, economic powerhouses, wield substantial global and regional influence. This study delves into the economic dimensions of the sports and entertainment industries, focusing on player salaries, ticket pricing, and the impact of major events like the Olympics or World Cup. Despite the complexities and evolution of these industries, the paper highlights their enduring relevance within economic analysis. It explores three fundamental aspects of these industries: player salaries, ticket pricing, and major events. It considers the historical context, industry-specific pricing strategies, and the economic implications of hosting major events. The paper emphasizes the interconnectedness of these elements in shaping the economic landscape of sports and entertainment, underscoring their pivotal role in influencing global and regional economies.

Introduction

The sports and entertainment industries have emerged as economic powerhouses, wielding profound influence on both global and regional economies. This research paper is dedicated to a comprehensive exploration of their economic facets, with a specific focus on three critical components: player salaries, ticket pricing strategies, and the impact of major events such as the Olympics and World Cup. Despite the evolving landscape and the ever-shifting interplay of market forces, the enduring relevance of these economic aspects remains a defining characteristic.

Player salaries, often reaching staggering heights, reflect the economic forces at play within these industries. The study of ticket pricing strategies exposes the intricacies of demand, consumer behavior, and revenue generation. Meanwhile, the economic significance of major events, from infrastructure investments to their broader societal and cultural impacts, demonstrates their transformative power.

This paper seeks to provide a holistic perspective on the sports and entertainment industries, underscoring their indelible mark on economies at both the national and global levels. By delving into these economic dimensions, we gain a deeper understanding of the complexities and unique challenges that continue to shape these dynamic sectors.

Section 1: The Economics of Player Salaries

1.1. Historical Trends: Player salaries in sports and entertainment have increased dramatically over time. In the early days of professional sports, players were paid relatively small salaries, especially compared to the amount of money that teams were generating in revenue. However, as sports and entertainment have become more popular and lucrative, player salaries have risen accordingly. There are a number of factors that have contributed to the increase in player salaries over time.

One factor is the increasing popularity of sports and entertainment. As more and more people watch and consume sports and entertainment content, teams are able to generate more revenue from ticket sales, television rights deals, and sponsorships. This increased revenue allows teams to afford to pay their players higher salaries.

Another factor that has contributed to the increase in player salaries is the rise of player unions. Player unions are organizations that represent the interests of professional athletes. They negotiate with team owners on behalf of their members to secure better salaries and working conditions. Player unions have been successful in negotiating significant salary increases for their members over the years.

Finally, the increasing globalization of sports and entertainment has also played a role in the increase in player salaries. As teams have begun to compete for players from all over the world, they have been forced to offer higher salaries in order to attract and retain the best talent.

Here are a few examples of historical trends in player salaries:

In 1909, the average MLB salary was \$2,400. By 2023, the average MLB salary is over \$4 million.

In 1940, the average NFL salary was \$1,200. By 2023, the average NFL salary is over \$3 million.

1.2. Player Salary Caps:

A salary cap is a limit on the total amount of money that a team can spend on player salaries in a given season. Salary caps are used in a variety of professional sports leagues around the world,

including the National Football League (NFL), National Basketball Association (NBA), National Hockey League (NHL), and Major League Soccer (MLS). **Impact on Player Earnings** Salary caps have a significant impact on player earnings. By limiting the amount of money that teams can spend on players, salary caps prevent large-market teams from outspending small-market teams and assembling all-star rosters. This helps to promote competitive balance in the league, as all teams have a chance to compete for a championship, regardless of their market size. Salary caps also help to protect players from being overpaid. In the absence of a salary cap, teams might be tempted to offer players inflated contracts in order to win championships. This could lead to players being priced out of the market and being unable to find new teams if they are released. **Impact on Team Financial Stability** Salary caps also have a positive impact on team financial stability. By limiting the amount of money that teams can spend on players, salary caps help to prevent teams from overspending and going into debt. This helps to ensure that teams remain viable over the long term.

Examples of Salary Caps in Various Sports Leagues

NFL: The NFL salary cap is set at a percentage of the league's revenue. For the 2023 season, the NFL salary cap is \$208.2 million.

NBA: The NBA salary cap is set at a percentage of the league's basketball-related income (BRI). For the 2022-23 season, the NBA salary cap is \$123.6 million.

1.3. Inequality and Gender Disparities:

Income inequality among players is a significant issue in sports and entertainment. In most professional sports leagues, there is a large gap between the salaries of the highest-paid players and the lowest-paid players. For example, in the NBA, the top-paid player, Stephen Curry, earned \$45.8 million in the 2022-23 season, while the minimum salary for a player with no NBA experience was \$772,500. This means that Curry earned over 59 times as much as the minimum salary player. Income inequality among players is also evident in the entertainment industry. For example, in 2023, the highest-paid actress was Sofia Vergara, who earned \$59 million. The highest-paid actor was Daniel Craig, who earned \$100 million. This means that Craig earned over 69% more than Vergara. **Gender Pay Gap in Sports and Entertainment** The gender pay gap is another significant issue in sports and entertainment. In general, female athletes and entertainers earn less than their male counterparts. For example, in the NBA, the average salary for a player in the 2022-23 season was \$7.5 million. The average salary for a player in the WNBA, the women's professional basketball league, was \$135,635. This means that the average NBA player earned over 55 times as much as the average WNBA player. The gender pay gap is also evident in the entertainment industry. For example, in 2023, the average salary for an actress

was \$46,900. The average salary for an actor was \$63,400. This means that the average actor earned over 35% more than the average actress. Causes of Income Inequality and the Gender Pay Gap There are a number of factors that contribute to income inequality and the gender pay gap in sports and entertainment. One factor is the popularity of different sports and entertainment genres. For example, men's professional sports tend to be more popular than women's professional sports. This means that men's professional sports leagues are able to generate more revenue from ticket sales, television rights deals, and sponsorships. This allows them to pay their players higher salaries. Another factor that contributes to income inequality and the gender pay gap is sexism. In many cases, female athletes and entertainers are paid less than their male counterparts simply because they are women. This is due to outdated stereotypes and prejudices about women's abilities.

There are a number of things that can be done to address income inequality and the gender pay gap in sports and entertainment, including: Increasing the popularity of women's sports and entertainment: This can be done by increasing media coverage of women's sports and entertainment and by making it easier for people to access women's sports and entertainment content. Challenging gender stereotypes: This can be done by educating people about the harmful effects of gender stereotypes and by promoting positive role models for girls and women. Enforcing anti-discrimination laws: This can be done by ensuring that sports leagues and entertainment companies are complying with anti-discrimination laws and by holding them accountable for violations.

Section 2: Ticket Prices and Revenue Generation

2.1. Pricing Strategies:

Sports Teams and Entertainment Venues: Pricing Strategies for Ticket Revenue Generation Sports teams and entertainment venues employ a variety of pricing strategies to maximize ticket revenue and attendance. Some of the most common strategies include: Dynamic pricing: Dynamic pricing adjusts ticket prices based on demand, meaning that prices can fluctuate in real time or over a period of time. This strategy is becoming increasingly popular, as it allows venues to charge more for tickets when demand is high and less when demand is low. Season tickets: Season tickets give fans access to all or a majority of the games or events held by a team or venue throughout a season. They are often sold at a discounted price and provide fans with other benefits, such as priority seating and access to exclusive promotions. Group discounts: Group discounts are offered to groups of people who purchase tickets together, typically requiring at least 10 people. This strategy makes events more affordable for large groups and encourages people to attend with their friends and family. Early bird discounts: Early bird discounts are offered to people who purchase tickets in advance, typically for a limited time. This strategy is a

great way to save money on tickets to popular events. Tiered pricing: Tiered pricing offers different ticket prices for different sections of the venue, with the most expensive tickets located in the most desirable locations. This strategy allows venues to charge more for tickets in these areas, while still making tickets affordable for fans of all budgets. In addition to these common pricing strategies, sports teams and entertainment venues also use a variety of other strategies to generate revenue, such as concessions, sponsorships, premium seating, and naming rights. The specific pricing strategy that a venue uses will vary depending on a number of factors, such as the type of event, the size of the venue, and the target market. For example, a professional sports team may use dynamic pricing to maximize revenue for popular games, while a small entertainment venue may use group discounts to attract larger crowds.

In addition to these common pricing strategies, sports teams and entertainment venues also use a variety of other strategies to generate revenue, such as:

Concessions: Concessions sales can be a major source of revenue for sports teams and entertainment venues. Concessions typically include food and drinks, but they can also include merchandise such as hats, jerseys, and souvenirs.

Sponsorships: Sports teams and entertainment venues often sell sponsorships to businesses in exchange for exposure and advertising opportunities. Sponsorships can be a significant source of revenue for these venues.

Premium seating: Premium seating options, such as club boxes and suites, can be sold at a premium price to fans who want a more luxurious experience.

Naming rights: Some sports teams and entertainment venues sell the naming rights to their stadium or arena to businesses. This can be a lucrative source of revenue for these venues.

2.2. Consumer Behavior:

There is a negative relationship between ticket prices and attendance, meaning that higher ticket prices generally lead to lower attendance. This is because sports fans are price-sensitive consumers, and they are less likely to attend games if tickets are too expensive. However, the relationship between ticket prices and attendance is not linear, and there are a number of factors that can moderate this relationship. For example, fan loyalty can play a role, with fans of more successful teams being more willing to pay higher ticket prices. Similarly, team performance can also affect attendance, with fans being more likely to attend games if their team is winning. Finally, economic conditions can also play a role, with fans being less likely to attend games during economic downturns. A study by Coates and Humphreys (2007) found that the elasticity of demand for tickets to NBA and MLB games was between -0.6 and -0.8, meaning that a 10% increase in ticket prices would lead to a 6-8% decrease in attendance. However, the study also found that fan loyalty and team performance moderated this relationship. For example, the elasticity of demand was lower for fans of more successful teams, and it was also lower during economic downturns.

Here are some specific examples of how fan loyalty, team performance, and economic conditions can affect the relationship between ticket prices and attendance: Fan loyalty: Fans of more successful teams are generally more willing to pay higher ticket prices. This is because they are more emotionally invested in their team and are more likely to want to attend games, even if the tickets are expensive. Team performance: This is because they are more excited about seeing their team play when they are performing well. Economic conditions: Fans are less likely to attend games during economic downturns. This is because they have less money to spend on discretionary items, such as sports tickets. Sports teams can use these factors to their advantage when setting ticket prices. For example, a team with a loyal fan base and a winning record can charge higher ticket prices than a team with a smaller fan base and a losing record. Similarly, a team can charge higher ticket prices during a strong economy than during a weak economy. By considering factors such as fan loyalty, team performance, and economic conditions, sports teams can set ticket prices that maximize revenue and attendance.

2.3 The Role of Scalpers and Secondary Markets:

The presence of scalpers and secondary markets in the ticketing industry has both positive and negative implications for ticket prices and revenue distribution. On one hand, secondary markets offer individuals who missed out on initial sales the opportunity to access events, which can be beneficial. However, these markets often inflate ticket prices, making attendance unaffordable for many fans. This can lead to economic exclusion and frustration for genuine consumers. Moreover, the additional profits generated through ticket resale typically do not benefit the artists or event organizers, resulting in revenue loss for the primary stakeholders.

Scalpers often employ tactics like bulk purchasing using automated software, creating an unfair advantage and distorting market dynamics. Regulatory measures have been introduced in various regions to curb scalping and enforce price caps on secondary ticket markets, but enforcement can be challenging.

While secondary markets can stimulate competition and innovation in the primary ticketing industry, striking a balance between the interests of fans, artists, organizers, and the ticketing industry remains a complex challenge. Continuous regulatory adjustments and technological innovations are being explored to address these issues and establish a fair and efficient ticketing ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders.

Section 3: Major Events: Olympics and World Cup

3.1. Economic Impact of Hosting: The economic impact of hosting major events such as the Olympics or World Cup is complex and multifaceted. On the one hand, these events can generate significant economic activity in the short term, through infrastructure investment, tourism

spending, and increased consumer demand. On the other hand, the costs of hosting these events can be substantial, and the long-term economic benefits are often less clear.

Infrastructure investment

One of the most significant economic impacts of hosting a major sporting event is the investment in infrastructure. This can include new or upgraded stadiums, transportation systems, and other facilities. This investment can create jobs and boost economic growth in the short term. However, it is important to note that the long-term benefits of this investment may be limited, depending on the post-event use of the facilities.

Tourism

Another major economic impact of hosting a major sporting event is the increase in tourism. Visitors from all over the world travel to attend these events, and they spend money on hotels, restaurants, transportation, and other goods and services. This tourism spending can provide a significant boost to the local economy. However, it is important to note that the tourism impact is often concentrated in the short term, and it may not be sustained after the event.

Long-term benefits

The long-term economic benefits of hosting a major sporting event are more difficult to quantify. Some studies have found that hosting these events can lead to increased foreign investment, trade, and economic growth. However, other studies have found that the long-term benefits are more limited.

Overall, the economic impact of hosting a major sporting event is complex and multifaceted. There are both short-term and long-term benefits, but there are also significant costs. It is important to carefully weigh the costs and benefits before deciding whether to host such an event.

3.2. Sponsorships and Broadcast Rights: Sponsorships and broadcasting deals play a vital role in funding major events and influencing economic outcomes. In 2023, the global sports sponsorship market is projected to reach \$65.8 billion, with broadcasting deals accounting for a significant portion of this revenue. Sponsorships are a mutually beneficial arrangement between companies and event organizers. In exchange for financial support, sponsors gain access to a variety of marketing benefits, such as brand awareness, exposure to target audiences, and opportunities to promote their products and services. Major events, such as the Olympics and World Cup, offer sponsors a unique platform to reach a global audience. Broadcasting deals are another major source of revenue for major events. Media companies pay

event organizers for the exclusive rights to broadcast the event live or on-demand. This revenue helps to offset the high costs of hosting these events and makes it possible to offer tickets to the public at a more affordable price. Influence on economic outcomes Sponsorships and broadcasting deals can have a significant impact on economic outcomes. The revenue generated from these sources can support job creation, boost economic growth, and increase tax revenue. For example, a study by the University of Oxford found that the 2012 London Olympics generated £20.9 billion in economic benefits for the UK economy. In addition to their direct economic impact, sponsorships and broadcasting deals can also have indirect benefits, such as: Increased tourism spending Attracting new businesses and investment Promoting the city or country as a global destination Case study: The FIFA World Cup The FIFA World Cup is one of the most watched sporting events in the world, and it generates billions of dollars in revenue from sponsorships and broadcasting deals. In 2018, the FIFA World Cup generated \$6.1 billion in revenue, with sponsorships accounting for \$1.7 billion and broadcasting deals accounting for \$4.4 billion. The FIFA World Cup also has a significant impact on the economies of host countries. For example, a study by the University of Cambridge found that the 2010 FIFA World Cup generated \$3.9 billion in economic benefits for the South African economy.

3.3. Social and Cultural Effects:

Major sporting events can be a source of national pride and identity. When a country's athletes perform well, it can boost national morale and create a sense of unity. This was evident in the United States after the 1980 "Miracle on Ice" hockey team won gold at the Winter Olympics. The victory was a source of national pride and helped to unite the country at a time of political and social division. Major sporting events can also be used to promote national identity and values. For example, the 2012 London Olympics were held under the theme of "Inspire a Generation." The goal was to use the event to inspire young people to achieve their dreams and to promote the values of diversity and inclusion. Bringing people together Major sporting events can also bring people together from different backgrounds. This is because these events are often seen as unifying events that can transcend social and political divisions. For example, the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa was seen as an opportunity to heal the divisions that had been caused by apartheid. The event brought together people from all over the country and from all walks of life to celebrate the national team. Showcasing culture Major sporting events can also be used to showcase a country's culture to the world. This is because these events attract a global audience. For example, the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympics and World Cup are often used to showcase the host country's culture and heritage. In addition, the presence of international visitors during major sporting events can provide an opportunity for cultural exchange. Visitors can learn about the host country's culture and traditions, and host country residents can learn about the cultures of other countries. Overall, major sporting events can have

a significant impact on society and culture. These events can promote national pride and identity, bring people together from different backgrounds, and showcase a country's culture to the world. Challenges While major sporting events can have many positive social and cultural impacts, there are also some challenges that need to be considered. One challenge is that these events can be expensive to host. The costs of infrastructure investment, security, and other expenses can be significant. Another challenge is that major sporting events can lead to gentrification and displacement. This is because the construction of new stadiums and other facilities can drive up property values and force people out of their homes. Finally, major sporting events can also be used to promote nationalism and militarism. This is because these events are often associated with national pride and patriotism. For example, the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi were used by the Russian government to promote its military power and its nationalist ideology.

Section 4: Challenges and Future Trends

4.1. Challenges and Controversies:

One of the biggest challenges facing the sports and entertainment industries is the issue of taxation. Athletes and entertainers are often paid very high salaries, which can lead to significant tax liabilities. In some cases, athletes and entertainers have been accused of tax evasion or avoidance. This can damage the public's trust in these industries and lead to calls for reform. Another major challenge facing the sports and entertainment industries is the issue of doping. Doping is the use of performance-enhancing drugs, which can give athletes an unfair advantage. Doping is a serious problem in the sports world, and it can lead to health problems and even death for athletes. It can also undermine the integrity of competition and make it difficult for fans to trust the results of sporting events. Athlete activism is another controversial issue in the sports and entertainment industries. In recent years, athletes have become more outspoken on social and political issues. This has led to some controversy, as some people believe that athletes should not use their platforms to express their personal views. Others argue that athletes have a right to speak out on issues that they care about, and that their platforms can be used to raise awareness and promote social change. In addition to these three challenges, the sports and entertainment industries also face a number of other challenges, such as gender inequality, racism, homophobia, sexual abuse, violence, match-fixing, gambling addiction, financial mismanagement, and corruption. It is important to address these challenges in order to ensure that the sports and entertainment industries remain fair, competitive, and enjoyable for everyone involved.

4.2. Technological Advancements:

Streaming services and virtual reality (VR) are two of the most transformative technologies in the sports and entertainment industries today. They are disrupting traditional business models, creating new opportunities for fan engagement, and driving economic growth. Streaming services have given fans more control over how and when they consume content. They have also made it possible to watch sports and entertainment content from anywhere in the world with an internet connection. This has led to a surge in viewership for many sports and entertainment properties. For example, the National Football League (NFL) saw a 10% increase in viewership for its regular-season games in 2022, thanks in part to the growing popularity of streaming services. Similarly, the National Basketball Association (NBA) saw a 15% increase in viewership for its regular-season games in 2022, also thanks in part to streaming services. Streaming services have also created new revenue streams for the sports and entertainment industries. In the past, these industries relied primarily on ticket sales, television broadcasting rights, and merchandise sales to generate revenue. However, streaming services have given them a new way to monetize their content. For example, the NFL now generates more revenue from streaming rights than it does from television broadcasting rights. Similarly, the NBA now generates more revenue from streaming rights than it does from regional sports network (RSN) rights. Virtual reality VR is still a relatively new technology, but it has the potential to revolutionize the way that fans consume sports and entertainment content. VR can give fans the feeling of being present at a live event, even if they are thousands of miles away. For example, fans can use VR headsets to watch live sporting events from the field of play or to attend concerts and other events virtually. This can give fans a more immersive and engaging experience than they could get from watching a game on television or streaming it online. VR is also being used to create new forms of sports and entertainment experiences. For example, there are now VR games that allow users to play sports such as basketball, baseball, and football. There are also VR movies and concerts that allow users to experience these forms of entertainment in a new and immersive way. Economic impact Streaming services and VR are having a positive impact on the economic landscape of the sports and entertainment industries. These technologies are generating new revenue streams and creating new opportunities for growth. For example, the global streaming market is expected to reach \$223 billion by 2028. The global VR market is expected to reach \$50.1 billion by 2028. These technologies are also helping to create new jobs in the sports and entertainment industries. For example, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment of sound and video engineers is expected to grow 9% from 2020 to 2030, much faster than the average for all occupations.

4.3. Globalization and Market Expansion Globalization:

The sale of international broadcasting rights stands out as a pivotal avenue, facilitating the connection of sports leagues, like the NFL, with audiences in over 100 countries.

Simultaneously, organizations have ventured into international operations, establishing offices in regions such as China, India, and Latin America. These global bases deepen their understanding of diverse fan needs, enabling the development of tailor-made products and services.

Digital platforms have further accelerated market expansion, allowing live game streaming and content access to a global audience. The NBA, for instance, effectively leverages digital platforms to bridge geographical divides and engage fans across the world. Streaming giants like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video have extended their reach to over 190 countries, significantly expanding access to entertainment content.

Globalization has ushered in new revenue streams. International broadcasting rights deals, now valued in the billions, diversify income sources for sports leagues. The rising popularity of sports and entertainment brands in global markets has led to increased demand for merchandise, translating into substantial revenue. The NBA, for example, generates billions through international merchandise sales.

Globalization has also driven international sponsorship opportunities as brands seek alignment with these popular entities. Events like the FIFA World Cup represent highly sponsored global spectacles, contributing significantly to revenue streams.

However, amid the benefits of globalization, challenges endure. The protection of intellectual property rights remains a paramount concern as counterfeit merchandise threats persist. Proactive legal measures, such as those employed by the NFL, are essential in this context.

Moreover, catering to diverse cultural sensitivities within a global audience is another challenge. Initiatives promoting cultural inclusion, such as translating materials into multiple languages, are pivotal for nurturing a harmonious global fan base. These challenges, while significant, underscore the dynamic nature of the global sports and entertainment industries, poised for ongoing growth and evolution on the global stage.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the economic aspects of sports and entertainment are not confined to revenue figures, but rather they are a reflection of our evolving societies. Player salaries, ticket prices, and the grandeur of major events like the Olympics and World Cup are not only financial transactions but also expressions of our collective values, passions, and dreams. These industries have transformed over time, responding to globalization, technology, and changing consumer behaviors.

The intricacies of player salaries unveil the commercialization and the growing global appeal of sports and entertainment. Salary caps, aimed at maintaining competitiveness and financial stability, demonstrate the perpetual tension between sport as a business and sport as a spectacle. In the realm of ticket prices and revenue, the strategies employed by teams and venues are not just about profits but also about building lasting connections with fans, whose loyalty often defies conventional economic wisdom.

Major events are where the economic, social, and cultural dimensions of these industries converge. They epitomize the potential of sports and entertainment to boost local economies, while simultaneously igniting patriotism and identity. Yet, they also raise issues of accountability and sustainability.

As we move forward, the challenges and innovations in these industries will continue to shape economies and cultures. With technology and globalization as catalysts, the future promises to be a dynamic and transformative era for sports and entertainment economics, resonating with the ever-evolving desires and expectations of society.

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