

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-50643

Date: 15-03-2025

Title: Fans zones: between organizational issues and the spectator experience in celebration areas for major sporting events in Senegal

Recommendation:

Accept as it is.....**YES**.....

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	√			
Techn. Quality		√		
Clarity		√		
Significance			√	

Reviewer's Name: Mr Bilal Mir

Reviewer's Decision about Paper: **Recommended for Publication.**

Comments (*Use additional pages, if required*)

Reviewer's Comment / Report

Introduction This study presents a comprehensive analysis of the organization of fan zones in Senegal during major sporting events and the spectator experience within these spaces. It effectively highlights the key stakeholders involved in fan zone organization, including commercial companies, public administrations, and local authorities. The research methodology, incorporating semi-structured interviews and participant observation, provides depth to the study and allows for an insightful exploration of the dynamics shaping the planning and implementation of these spaces.

Summary of Findings The study identifies that fan zones in Senegal serve multiple purposes beyond their core function of providing a communal viewing experience. These spaces contribute to national cohesion, promote local economic activity, and function as marketing opportunities for commercial entities. Notably, the study categorizes organizers into three primary groups:

1. **Commercial Companies** – Utilize fan zones as a strategic marketing platform to engage with spectators in an emotionally charged setting, enhancing brand visibility.
2. **Public Administrations** – Organize fan zones as part of national initiatives to foster unity and public engagement with sports.

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3. **Local Authorities** – Leverage fan zones as opportunities to showcase political dynamism and facilitate regional socio-economic development.

The findings further indicate that fan zones vary in their distribution across urban and rural areas, with a significant expansion over time. While initially concentrated in central Dakar, the number of fan zones increased to over sixty, including rural communities, highlighting their growing popularity and importance.

Methodology Evaluation The study employs a rigorous methodological framework, utilizing both participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The participant observation approach aligns with the method proposed by Patricia and Peter Adler, enabling the researcher to maintain proximity to the subjects while remaining neutral in organizational matters. Seven distinct fan zones were observed, strategically selected based on location and organizer profiles. The ethnomarketing study conducted at these sites generated extensive qualitative data, including field notes, photographs, and recorded conversations.

Additionally, interviews with seven key organizers and 18 spectators provided a diverse range of perspectives, enhancing the reliability of the findings. The thematic coding and content analysis employed in data processing ensured a structured and comprehensive synthesis of information.

Key Insights

1. **Spectator Experience** – The study reveals that fan zones offer an immersive and emotionally engaging environment, fostering a sense of camaraderie among supporters. The accessibility of these spaces, often free of charge, contributes to their widespread appeal.
2. **Economic and Political Dimensions** – Commercial entities benefit from heightened brand engagement, while local authorities use these events to align themselves with the positive sentiments associated with sports.
3. **Logistical and Financial Challenges** – The organization of fan zones requires significant investment in infrastructure, security, and technical expertise. Some organizers struggle with resource constraints, affecting the overall quality of the experience.

Conclusion The study provides valuable insights into the multifaceted role of fan zones in Senegal. It successfully illustrates how these spaces function beyond mere spectator venues, serving as social, economic, and political instruments. The methodological rigor and diversity of perspectives strengthen the study's conclusions, offering a well-rounded understanding of the subject matter.