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Introducing a corporate hospitality framework for optimum match day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe.

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Dissertation Release Form

I certify that the following student, Andrew Moyo was under my supervision. I further certify that he has attended all the scheduled meetings with me and has fulfilled all the requirements I set before him as the supervisor. It is my professional judgment that the dissertation is of a sufficiently high standard to be submitted with my name attached as the supervisor.

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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Bindura State University of Science Education for acceptance, a research project entitled**: Introducing a corporate hospitality framework for optimum match day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe.**

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DECLARATION

I, Andrew Moyo declare that the research entitled 'Introducing a corporate hospitality framework for optimum match day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe', is my work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references.

31 March 2024

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my lovely wife Rudo and my two children, Vimbai and Tanaka You have been an inspiration to me. At the time when we were financially challenged, you remained resolute and supported me all the way. I feel so humbled by your support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The objectives of the study were to explore different corporate hospitality activities that can optimize match day fan experience in the Zimbabwean Premier Soccer League in Harare. The impact of corporate hospitality was unravelled, taking into cognizance the different challenges faced in the implementation of hospitality activities. This study is explorative, with the researcher`s major goal being to try and understand the challenges that clubs face in coming up with a hospitality framework that optimizes match day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League. The inductive approach was used in the study. The approach has been chosen to establish existing gaps that need intervention to promote sports hospitality. The research was carried out on the six Premier Soccer League teams in Harare namely Dynamos, Caps United, Herentals, Yadah, Cranborne, and Black Rhinos Football Club. 40 soccer fans, 10 stadium managers, 10 Premier League officials, and 10 team managers were given questionnaires. 3 soccer fans, 2 stadium managers, 2 sponsors, 3 Premier League officials, and 5 team managers were interviewed. These were chosen because of the important characteristics that are based on the research. Qualitative data was organised into themes using the NVivo 14 software where the SPSS was used to perform descriptive statistics and for quantitative data. The study showed that fan engagement activities are sporadically organized but there is a lack of consistency and creativity, resulting in repetitive and uninspiring fan experience. The existing stadiums and facilities are not designed to meet the requirements and expectations of modern corporate hospitality. The study on its recommendations prioritized the fostering of strong partnerships and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including clubs, stadium authorities, corporate sponsors, local businesses, and fan organizations. Engagement of stakeholders ensures a collective effort and shared commitment towards enhancing the match day experience. Future studies can explore the potential impact of emerging technologies, such as virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and wearable devices, on enhancing the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the background of the research study. It discusses the corporate hospitality framework that can be introduced to optimize the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Zimbabwe. It presents a foundation of the study which includes the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Theoretical Framework of the Study, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Significance of the Study, Delimitation of the Study, and Study Outline.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Over the last ten years, the perception has grown that football clubs need to diversify their revenue streams to survive in the volatile market, Titlebaum et al. (2013). In Europe, corporate budgets for sports sponsoring were reduced by 25% after the Covid-19 pandemic, Connelly, (2011). Charumbira (2022) noted that top-flight football in Zimbabwe failed to run for the entire 2020-21 season when fans were banned from attending matches because of Covid 19.

Football teams in Zimbabwe generally rely on gate-taking for survival. The Herald, 07 May, (2022) Local football needs more investors and this seems to be affecting the development of sport in general and football in particular. There are a few exceptional teams in Zimbabwe that are sponsored by corporates like Dynamos FC and Highlanders FC. These are bankrolled by Sakunda Holdings. The Sunday News, 14 September (2022), while, FC Platinum and Ngezi FC are sponsored by mining giants MIMOSA respectively. There is a debate among the different stakeholders on what could be done to improve the revenue streams of clubs and the optimization of match-day fan experience in Zimbabwean football. Delta Beverages is sponsoring the Zimbabwean Premier Soccer League with their brand of Castle Beer (The Sunday Mail, 13 May 2021). The company has come up with the suggestion of allowing teams to sell alcoholic beverages in football stadiums as part of revenue generation and improvement on optimum match day fan experience in Zimbabwean football. This has brought very interesting conversations from a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The police, local authorities, licensing boards, and fans have a vested interest in the discussion. In an article in the Chronicle, titled 'Booze in Stadium' Zililo(2023), the sale of alcohol in the stadium could be the right tonic to lure fans to watch Castle Lager Premier League games after the premier league delivered the historic news that will also generate revenue for the clubs. Worried about dwindling numbers at the terraces for topflight matches, the PSL, its management as well and clubs have been pondering on what to do to have fans back in the stadium. In a memo attributed

to the PSL chief executive officer, clubs have been given the green light to start the process of sorting paperwork that will facilitate the sale of alcohol at their games. (Rutendo, 2023) PSL clarifies the position of sale, and consumption of alcohol in stadiums, Sunday News. 'Following a board resolution made at the Annual General Meeting held on March 17 2023 to allow alcohol sales at the stadia, clubs are advised to secure written permission from stadium owners for the sale of alcohol', said Kennedy Ndebele. Clubs are further advised to get an amended Lease Agreement that allows the sale of alcohol, police clearance from Zimbabwe Republic Police as well as liquor licenses from the Liquor Licensing Board (Zililo, 2023) Booze in Stadium: PSL get it right, The Chronicle. Clubs are also required to indicate where the alcohol will be sold at the stadium. By allowing the sale of alcohol to fans at the stadium, the league is following suit with international trends (Matambanadzo 2023). Zimbabwean Fans Rejoice as PSL Finally Approves Sale of Alcohol at Stadiums. The sale of alcohol will generate extra revenue for clubs. Football fans welcomed the latest development, with the Zimbabwe National Soccer Supporters Association's executive applauding the league. "It's been long overdue. We have been to many countries in the past to watch the national teams as well as continental football and we have seen them selling alcohol in the stadium. We have been wondering when this will happen in our country. What the league bosses have done is a good move, something that will not only generate revenue for clubs but could see more fans coming in knowing that they can still enjoy their drinks while watching the game", said Jim a Dynamos Football club fan. Zimbabwe Cricket has a partnership with the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority Chikamhi, (2023). President Emmerson Mnangagwa officially launched the campaign, a partnership between the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) and Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC) designed to help boost the country's tourism appeal.

It is from the above expositions that the researcher wishes to dig deeper into different corporate hospitality activities that can introduced to improve the financial positions of soccer clubs and optimize the match-day fan experience in Zimbabwe.

Corporate hospitality is the entertainment of clients, or stakeholders by companies at public events such as sports, concerts, or tours to promote business and strengthen relationships (Christing, 2023). The hospitality experience at match days in football has been evolving, and several activities can optimize the fan experience. Andreff and Staudohar (2014) traced the evolution of the financial structures of football teams over the past five decades. They noted that throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the primary source of revenue for European professional football teams was gate takings, for example, French division one football teams generated

81% of their revenue from gate takings receipts during the 1970-1 football season. As alluded to, the overreliance on gate takings as a major source of revenue in modern-day football has serious ramifications on the development of the sport as experienced during the Covid-19 era.

Dollies and Solderman (2005) argue that since the late 1980s, revenue streams in professional sport have changed character. The richer clubs monitor decreasing ticket revenues and increasing dependence on revenue streams from sponsors, merchandise, and media. It is by the same token that our football clubs in Zimbabwe must move away from overreliance on gate takings and explore other revenue-generating schemes. This can only be achieved by generating an optimum match-day fan experience through different activities. This is corroborated by Kaynak, Salman, and Tatoglu (2008) who observe that although ticket revenue used to be the number one source of income, its significance has been declining due to the emergence of other sources of revenue such as merchandising, broadcasting, corporations, and season combined tickets. During covid era, European clubs were able to play their games without the attendance of fans because of the financial support from other streams. These new revenue generation trends are also captured by Deloitte (2023), who note that match-day revenue for the top twenty global professional football teams was declining, and commercial and broadcasting streams have emerged as the leading source of revenue for these teams. For example Manchester City in 2022 it was 9 % Match day, 40 % broadcasting, and 51 % commercial. The findings from a study by Charumbira (2016) show that Zimbabwean professional football teams derive most of their revenue from owners (42.5 %. Other significant sources of revenue are; gate receipts (24.7 %), player transfer (12.2 %) commercial revenue (10.8 %), Television Rights (3.7 %), member subscriptions (4 %), and donations (2 %). When the owner of the club pumps in the largest percentage of revenue to the club, this may not be sustainable in the Zimbabwean context. Several clubs have folded wants the club owner pulled out because of personal reasons. Amazulu Football Club in Zimbabwe faced the same challenges. Shirbury et al. (2009) and Shank and Lyberger (2015) note that it is risky for sports organizations to draw most of their revenue from the core sports product because it is unpredictable, subjective, and highly perishable, and demand fluctuates considerably.

To increase revenue generation through corporate hospitality activities, it is important to focus on enhancing the fan experience. This can be achieved by upgrading networks to guarantee fans the same service they use outside the stadiums, providing superior customer service, and focusing on small details that can make a big difference.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Premier Soccer teams in Zimbabwe heavily rely on match-day gate-takings and sponsorship from club owners for their survival and operations Trusida (2023). The over-dependence on the two models of funding has serious effects on the development of sports in general and football in particular. The devastating effects of covid 19 are a case in point in the Zimbabwean context as clubs could not play the games since soccer fans were prohibited from attending matches in the stadiums. Munyaradzi and Tarisayi (2020,) The Covid-19 and Sport. The dissolution in 2005 of former premier club Amazulu which was owned by businessman Mr Delma Lupepe is an example of the challenges that clubs can face when the sole owner decides to part ways with the team. The perennial funding challenges that CAPS United Football Club faces every season as it is bankrolled by an individual, Mr Farai Jere is also a case in point. Manyepo, (2022) 'Financial challenges floor Caps United commercialization project. It is against this background that clubs must vigorously pursue other forms of revenue generation like jersey rights, selling jerseys, alcohol sales, and other hospitality activities. Optimizing match day fan experience activities will ultimately improve the revenue streams of the clubs in Zimbabwe. Internationally football clubs have aggressively pursued this model of funding and financially the clubs are quite stable. Danson (2023). Big clubs in Europe like Manchester United FC and Liverpool tour Asian countries during pre-season as a way of penetrating the market. Gupta, (2022) Several replica football jerseys are purchased by the fans and this has a positive effect on the financial status of the club. There is a big gap between the financial stability of our local clubs compared to teams in the premier leagues in Europe mainly because of revenue generated from different operations. Many soccer clubs in the country face challenges in running their operations profitably. Sponsorship from the league sponsors Castle Lager is not even enough to run the operations of clubs. Match day attendance in Zimbabwean football has seriously declined and the onus is on the clubs and league administrators to find ways of improving attendance in stadiums. Statistics have indicated that several clubs in Zimbabwe are struggling to fund their operations and low match day attendance has exacerbated the challenges. Charumbira (2016) The league match between Yadah FC and Herentals FC on 14 October 2023 was played in an almost empty stadium. The Sunday Mail of 15 October 2023 reports that the two teams are owned by individuals Mr Magaya and Mr Benza respectively and the future is not looking bright as sponsoring them is now a big challenge. (Murombedzi (2023) The owners are responsible for everything from the welfare of players, the technical department, travelling

and accommodation of players, and payment of referees. It is against this background that clubs in Harare are facing challenges in meeting a number of their sporting obligations because of limited funding. There is a need to research more on different interventional measures that would improve the revenue streams of clubs in the country.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The sporting industry in the world is a multi-billion industry Gupta (2022)), soccer in particular as the most popular sport in the country must take the lead in Zimbabwe by being run professionally so that the benefits permeate right across all the sporting disciplines. This research will make contributions to sports management literature by identifying the value of sports in the country by focusing on different activities that can generate revenue for football clubs. The research will further identify and discuss the different barriers to football development in the country. Issues to do with alcohol sales in the stadiums are going to be looked at in the context of revenue generation vis-a-vis sports development. The study will propose innovative methods to solve the existing challenges of low attendance in football matches for professional football in a developing African country. The study also looks at policy issues related to the financing of football teams in the country. There must be policy guidelines on clubs owned by individuals and those owned by companies

The findings of the study will be shared with the different stakeholders among the club owners and league administrators. This can be made through some publications in journals. The findings must be shared so that different clubs may implement some of the recommendations to improve the financial status of the clubs.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What corporate hospitality framework can be introduced to optimize match day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Zimbabwe?

SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

- What types of corporate hospitality activities are currently provided by Premier Soccer League teams in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match day?

- What is the impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match day for fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare?

- What are the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences?

- What strategies can be put in place to ensure the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing match day fan experience?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Main objective

- To explore different corporate hospitality activities that can optimize match day fan experience in the Zimbabwean Premier Soccer League.

Sub objectives

- To identify the current hospitality activities being offered by Premier Soccer League teams in Harare for match day fan experience

- To discover the business relationship between football sponsors and sports development.

- To quantify how corporate sports hospitality creates value for both clubs and companies sponsoring football in Zimbabwe

- To ascertain whether different corporate hospitality activities have a bearing on match day attendance.

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is going to focus on the different clubs in Harare the corporate hospitality activities that they are involved in and those that can be introduced. Different clubs use the National Sports Stadium in Harare as their home ground and this study will investigate

how their corporate hospitality activities optimize match day fan experience to improve their revenue streams.

1.8 STUDY OUTLINE

The research is going to justify the interest in the study in chapter one by looking at the background of the study, the statement of the problem will summarize the research problem. The significance of the problem to stakeholders and different research questions will be raised. The objectives of the study also constitute a very important component of the study. The study is going to be confined to Harare. Chapter two is going to review the literature related to the study. The research methodology in chapter three will highlight how the research was conducted. Chapter four will look at the results with a discussion following in chapter five. Chapter Six will conclude and make recommendations to different stakeholders

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter one focused on the introduction of the research and highlighted the background of the study. The statement of the problem justified the need for research on the topic. The significance of the problem to different stakeholders was also covered. Different research questions were also raised and objectives of the study emanated from research questions. The research study is confined to Harare province. The next chapter is going to look at the literature review. The literature will look at what different authors recommend about the research problem and the solutions proffered as part of intervention measures

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is going to analyse literature from different authorities on the subject of research by looking at previous research carried out on the topic to identify knowledge gaps. This is going to be achieved by reviewing literature from books, scholarly articles, and journals. Critiquing previous research will enable the researcher to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the research method employed and the importance of their findings. The literature review will enable the researcher to identify key patterns, research gaps, and conflicts. This will be done by interpreting the concepts that are relevant to the research highlighting any divergence or convergences in scholarly views, inconsistencies, and significant controversies. This will be done through the conceptualization of the study, and methodological and thematically reviewing literature. Finally, the conclusion and summary of the chapter will be presented.

2.2 THE CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Corporate hospitality involves the entertainment of clients, colleagues, staff, or other relevant stakeholders by a company in an attempt to impress, reward, or network. It is when a business invites its guests to a prearranged entertainment event that a company offers its most valued clients, for example by inviting them to sporting or music events and providing them with food and drinks Prowse (2023). Corporate hospitality is about making people feel valued and appreciated and going the extra mile to make them feel welcome. In a competitive market, it is important to stand out from the competition. (International Journal of Hospitality Management, Volume 19, Issue 1, March 2000 pages 3-5) points out that both academics and industry practitioners have over the recent years increasingly used 'hospitality' to describe the industrial and commercial provision of food, drink, and accommodation as an economic activity. This research argues that hospitality activities have deep-seated social significance and there is a need to study the area in social, private, and commercial settings. Providing excellent hospitality can set a club apart from other clubs and create more fans. Corporate sports hospitality (CSH) is described as a relationship marketing technique in which a business purchasing CSH from a club extends an invitation to customers and other stakeholders to attend a sporting event Berry and Drake (2013). In this sense, a club's CSH offering consists of not only first-rate seats but also, if desired, catering and extra stadium entertainment. There are several ways to approach corporate sports hospitality, including marketing, sponsorship, sales, and stadium management. Titlebaum and Lawrence (2011). Although CSH is frequently included in sponsorship agreements, it can also be used independently. Bennett (2003.)

Titlebaum et al., 2013). Although they are two distinct marketing components, when used together, they can support one another (Titlebaum and Lawrence (2010)

By the same token football clubs in Zimbabwe must be involved in different hospitality activities ultimately increasing the revenue streams of clubs as fans will see the value of attending matches. F.C. Platinum with its parent sponsor MIMOSA has been involved in different corporate hospitality activities. Chizondo (2022) The three main areas of the hospitality industry are accommodation, food and beverages, and travel and tourism services to customers. The primary focus of the research will be food and beverages. The hospitality industry is a broad group of businesses that provides services to customers. It relies on discretionary spending by consumers as well as the consumer's availability and free time. There must be a demand for leisure activities for the industry to be successful because the experiences that the hospitality industry provides are not necessities of life. The hospitality sector's job is to give customers memorable, expert, and one-of-a-kind experiences during their leisure time—at a price. Providing the best experience for customers is the hospitality industry's main goal. Zimbabwean Premier soccer teams must introduce corporate hospitality activities for revenue generation and optimize match day fan experience. The Zimbabwe Premier League soccer teams must take a leaf from the Zimbabwe Cricket which has forged a partnership with Zimbabwe Tourism Authority. Moyo (2023) in an article in the Chronicle of July 15, 2023,). Zimbabwean Premier League Soccer teams must introduce corporate hospitality activities.

In a strategic managerial approach to corporate hospitality, Balliauw (2019) Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing uses the example of Belgian football to illustrate how corporate sports hospitality (CSH) is a relationship marketing tool in which a company purchases CSH from a club and invites its customers and other stakeholders to a sporting event. The CSH product includes optional services including catering as well as first-rate seating. It has been observed that the industry's decline, particularly during economic downturns, has forced football teams to devise corporate hospitality initiatives to increase game attendance. The hospitality sector suffers from weakening economies. The hospitality sector is more likely to prosper if the country's economy is performing well. That is the setting in which football

teams in partnership with their sponsors should be engaged in different corporate activities to boost their finances.

Dollies and Solderman (2005) refer to the fact that professional sports revenue streams in Europe have been evolving since the late 1980s. The wealthier teams keep an eye on declining ticket sales and growing reliance on sponsorship, retail, and media revenue. By the same token, Zimbabwe's football teams need to look at alternative revenue-generating opportunities and wean themselves from an excessive reliance on gate receipts.

 This can only be achieved by generating an optimum match-day fan experience through different activities. This is corroborated by Kaynak, Salman, and Tatoglu (2008) who observe that although ticket revenue used to be the number one source of income, its significance has been declining due to the emergence of other sources of revenue such as merchandising, broadcasting, corporations, and season combined tickets. During the 19th era, European clubs were able to play their games without the attendance of fans because of the financial support from other streams. These new revenue generation trends are also captured by Deloitte (2023), who note that match-day revenue for the top twenty global professional football teams was declining, and commercial and broadcasting streams have emerged as the leading source of revenue for these teams. For example Manchester City in 2022 it was 9 % Match day, 40 % broadcasting, and 51 % commercial. The findings from a study by Charumbira (2016) show that Zimbabwean professional football teams derive most of their revenue from owners (42.5 %. Other significant sources of revenue are; gate receipts (24.7 %), player transfer (12.2 %) commercial revenue (10.8 %), Television Rights (3.7 %), member subscriptions (4 %), and donations (2 %). When the owner of the club pumps in the largest percentage of revenue to the club, this may not be sustainable in the Zimbabwean context. Quite several clubs have folded wants the club owner pulled out because of personal reasons. Amazulu Football Club in Zimbabwe faced the same challenges. Shirbury et al. (2009) and Shank and Lyberger (2015) note that it is risky for sports organizations to draw most of their revenue from the core sports product because it is unpredictable, subjective, and highly perishable, and demand fluctuates considerably.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The social exchange theory underpinned this study. My study is grounded on this theory because of the reciprocal relationship that must exist between the teams and the fans. Teams

need social and financial support from the fans and fans expect good entertainment from the clubs. The social exchange theory propounds that people will help others when the benefits to themselves outweigh the costs of helping. Blau, P. (1986) People engage in social exchanges in which they expect rewards and attempt to minimize costs. According to the social exchange theory, when engaging in corporate hospitality, there is an expectation of reciprocation from the receiving party. In this case, a club gives rewards in the form of hospitality, hoping for reciprocation in terms of improved support, loyalty, or other desired outcomes. Through corporate hospitality, clubs seek to establish positive impressions, build relationships, and potentially retain or attract more fans. Following the social exchange theory, these hospitality activities are seen as an exchange with clubs evaluating potential costs and rewards at a cognitive level. The basic idea behind social exchange theory is that most of our behaviour comes from a desire to maximize our rewards and minimize our costs. (Blau, 1986, Cook and Rice, 2006)The Social Exchange Theory argues that people calculate the overall worth of a particular relationship by subtracting its costs from the rewards it provides. Worth equal rewards minus the costs. If worth is a positive number, it is a positive relationship. On the contrary, a negative number indicates a negative relationship. Blau, P. (1986) discussed how the need for advice or help leads to exchanges among members in groups and organizations. Social exchange theory refers to when one party favours the other because it expects a benefit. According to this theory, clubs will benefit from increased fan satisfaction and positive evaluation which in turn generate retention and revenue for the club. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005). The reciprocal exchange process starts when an organization takes the initiative and starts giving particular attention to how to support the organizational support. Exchanges are not limited to the organization but extended to our families, friends, and relatives. Cropanzano et al (2017) defined the social exchange theory as an initiation by an actor toward the target, an attitudinal or behavioural response from the target in reciprocity, and the resulting relationship. Premier League teams must adopt a company approach that emphasizes satisfying the fans by embarking on different activities. The fans will reciprocate by attending their matches in large numbers thereby increasing the revenue of the teams. The foundation of social exchange theory is the idea that a cost-benefit analysis is used to establish a relationship between two individuals. The underlying premise of this concept is that social behaviour among football supporters is the outcome of an exchange process.

Supporters balance the advantages and disadvantages of their social ties to the teams. They will end or leave the connection when the risks become too great for them to bear. (R. Ahmad,

2023) Clubs can make strategic decisions in fostering strong relationships with fans while taking into account the expenses, rewards, and expected reciprocity that result from hospitality endeavours by understanding social interaction about a corporate hospitality framework.

The social exchange hypothesis explains and predicts behaviour in specific relationships, such as that between a team and its fans, in the context of corporate hospitality. It helps understand how hospitality initiatives encourage the growth of fan interactions and helps identify the forces that motivate them. (Thibaut, J. 2022) It can be viewed as a type of social exchange that enables clubs to establish rapport with important parties, generate goodwill, and cultivate steadfast loyalty. The concept of social exchange has a few more flaws. Hospitality is often a complex, multidimensional concept influenced by many factors, such as individual preferences, club standards, cultural norms, industry-specific procedures, and financial concerns.

The inflexible cost-benefit analysis paradigm of social exchange theory may not be sufficient to describe subjective elements and unpredictable social dynamics. In favour of material advantages and economic values, the social exchange theory tends to downplay the importance of the emotional and social capital gained via acts of hospitality (Kelley, H., 2022).
While social exchange theory can offer a useful framework for comprehending some aspects of corporate hospitality, its limits must be taken into account to assess its applicability and usefulness.

2.4 METHODOLOGICAL REVIEW

The research compared studies conducted by Balliaum, M et al, (2018) on "A managerial approach to Corporate Sports Hospitality, the case of Belgian Football." It focused on the research methods and approaches used in the literature. It quantifies the added value of corporate sports hospitality. A case study from the highest division in Belgian football (soccer) shows that, although the market is smaller than in the American major sports leagues, corporate sports hospitality returns account for an important share of club revenues. Since corporate sports hospitality is often managed on an ad-hoc base and the literature offers no formal CSH management process for companies and clubs, information is gathered to build such an effective process. The majority of the corporate sports hospitality literature concentrates on the situation in the USA, where the first seating suits emerged in their stadiums in 1965 (Titlebaum, Lawrence 2011) In Belgium, RSC Anderlecht was the first team to have business seats in the 1980's.

The Belgian football corporate sports hospitality sector is examined using the case study technique to determine how win-win partnerships might provide added value for both firms and teams. Deloitte's (2016) study on Belgian professional football clubs is a significant source of quantitative data. Prices, revenues, and capacities are complemented by information from the clubs' websites and publicly available annual reports.

There are 24 professional teams in Belgium; 16 of them compete in the top league, the Jupiler Pro League (1A), and 8 in the second division, the Proximus League (1B) (Jupiler Pro League, 2018). The G5 is made up of the five teams with the largest budgets from these teams. These are KRC Genk, KAA Gent, Standard de Liège, Club Brugge, and RSC Anderlecht. Although Division 1A was the main focus of this research, the findings were also examined in relation to a 1B club and the corporate sports hospitality approach used by the Belgium Red Devils, the national team. Because not all information is available online, interviews with sponsor- or team managers at clubs and sponsor managers at companies buying corporate sports hospitality in Belgium have been carried out, following the scheme of semi-structured interviews. The surveys for clubs and companies are structured by themes to quantify CSH benefits. It is noted that to quantify the data, case studies, interviews and surveys were used. The methodology is quite appropriate for the collection of data that is relevant to the study. The research provides quantification of the corporate hospitality industry's value and the development of a formal corporate sports hospitality management process for both companies and clubs. The research was conducted using a case study from the highest division in Belgian football, involving interviews and quantitative data collection as the primary data source. (Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing, 2021)

2.5 THEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW.
2.5.1 Corporate sports hospitality activities in the Premier Soccer League in Zimbabwe.
This section of the study seeks to establish the current level or the extent to which Premier Soccer League teams in Zimbabwe are involved in corporate sports hospitality activities that generate revenue for the clubs. Specifically, the section will identify and discuss the corporate hospitality activities of three Premier League clubs in Zimbabwe namely FC Platinum, Dynamos FC, and Highlanders FC. According to a research paper published in the Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing (2021), corporate sports hospitality returns account for an important share of club revenues. Another article from Sportfive, a sports marketing agency, cites a Nielsen Sport Survey (2020) which found that corporate sports hospitality activities

account for major revenue generation for clubs in the English Premier League. FC Platinum t/a FC Platinum Holdings is a limited company by guarantee incorporated in January 2014 to support sporting activities within the Midlands province. Consequently, the entire profits of the company are channelled to sporting initiatives, the primary beneficiary being FC Platinum (the football club).FC Platinum Holdings partly funded the operations of FC Platinum (the football club) in 2014 and has been fully funding the football club since the 2015 Premier Soccer League season. (https:www.platinumholdings.co.zw) FC Platinum has as part of its corporate hospital events, corporate cocktails, luncheons, VIP seats, entertainment, and the sale of replica jerseys. The corporate cocktails and luncheons entail meeting all the club players before matches and seeing how training and match preparations are done. Chizondo (2022) The fans have an opportunity to see and talk to the players on a one-on-one. This excites the fans and develops a very strong sports relationship between the club and the fans. FC Platinum also sells replica jerseys to its fans around the country and this also brings revenue to the club. "We have created a special bond with our fans by creating a fans club that provides entertainment during matches in the stadiums. We sell replica jerseys to them and they are proud to be associated with the club. The players have reciprocated by playing good football and we have been Zimbabwe champions for the past four seasons". Moyo (2022)

Dynamos Football Club which is sponsored by Sakunda Holdings is also involved in some corporate sports hospitality activities. The team is on a three-year sponsorship deal amounting to US$3 million. However not much has been recorded on the corporate hospitality activities that the club is involved in. The club can embark on several activities to augment its revenue base. It has a large number of fans and by coming up with different hospitality activities a lot of revenue can be generated that will ultimately benefit the club. With its legion of fans, the sale of replica jerseys, hats, and flags can also generate revenue. The introduction of Premier VIP seats, entertainment, and corporate cocktails can generate revenue for the club. There seems to be an overreliance on sponsorship and gate takings.

Highlanders FC is a Zimbabwean football club based in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, formed in 1926 that plays in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League. It is also known colloquially as iBosso, Amahlolanyama.(https://highlandersfc.co.zw) Highlanders like Dynamos are also bankrolled by Sakunda Holdings has no documented corporate sports hospitality programmes. The club has the potential to draw large crowds in their matches. Generally, many fans in Matabeleland support the team and by coming up with hospitality activities, a large number will be drawn to

their matches. The sale of replica jerseys and flags will improve their revenue. Many things are sold outside the stadiums during matches and this does not benefit the clubs. It is noted that Highlanders FC also relies on sponsorship and gate takings from the fans.

2.5.2 Global best practice of corporate sports hospitality activities
Corporate sports hospitality is widely acknowledged to offer many benefits and is a great method to cultivate ties with fans. According to research, 92% of companies who purchase corporate hospitality think it is very successful at fostering better relationships with customers, and 70% of attendees report that the experience increases brand loyalty more than phone calls do. The English Premier League team Chelsea Football Club provides a Platinum VIP hospitality package that grants access to preferred treatment both inside and outside the stadium. Fine eating and a lively eambience in all of the stadium's hospitality restaurants come with the package. (Littleman 2023) When we got to Stamford Bridge, most of the gates had quite long lines. Fortunately, our ticket allowed us to enter the stadium through the executive club's East stand reception, so there was no need to wait in line. We got there at about 2.20 pm, which is when our pre-match hospitality started. Our waiter for the afternoon met us at the entrance to the elite dining room and showed us to our completely decorated table.

2.6 CONCLUSION
It can be concluded from the literature findings that corporate sports hospitality is more focused on building relationships with existing fans and stakeholders, providing a more unique experience to the fans, rewarding the employees, and increasing brand awareness. Teams are strengthened and morale boosted leading to increased productivity in the workplace. Corporate sports hospitality returns account for an important share of the club revenues. The overreliance on gate-taking has limitations on the operation and development of clubs. It has also been noted from the literature review that very few clubs in Zimbabwe are involved in corporate hospitality activities to boost their revenue base. Trends in international football indicate that clubs are no longer relying on sponsorship and gate takings only as the main source of revenue

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY
The chapter reviewed literature related to corporate sports hospitality. The meaning of corporate hospitality in the context of sports was explained and a reference to national and international activities undertaken by the club was made. Key findings from other studies and the trends were identified and that helped in discovering the gaps regarding research objectives.

The next chapter is going to look at the research methodology comprising of research purpose, research design, and research philosophy and time horizon. Procedures that are going to be used to gather data and instruments used will also be outlined. Data presentation and analysis will also be considered.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter explained the research purpose, philosophy, approach, design, time horizons, population and sampling procedures, data collection and analysis procedures, and ethical considerations. The chapter also discussed specific research methods that are effective in connecting the research design to the research questions and objectives. Data presentation, analysis, and interpretation strategies were also clarified.

3.2 RESEARCH PURPOSE

The main objective of this exploratory study is to attempt and understand the difficulties teams have in developing a hospitality framework that maximizes the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League. This study also takes into account the exploratory technique, which is based on a study by Gray (2018) who hypothesizes that exploratory is especially helpful when there is a lack of knowledge about the issue. o guarantee a thorough investigation of the research problem based on the perspectives and opinions of the stakeholders directly involved in the implementation of corporate hospitality activities, a phenomenological viewpoint is adopted. According to Sandhursen (2000), exploratory research has the advantage of helping the researcher explore the research questions with no intention of offering final and conclusive solutions to existing challenges. The researcher chose to use exploratory methods as a way to determine the nature of the problems in a flexible way. The researcher also believes that the use of exploratory studies gives more room for comparing the global best practices in corporate sports hospitality. This helps to come up with plausible and generalizable conclusions. More importantly, the conclusions also leave room for other researchers to further explore the challenges faced by clubs in coming up with corporate sports hospitality programs. This research is based on new interventions since the information generated will help to develop new strategies to promote corporate sports hospitality in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League .

3.3 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The interpretive research philosophy was applied in this study. According to Bhandari (2021), this study philosophy clarifies how people interpret and provide meaning to their subjective experience. The researcher employed this paradigm because it highlights the idea that participants shouldn't be viewed as isolated individuals existing in a vacuum, but rather as capable individuals who can examine their worldview in the context of their entire life. Thus,

to gain fresh perspectives on corporate sports hospitality promotion, the interpretive research philosophy was applied. By providing an operational framework, the research paradigm also served as a guide for the research process. From this angle, then, a paradigm is a set of ideas and customs that govern research within a field by offering frameworks, lenses, and procedures for conducting investigations (Weaver, 2006).

More significantly, the goals of qualitative research are closely aligned with the application of the interpretive paradigm. Cresswell (2011) states that the interpretative approach will assist the researcher in concentrating on the interpretations that people and communities make of the experiences they have when interacting with soccer players and administrators. Moreover, the interpretative paradigm facilitates the researcher's understanding of social reality, which may be understood through a sense-making process as opposed to a hypothesis-testing approach, since social reality is entrenched in and impossible to isolate from social settings (Creswell, 2011). By concentrating on their language, signals, and meanings from their point of view, the interpretative paradigm helped participants feel at ease in their social environment. Consequently, the strategy avoided becoming reductionist and isolationist by being contextual and comprehensive.

Understanding the respondents' perspective and frame of reference is the interpretive paradigm's main goal (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). Accordingly, interpretive paradigm researchers are less interested in determining the validity of people's thoughts and feelings and more interested in learning more about how individuals think and feel in the situations in which they find themselves (Cole, 2006). Under the interpretive paradigm, the researcher conducted stakeholder interviews and acknowledged the significance and complexity of each unique setting. It is important to recognize that every individual has unique needs, experiences, and perspectives. Sanders et al. (2012), who promote that interpretive focuses on conducting research among people rather than upon objects, adopting an empathetic stance to understand the meaning they give it from their point of view, support the choice of interpretive philosophy in conducting qualitative research.

3.3.1 Ontology

Examining the nature and structure of reality in isolation from other aspects and their actual existence is the focus of the study of ontology. The core ideas of reality's natural surroundings are referred to as ontological. In ontology, the topic of what reality is made of is frequently

asked. This study will explore reality through interviews with football managers, coaches, and supporters. Their responses to the survey and face-to-face interviews will shed light on the actualities of corporate sporting events' hospitality experiences for spectators.

3.3.2 Epistemology

Epistemology comprises the fundamental assumptions regarding our understanding of reality and the relationship between knowledge and actuality. Epistemology, according to Silverman (2000), provides solutions to queries concerning knowledge and what we know about the world. The interpretive paradigm, which emphasizes comprehending things, served as the foundation for this investigation. Interpretive theory, as a research framework, asserts that knowledge, in addition to observation, can support the investigation of people's lived experiences to highlight the relationships between social, cultural, and historical facets of people's lives as well as the context of a given action. Creswell et al.,(2007). To better understand corporate sports hospitality experiences, this study has embraced an interpretive approach. Thus, interpretive maintains that meaning exists in how we see the world at large. This study is centred on the perspective that knowledge about sports hospitality is all about interpretation and understanding of what you would have seen.

3.4 APPROACHES TO THEORY DEVELOPMENT

The inductive approach was taken by the researcher because he believed it to be the most suitable for this study, which aimed to determine the extent of corporate sports hospitality activities now provided by Zimbabwean Premier League clubs. The study population consisted of sports administrators, players, and fans. By examining their experiences, the researcher was able to determine the desired trends among fans in terms of corporate hospitality activities. The strategy has been selected to identify current gaps that require attention to advance sports hospitality. Since the information for this study was gathered from the experiences of players, administrators, and spectators, the inductive approach was selected. This made it possible to better grasp the issue and develop ways to close gaps in knowledge. After that, theories are developed using the data. Researchers employ this strategy, according to Saunders et al. (2019), when addressing subjects that generate a lot of discussion but have little body of literature.

3.5 TIME HORIZON

. The cross-sectional horizon was used in this study because there is a time constraint on how soon the research must be finished and submitted. A cross-sectional study is a type of research

design in which data is collected from several individuals at a single point in time by interviewing them without influencing them (Lauren, 2020). The choice of cross-sectional studies over longitudinal studies was influenced by taking into account the use of questionnaires, observation, and interviews in data collection as well as the time limit as well. This allowed the researcher to compare many different variables at the same time. The advantage of the cross-sectional approach in this research was that it was less expensive because subjects were not followed over time. Hence, cross-sectional as a time horizon saved time.

3.6 PRIMARY RESEARCH STRATEGY
3.6.1 Qualitative Approach

In this study, the qualitative research methodology was applied. According to Krathwohl (2000), qualitative research methods enable the comprehension and description of phenomena. In the social sciences and applied domains, qualitative research approaches are becoming more and more significant forms of investigation. According to Marshal and Grossman (2011), the qualitative approach is a research methodology that heavily draws from interpretive research techniques and is grounded in the phenomenological paradigm. According to Marshal et al. (2011), questionnaires and interviews will be used as study techniques. Patron (2002) further argues that natural settings are used for doing qualitative research, with the researcher acting as a participant observer. There is no control over the variables, and the study problem may be continuously reinterpreted. Since the researcher participated in the process while conducting interviews and making observations, the chosen methodology has been taken into consideration. In keeping with the qualitative technique, this researcher aims to understand the many viewpoints on how clubs might implement corporate sports hospitality programs. This is done by rewarding and interpreting all facts and values as perceived by the participants.

3.7 POPULATION AND SAMPLING
3.7.1. Population

According to Saunders et al. (2009), a population is the total number of entities—such as people, events, or organizations—from which data can be gathered. Therefore, a population is the total set of potential subjects that the researcher is interested in and that share some common traits. Six Premier Soccer League teams in Harare were the subject of the study: Dynamos, Caps United, Herentals, Yadah, Cranborne, and Black Rhinos Football Club. Questionnaires

were distributed to 40 soccer fans, 10 stadium managers, 10 Premier League officials, and 10 team management. There will be interviews with three soccer fans, two stadium managers, two sponsors, three Premier League officials, and five team managers. These were selected due to their salient features, which are grounded on the research

3.7.2 Sampling

Sampling is a systematic procedure wherein a researcher selects and finds suitable study participants from a sampling frame representative of the total population (Struwig and Stead, 2019). Fox and Bayat (2017) stress that participants from every aspect of the universe should be represented in the sample. According to Saundra et al. (2009), it is a representative subject whose traits can be applied to the population being studied. Each person in the population should have an equal chance of being selected to be included in the sample. To choose soccer supporters, stadium personnel, Premier League officials, and team management, purposive sampling will be employed. Purposive sampling, according to Patton (1990), is crucial because it enables the researcher to specifically select specific population members that will provide information regarding particular research issues. As a result, the researcher chose participants who assisted with administrative tasks related to corporate hospitality events using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to deliberately choose participants based on predetermined traits.

This study used a non-probability sampling technique. In non-probability sampling, samples are made using the researcher's expertise and knowledge. Not every member of the target population has an equal chance of being chosen to be a part of a sample because of the researcher's involvement.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The data collection process for this research was conducted on six sampled Premier League football teams namely Dynamos, CAPS United, Herentals, Yadah, Cranborne Bullets, and Black Rhinos football club that used National Sports, Bata, and Baobab stadium. The first phase involved interviews with the fans, stadium managers, sponsors, Premier League officials and team managers. The second phase of the study was done by using a questionnaire to collect data from fans, stadium managers, Premier League officials, and team managers.

The researcher focused on analysing the current state of corporate sports hospitality in the country and comparing it with global best practices. All this was analysed to identify gaps encountered when introducing a corporate hospitality framework

3.8.1 Interview guide

An interview guide was prepared to gather data from fans, stadium managers, sponsors, Premier League officials, and team managers. The type of interview that was used was the semi-structured individualized interview. The interview guide had some open-response questions related to the stated research questions. The interview questions aimed at illuminating the research questions stated and help in the generation of more strategies that pave the way in promoting corporate sports hospitality activities

The interview guide approach necessitates that the interviewer conduct in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews are comprised of one or more in-person interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee, to comprehend the interviewee's life experience or situation as articulated in their own words Schulze (2002). According to De Vos et al. (2011), accurate data may be obtained if the interviewer does his or her job well, that is, builds rapport and asks questions without ambiguity, and if the respondent is sincere and well-motivated. As a result, the researcher expects accurate information regarding experiences and expectations of corporate hospitality activities.

3.8.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to collect information from fans, stadium managers, Premier League officials and team managers. The first section of each questionnaire collected demographic data; the second section collected information on the current level of corporate sports hospitality, the third section centred on corporate hospitality activities that can be introduced by clubs. Fixed response and open-ended questionnaires were used giving respondents a chance to air their views. Questionnaires were distributed to the club administrators and fans. The distribution and filling in of the questionnaires was done electronically.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Data analysis, according to Sakarantos (2018), is the statistical examination of data gathered during research to ascertain whether the posed hypothesis has been supported. Burns and Bush (2020) state that statistical data analysis is concerned with the procedures used to identify, extract, and organize data to develop theories, test hypotheses, and draw findings and suggestions from the current study. Data analysis, according to Remenyi and Bannister (2012), comprises processing, testing, and evaluating data gathered from respondents for relevance to

any hypothesis, theory, or newly developed theory. After collecting the questionnaires from the respondents, the researcher reviewed the questionnaires to establish if the respondents had completed and answered all the questions. The researcher captured the data obtained from the questionnaire to form a data set. Thereafter, since the questionnaires were pre-coded the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 for Windows, which is the latest version, will be used to analyse the responses. Presentation of data was done using tables, graphs and pie charts.

3.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The data from the research should be reliable and should be repeatable. Reliability refers to a technique of collecting data being applied repeatedly to the same object and yields the same results each time it is administered (Creswell, 2012). The researcher pilot-tested the focus group guide and the interview guide with people who had the same characteristics as the research participants and reliability was proven through the consistency of the responses given by the respondents. On the other hand, validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately the real meaning of the phenomenon under consideration (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Data is valid if it intends to answer the research objectives and the instrument is valid if it can measure what it is supposed to measure. To ensure validity, the researcher will design the interview guides based on the research objectives, analyse data and make recommendations based on the formation of themes obtained from the research objectives.

Theoretical triangulation is also going to be done to match the reliability of data with the theories about the phenomenon being discussed. The data that will be obtained in research can be transferred and scholars who carry out research in another context will be able to utilize certain concepts which were initially developed. Lincoln and Guba (2018) say that as the naturalist can not specify the external validity of an inquiry, she can only give a tick description essential to enable someone interested in making the transfer to conclude whether a transfer can be contemplated as a possibility. Transferability implies that the results of the research study can apply to similar situations or individuals.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Muswazi and Kanhukamwe (2003) define ethics as a code of behaviour or expected behaviour of an individual or group in the same profession. Thus, ethical consideration refers to certain behaviour that is acceptable that the researcher is expected to observe when carrying out the

study. The researcher used a letter from Bindura University to seek permission from the Premier Soccer League Management in Zimbabwe.

As the researcher interacts with both official documents and participants through analysis, interviews and questionnaires were guided by ethical considerations. Informed consent is one of the ethical considerations to be observed by the researcher. Mindful of this, participants responding to interviews and questionnaires were fully informed and permission from relevant authorities was requested for them to participate in this study.

Last but not least, all participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality in this study. The researcher made an effort to explain to the participants that the information they supplied was treated as confidential. According to Burns (2010), both the researcher and participant must have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study. In addition to the ethics discussed the researcher conducted the research adhering to research ethics provided by Bindura University of Science Education.

3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter focused on the methodology that the researcher used in conducting the research in the Zimbabwe Premier Soccer League. The researcher highlighted the aim of the research which was to gain new insights into the current situation regarding corporate sports hospitality. The researcher used population and sampling as research methods to get information from respondents. The researcher also used questionnaires, interviews, and observations to get information regarding corporate sports hospitality. The next chapter presented the response rate, demographic data, and findings linked to the research objectives.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as a vital component of the research process, as it presents the initial steps taken to analyze and interpret the data collected through questionnaires and interviews. By examining the response rate, demographic data, and the normality of the data, this chapter ensures the reliability and validity of the subsequent analyses, setting the stage for a robust and comprehensive exploration of the research findings.

4.2. Response Rate

*Table 1: **Interview response rate 1***

Stakeholder(s)	Target	Interviewed	%
Fans	3	3	100
Stadium managers	2	2	100
Sponsors	2	2	100
Premier League officials	3	3	100
Team managers	5	5	100
Total	15	15	100

The data from Table 4.1 indicates that all targeted stakeholders were successfully interviewed for the study on introducing a corporate hospitality framework for an optimum match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe. Table 4.1 shows that the study included interviews with fans, stadium managers, sponsors, Premier League officials, and team managers, with each group represented by the same number of participants as initially targeted. The fact that 100% of the targeted stakeholders were interviewed is significant for the study. It demonstrates a comprehensive and well-rounded approach to gathering insights and perspectives from key individuals involved in the match day experience. By including representatives from different stakeholder groups, the study ensures a holistic understanding of the various perspectives, needs, and expectations related to corporate hospitality in the Premier Soccer League. This comprehensive data collection process ensures that the study captures a broad spectrum of insights and perspectives, enhancing the credibility and applicability of the findings.

Table 2: **Queationnire Response Rate 1**

Stakeholder(s)	Target	Questionnaire returned	%
Fans	40	30	100
Stadium managers	10	8	80
Premier League officials	10	9	90
Team managers	10	7	70
Total	70	54	77

The data from Table 4.2 shows the response rate of the questionnaire participants for the study. The table provides information on the number of participants targeted for each stakeholder group, the number of questionnaires returned, and the corresponding response percentages. All 30 targeted fans returned the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 100%. This high response rate is significant as it indicates a strong engagement and willingness among fans to provide their opinions and feedback. Their perspectives are crucial in understanding their expectations, preferences, and suggestions for improving the match-day fan experience. Obtaining a 100% response rate from fans enhances the representativeness of their views and strengthens the validity of the study's findings. Out of the 10 targeted stadium managers, 8 returned the questionnaire, resulting in an 80% response rate. While not reaching 100%, an 80% response rate is still considered relatively high and provides valuable insights from those responsible for managing the stadium operations. The responses from stadium managers can shed light on the logistical and operational considerations related to implementing a corporate hospitality framework. Although not all stadium managers participated, the 80% response rate still provides a substantial sample size for analysis. Among the 10 targeted Premier League officials, 9 returned the questionnaire, resulting in a 90% response rate. The participation of Premier League officials is crucial as they play a key role in governing and overseeing the league's operations. Their perspectives provide insights into the league's policies, regulations, and strategic considerations related to corporate hospitality. With a 90% response rate, the study captures a significant portion of the officials' viewpoints, ensuring a robust understanding of their perspectives. Out of the 10 targeted team managers, 7 returned the questionnaire, resulting in a 70% response rate. While the response rate is lower compared to the other stakeholder groups, the participation of team managers is still important. Team managers can offer insights into the practical implementation of corporate hospitality initiatives at the team

level and provide feedback on their experiences and challenges. Although the response rate is lower, the 70% participation still contributes valuable perspectives to the overall study.

4.3. DEMOGRAPHICS

The study examined the demographic characteristics of the research participants, focusing on their gender, age, and professional experience. This investigation was conducted within the context of introducing a corporate hospitality framework to enhance the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe.

4.3.1 Gender Composition of the Respondents

Table 3: Interview Respondents 1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	10	66.7	66.7	66.7
	Female	5	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The findings indicate that the majority of the interview respondents were male, constituting approximately two-thirds 10 (66.7%) of the sample. The female respondents accounted for around one-third 5 (33.3%) of the sample. The gender composition of the interview respondents may reflect the actual gender distribution within the target population. The study aimed to capture the perspectives of fans, stadium managers, sponsors, Premier League officials, and team managers, the higher representation of males among the respondents might align with the demographics of these stakeholder groups in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe. The findings may also indicate potential gender disparities or imbalances within the targeted stakeholder groups. For example, the significant underrepresentation of females among team managers or Premier League officials, suggests gender disparities in these positions within the league. Nevertheless, the voices of the representatives of females were fully captured and prioritized in this study's findings.

Table 4: **Questionnaire Respondents 1**

Gender Composition of Questionnaire Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	42	77.8	77.8	77.8
	Female	12	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

The findings suggest a significant gender imbalance among the questionnaire respondents, with a higher proportion of male participants 42 (77.8 %) compared to females 12 (22.2 %). This imbalance may indicate a disparity in the representation and participation of genders in the specific context of the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe. The justification of this gender gap may be a result of different genders having distinct experiences, preferences, and expectations related to the match day fan experience and corporate hospitality. Therefore, an imbalanced gender composition among the respondents may result in a skewed representation of these perspectives.

4.3.2 Ages of the Respondents

Table 5: **Ages of Respondents 1**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 20 years	2	13.3	13.3	13.3
	20-30 years	1	6.7	6.7	20.0
	31-40 years	4	26.7	26.7	46.7
	41-50	4	26.7	26.7	73.3
	Over 50	4	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The age composition of the interview respondents in the study is as follows:

Below 20 years: 2 respondents, accounting for 13.3% of the sample.

20-30 years: 1 respondent, representing 6.7% of the sample.

31-40 years: 4 respondents, constituting 26.7% of the sample.

41-50 years: 4 respondents, making up 26.7% of the sample.

Over 50 years: 4 respondents, also representing 26.7% of the sample

The age composition of the interview respondents reflects the presence of a wide range of generations within the sample. This diversity in age groups allows for the exploration of perspectives and experiences across different generations, which can provide valuable insights into the match-day fan experience and inform the development of a corporate hospitality framework that caters to the needs and expectations of various age groups. Younger fans might prioritize aspects such as technology integration, social media engagement, or interactive activities, while older fans may value comfort, convenience, and a more traditional match day experience. The age composition findings can shed light on any age-related challenges or barriers that may exist in the match day fan experience. For instance, the lack of representation among younger fans may indicate potential difficulties in attracting and engaging the younger demographic.

Table 6: *Age of questionnaire respondents*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 20 years	3	5.6	5.6	5.6
	20-30 years	16	29.6	29.6	35.2
	31-40 years	21	38.9	38.9	74.1
	41-50	6	11.1	11.1	85.2
	Over 50	8	14.8	14.8	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6 shows the age composition of the questionnaire respondents in the study as follows:

Below 20 years: 3 respondents, accounting for 5.6% of the sample.

20-30 years: 16 respondents, representing 29.6% of the sample.

31-40 years: 21 respondents, constituting 38.9% of the sample.

41-50 years: 6 respondents, making up 11.1% of the sample.

Over 50 years: 8 respondents, also representing 14.8% of the sample.

The age composition of the questionnaire respondents provides insights into the demographics of the target audience for the corporate hospitality framework. It indicates the presence of a diverse range of age groups, including younger fans (below 20 years) as well as fans across different stages of adulthood. This understanding can inform the design and implementation of the framework to cater to the needs, preferences, and expectations of each age group. Different age groups may have specific preferences and requirements when it comes to the match-day fan experience. For example, younger fans might value interactive technologies, social media integration, and immersive experiences, while older fans may prioritize comfort, convenience, and ease of access. The age composition findings highlight the importance of creating inclusive experiences that cater to fans across all age groups. By considering the preferences and needs of fans at different life stages, the corporate hospitality framework can ensure that it is accessible and enjoyable for a broad range of attendees. This inclusivity can contribute to a positive match-day fan experience and foster a sense of belonging and engagement among fans of all ages.

4.3.3 Professional Qualifications of Respondents

Professional Qualification of Interview Respondents

Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Secondary	4	26.7	26.7	26.7
	Certification	9	60.0	60.0	86.7
	Degree	2	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	15	100.0	100.0	

The professional qualifications of the interview respondents in the study are as follows

Secondary: 4 respondents, accounting for 26.7% of the sample.

Certification: 9 respondents, representing 60.0% of the sample.

Degree: 2 respondents, making up 13.3% of the sample.

The professional qualification findings indicate a diverse range of skill sets among the respondents. Respondents with secondary qualifications may possess practical skills or specific industry knowledge, while those with certifications may have received specialized training or acquired expertise in specific areas relevant to the study. Respondents with degrees may have a broader educational background and potentially possess a more comprehensive understanding of various aspects related to corporate hospitality and fan experience. This diversity in skill sets can contribute to a comprehensive and well-rounded approach to developing the corporate hospitality framework.

Table 7: **Professional Qualification of Questionnaire Respondents**

Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Secondary	22	40.7	40.7	40.7
	Certification	20	37.0	37.0	77.8
	Diploma	7	13.0	13.0	90.7
	Degree	2	3.7	3.7	94.4
	Postgraduate	3	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.8 shows the professional qualifications of the questionnaire respondents in the study which are as follows

Secondary: 22 respondents, accounting for 40.7% of the sample.

Certification: 20 respondents, representing 37.0% of the sample.

Diploma: 7 respondents, making up 13.0% of the sample.

Degree: 2 respondents, representing 3.7% of the sample.

Postgraduate: 3 respondents, constituting 5.6% of the sample.

The professional qualification findings indicate a diverse range of skill sets among the questionnaire respondents. Respondents with secondary qualifications may possess practical skills or specific industry knowledge relevant to the match-day fan experience. Those with certifications may have undergone specialized training in specific areas, while individuals with diplomas, degrees, or postgraduate qualifications may bring a broader educational background and potentially possess more comprehensive knowledge in their respective fields. This

diversity in skill sets contributes to a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to developing the corporate hospitality framework.

4.3.4 Test of Normality of Data

Table 8

Normality of the Qualitative data

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
age	.186	15	.170	.885	15	.057

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on these results in Table 4.9, the data does not provide strong evidence against the assumption of normality. Using the Shapiro-Wilk results, the obtained statistic of 0.885 and significance level of 0.057 indicates that the data does not significantly deviate from a normal distribution.

Figure 1: **Q-Q Plot of the Normality of Qualitative Data**
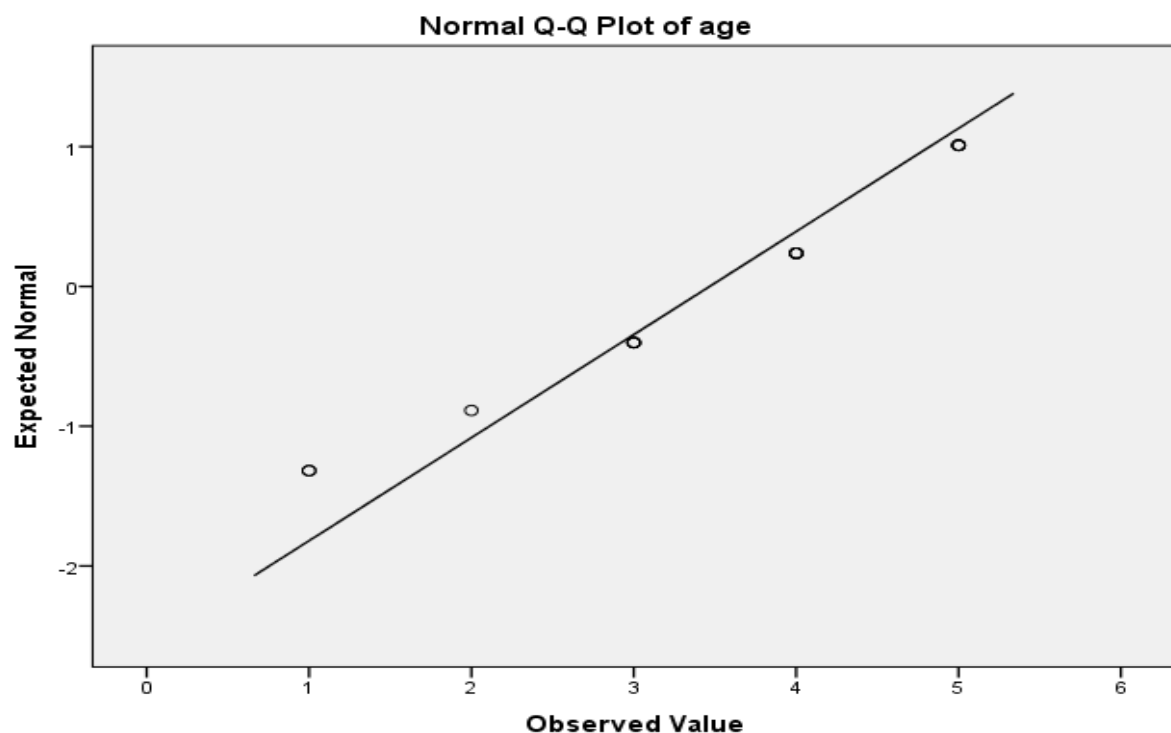
There is no strong evidence to reject the assumption of normality for the ages of the interview respondents in the study since participant's ages follow closely the diagonal line.

Test of normality quantitative data

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Age	.241	54	.000	.884	54	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

To assess the normality of the data using the ages of questionnaire respondents in the study, two statistical tests were conducted: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test. Both tests indicate that the data significantly deviates from a normal distribution at a statistically significant level ($p < 0.05$). For instance, according to Shapiro-Wilk the obtained statistic of 0.884 and significance level of 0.000 also indicate a significant departure from normality. The low p-value provides strong evidence against the assumption of normality. Based on the results of both tests, there is clear evidence to reject the assumption of normality for the ages of the questionnaire respondents in the study. The significant p-values suggest that the data does not follow a normal distribution. The results were, however, expected because the sample came from a diverse population. It is also possible that the underlying population itself does not follow a normal distribution. Age is a variable that is often influenced by various factors, such as birth rates, demographic trends, and cultural factors. The population from which the sample is drawn does not follow a normal distribution, it can lead to non-normality in the data.

4.4. RELIABILITY STATISTICS

The reliability of the questionnaire was checked and the results were as follows;

Cronbach's Alpha reliability statistics

Subdimension	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized items	Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
Fan experience	.824	.823	8
Level of fan satisfaction	.707	.741	5
Challenges	.726	.716	8

Corporate hospitality framework	.754	.755	6
Internal Reliability scale	.899	.890	27

The reliability results were assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency that indicates the extent to which the items within a scale or subdimension are interrelated and measure the same underlying construct. The overall reliability results, as indicated by Cronbach's alpha coefficients, are quite high for the internal reliability scale (overall) with values of 0.899 and 0.890 for the standardized and non-standardized items, respectively. These coefficients suggest a high level of internal consistency among the items in the scale, indicating that the items are interrelated and measure the same underlying construct. The high Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the overall internal reliability scale imply that the measurement items across the subdimensions collectively perform well in terms of reliability. This suggests that the scale is consistent and reliable in assessing the constructs of fan experience, level of fan satisfaction, challenges, and the corporate hospitality framework. The high-reliability results have important implications for the study. Researchers can have confidence that the scale is measuring the intended constructs consistently and reliably. This provides a solid foundation for making accurate inferences and drawing conclusions based on the collected data. Additionally, the high reliability of the scale enhances the validity of subsequent analyses and interpretations.

4.5 ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA LINKED TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

4.5.1 Research question 1: What types of corporate hospitality activities are currently provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days?

To determine the types of corporate hospitality activities currently provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days, the study conducted descriptive statistics. The data includes descriptive statistics, such as the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each activity

Table 11

Descriptive analysis of the t*ypes of corporate hospitality activities are currently provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days.*

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stadium management leverages technology like mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences	54	1	5	2.83	1.437
Stadium management offers team merchandise, memorabilia, and limited edition items.	54	1	5	2.83	1.270
Stadium management offers pre-game fan engagement activities such as player meet, and greets, and autograph sessions	54	1	5	2.81	1.415
Stadium management seeks feedback from fans through surveys	54	1	5	2.54	1.463
Stadium management offers exclusive VIP packages that include premium seating, access to private lounges, complimentary food and beverages	54	1	5	2.54	1.328
Stadium management provides a wide range of food and beverage options, including local and international cuisine, craft beer, and speciality snacks.	54	1	5	2.24	1.228
Stadium management hosts fan competitions such as half-time penalty shootouts or trivia contests	54	1	5	2.19	1.260
Stadium management engages the local community by organizing charity events and fan-driven initiatives	54	1	5	2.11	1.160
Stadium management has partnered with corporate sponsors to create interactive activations such as photo booths, mini-games, and giveaways	54	1	4	1.69	1.113
Valid N (listwise)	54				

Based on the provided data, the first item with a mean score of 2.83 and a standard deviation of 1.437 is an activity in which Stadium management leverages technology like mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences. This activity has a relatively

moderate mean score, suggesting that stadium management in Harare partially uses technology like mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences for fans.

The second aspect has a mean score of 2.83 and a standard deviation of 1.270. It entails that Stadium management offers team merchandise, memorabilia, and limited edition items. Similarly, this activity also has a moderate mean score, indicating that stadium management provides team merchandise, memorabilia, and limited edition items to enhance the fan experience.

The third aspect has a mean score of 2.81 and a std of 1.415. It entails that stadium management offers pre-game fan engagement activities such as player meet and greets and autograph sessions. This activity has a relatively high mean score, indicating that stadium management in Harare actively engages fans through pre-game activities like player meet and greets and autograph sessions.

The fourth aspect has a mean score of 2.54 and std of 1.463. It entails that stadium management seeks feedback from fans through surveys. This activity has a moderate mean score, suggesting that stadium management occasionally seeks feedback from fans through surveys to improve the match-day fan experience.

The first item entails that stadium management offers exclusive VIP packages that include premium seating, access to private lounges, complimentary food, and beverages. The mean score of 2.54 and STD 1.328 reflect that this activity has a moderate mean score, indicating that stadium management provides exclusive VIP packages with various amenities to enhance the fan experience.

The first item on stadium management provides a wide range of food and beverage options, including local and international cuisine, craft beer, and speciality snacks. This activity has a relatively lower mean score of 2.24 and STD 1.228, suggesting that the variety of food and beverage options provided by stadium management in Harare may not be as extensive as other activities.

The sixth item on stadium management is hosting fan competitions such as half-time penalty shootouts or trivia contests. This activity has a moderate mean score of 2.19 and ATD 1.260, indicating that stadium management occasionally hosts fan competitions during match days.

Stadium management engages the local community by organizing charity events and fan-driven initiatives activity has a moderate mean score of 2.11 and STD 1.60, suggesting that stadium management in Harare engages the local community through charity events and fan-driven initiatives.

Stadium management has partnered with corporate sponsors to create interactive activations such as photo booths, mini-games, and giveaways activity has a lower mean score of 1.69 and STD OF 1.113 compared to other activities, indicating that stadium management in Harare has relatively fewer partnerships with corporate sponsors for interactive activations.

The descriptive statistics provide insights into the types of corporate hospitality activities currently provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days. The findings suggest that stadium management in Harare focuses on various activities such as leveraging technology, offering merchandise, organizing pre-game engagements, seeking feedback, providing VIP packages, hosting fan competitions, engaging the local community, and partnering with sponsors for interactive activations. However, there mean scores of most of the activities are very low suggesting that stadium management is slowly adopting global practices and hence may be room for improvement in certain areas, such as the variety of food and beverage options and partnerships with corporate sponsors.

During the interviews conducted for this research, a diverse set of participants, including fans, stadium managers, sponsors, Premier League officials, and team managers, were asked to provide descriptions of the corporate activities currently offered on match days to enhance the fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare. To analyze the data obtained from these interviews, the responses were grouped and organized using NVivo version 12, a qualitative data analysis software. The most frequently mentioned words and themes were identified and extracted to create a comprehensive and accurate representation of the activities being discussed. This thematic analysis enables us to gain a clear and detailed understanding of the corporate activities currently implemented in the Premier Soccer League in Harare.

Table 12

Types of corporate hospitality activities are currently provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days according to a research interviewee.

NVivo code	No code references
VIP packages	**16**
Meet and greet	**12**
Corporate Sponsor Activations	**9**
Fan Engagement Activities:	**12**
Enhanced Food and Beverage Options	**16**

Based on the provided data, we can analyze the frequency of certain corporate hospitality activities in Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare. There are 16 references to VIP packages in the data. This suggests that offering exclusive VIP packages is a relatively common practice in Harare Premier Soccer League stadiums. Some participants had this to say;

"Although VIP packages are offered, the overall experience falls short of expectations with limited amenities and subpar service."

"The VIP packages are priced higher compared to other leagues, but the benefits and exclusivity provided do not justify the cost".

There are 12 references to meet and greet activities. This indicates that fans have the opportunity to meet players, coaches, or club legends in Harare stadiums, although this is mentioned less frequently compared to VIP packages. Some fans had this to say;

"Meet and greet events are occasionally organized, but they often lack proper organization and coordination, resulting in fans feeling rushed and not having meaningful interactions."

"While there are opportunities for meet and greets, the access to players is limited, and fans are often left disappointed due to the lack of availability.'

There are 9 references to corporate sponsor activations. This suggests that partnerships with corporate sponsors for interactive activations, such as photo booths and mini-games, might be less prevalent in Harare Premier Soccer League stadiums compared to other global practices. Some sponsors had this to say:

"Corporate sponsor activations are mentioned, but they are not integrated seamlessly into the match day experience, causing them to feel disconnected and irrelevant."

"The corporate sponsor activations are limited and fail to engage fans effectively, as they often come across as forced and promotional rather than enhancing the overall experience."

There are 12 references to fan engagement activities. This indicates that Harare stadiums do organize activities to engage fans, such as live music performances and dance routines, which align with global practices. Some had this to say;

"Fan engagement activities are sporadically organized, but there is a lack of consistency and creativity, resulting in a repetitive and uninspiring fan experience."

"The fan engagement activities often feel forced and superficial, lacking genuine interaction and failing to create a sense of excitement or connection with the fans."

There are 16 references to enhanced food and beverage options. This suggests that Harare stadiums do offer a diverse range of food and beverage choices, similar to global practices.

"*While there are options for food and beverages, the quality and variety offered are subpar, leaving fans with limited choices and a relacklustre culinary experience."*

"The enhanced food and beverage options are limited to basic stadium fare, and there is a lack of diverse and unique offerings that cater to different tastes and preferences."

These quotations combined with positivist ideas from the questionnaire suggest that while certain corporate hospitality activities are present in Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare, they may not be executed to the desired standards seen in other global practices. There seems to be a need for improvement in terms of the quality, organization, creativity, and overall execution of these activities to enhance the fan experience on match days.

4.5.2 Research question 2: What is the impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare?

To understand the impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, the researcher computed correlation analysis.

Table 13: **Correlation Descriptive statistics**

		Statistic	Bootstrap			
			Bias	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
Stadium management leverages technology like mobile apps and	Mean	2.83	.01	.20	2.48	3.24
	Std. Deviation	1.437	-.011	.083	1.240	1.583

augmented reality to provide interactive experiences	N	54	0	0	54	54
Fans share their positive experiences with others and become loyal customers	Mean	2.07	-.01	.18	1.74	2.44
	Std. Deviation	1.399	-.021	.119	1.134	1.588
	N	54	0	0	54	54
a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples						

Based on the provided descriptive statistics, the researcher analyzed the impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare. For the variable "Stadium management leverage technology like mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences," the mean score is 2.83 with a standard deviation of 1.437. This suggests that, on average, fans perceive the utilization of technology for interactive experiences to be moderately positive. However, there is some variability in the responses, indicated by the standard deviation. For the variable "Fans share their positive experiences with others and become loyal customers," the mean score is 2.07 with a standard deviation of 1.399. This indicates that, on average, fans perceive their positive experiences and loyalty to be relatively lower compared to the perception of technology utilization. Again, there is some variability in the responses, as reflected by the standard deviation.

Table 14: *Correlation analysis*

Correlations			Stadium management leverages technology like mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences	Fans share their positive experiences with others and become loyal customers
Stadium management leverages technology like mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences	Pearson Correlation		1	-.069
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.621
	N		54	54
	Bootstrap	Bias	0	.001
		Std. Error	0	.116
		95% Confidence Interval	Lower	1	-.293
			Upper	1	.159
	Pearson Correlation		-.069	1

Fans share their positive experiences with others and become loyal customers	Sig. (2-tailed)		.621	
	N		54	54
	Bootstrap	Bias	.001	0
		Std. Error	.116	0
		95% Confidence Interval	Lower	-.293	1
			Upper	.159	1
c. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples				

Based on the provided correlations, it appears that there is no significant correlation between stadium management leveraging technology like mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences and fans sharing their positive experiences with others and becoming loyal customers. The correlation coefficient of -0.069 suggests a weak negative relationship, but it is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.621). Therefore, based on the available data, the research cannot conclude that the use of technology-based interactive experiences directly impacts fans' sharing of positive experiences and their loyalty as customers.

During the interviews conducted for this study, participants were specifically asked to express their levels of satisfaction regarding the existing corporate hospitality offerings at the stadium. Using NVivo 14, a qualitative analysis software, the responses were analyzed and categorized into two main themes: satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This thematic analysis allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the participants' viewpoints and the reasoning behind their assessments. By examining their arguments and perspectives, the research can gain valuable insights into the factors that contribute to their overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the current corporate hospitality offerings at the stadium

Table 15

The impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare.

NVivo code	Code References
Satisfied	10
Dissatisfied	4

Based on the provided NVivo code references, the data suggests that out of the interviewed participants, 10 code references show that participants expressed satisfaction with the current corporate hospitality activities, while 4 codes expressed dissatisfaction. Some participants expressed their dissatisfaction and argued that :

Participant 1 *"The corporate hospitality offerings at the stadium are subpar. The seating arrangements are uncomfortable, and the food options are limited and overpriced. I expected a more premium experience, but it fell short of my expectations."*

Participant 8: *"I was disappointed with the lack of interaction and engagement from the staff in the corporate hospitality areas. It felt impersonal, and I didn't feel valued as a fan. The whole experience felt generic and didn't add any value to my match-day experience."*

Participant 5: *"The corporate hospitality activities seem outdated and uninspiring. There is a lack of innovation in terms of technology integration and interactive experiences. I was expecting more modern and engaging activities to enhance the overall fan experience, but it felt stagnant and uninteresting."*

Participant 4: *"The corporate hospitality offerings are not worth the price. The quality of services and amenities provided did not justify the high cost. I felt like I was paying for a premium experience, but I didn't receive the value I expected."*

These quotations highlight the participants' dissatisfaction with various aspects of corporate hospitality activities, such as seating arrangements, food options, staff interaction, innovation, and value for money. These sentiments indicate areas where improvements might be needed to enhance the match-day fan experience in Harare's Premier Soccer League. The findings from both the interviewee responses and the questionnaire indicate that the corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League is not meeting global practices, as the fans expressed their dissatisfaction.

4.5.3 Research question 3: What are the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the premier soccer league in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences?

Regression model table showing the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the premier soccer league in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences.

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	2.340	1	2.340	1.645	.205b
1	Residual	73.975	52	1.423		
	Total	76.315	53			

a. Dependent Variable: The existing stadiums and facilities may not be designed to meet the requirements and expectations of modern corporate hospitality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Lack of resource

Based on the provided ANOVA table, the study can analyze the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences. The ANOVA table indicates the results of a regression model, with the dependent variable being "The existing stadiums and facilities may not be designed to meet the requirements and expectations of modern corporate hospitality." The predictors in the model include a constant and the factor "Lack of resource.". The regression model's overall significance is not statistically significant, as indicated by the p-value of 0.205. This suggests that the predictors included in the model, specifically the constant and the factor "Lack of resource," do not have a significant effect on the dependent variable. From this analysis, the researcher can infer that one of the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare is a lack of resources. This lack of resources may hinder the development and implementation of modern and effective corporate hospitality practices that meet the requirements and expectations of fans.

Table 17

Regression model table showing the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the premier soccer league in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences.

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.625	1.586		1.025	.310
	Lack of resource	.475	.370	.175	1.282	.205

a. Dependent Variable: The existing stadiums and facilities may not be designed to meet the requirements and expectations of modern corporate hospitality

Based on the provided coefficients table, the research can further analyze the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences. The constant term has a coefficient of 1.625 and a standard error of 1.586. However, it is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.310). This suggests that the constant term does not have a significant impact on the dependent variable. The predictor "Lack of resource" has a coefficient of 0.475, indicating that an increase in the perceived lack of resources is associated with a positive increase in the dependent variable.

However, the coefficient is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.205). This suggests that the lack of resources, as measured by this variable, does not have a significant effect on the existing stadiums and facilities meeting the requirements and expectations of modern corporate hospitality. From this analysis, the research can infer that while the lack of resources may be perceived as a challenge for implementing a corporate hospitality framework, the current data does not provide sufficient evidence to support its significant impact. Nevertheless, the interviewees were used for further investigation and additional data to better understand the specific challenges involved in implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare and improving match-day fan experiences.

During the interviews conducted, participants were specifically asked to discuss the key challenges or barriers encountered when implementing corporate hospitality initiatives for the match-day fan experience. The responses provided by the interviewees highlighted various challenging factors that have the potential to hinder the progress of certain stadiums. Notably, some of these stadiums have been banned by FIFA field inspection committees. To analyze and make sense of the participants' views, the data was organized into themes using NVivo version 14, a qualitative analysis software. This thematic analysis allowed for the identification and categorization of recurring patterns and issues raised by the interviewees regarding the challenges and barriers faced in implementing corporate hospitality initiatives.

Table 18

NVIvo Table showing the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the premier soccer league in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences

NVivo code references	No code references
Infrastructure limitations	11
Resistance to change	17
Regulatory and legal considerations	7
Limited technology adoption	8

The provided NVivo table shows the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences. The table includes code references and the corresponding number of occurrences for each challenge.

Infrastructure limitations: This challenge is referenced 11 times in the data. The high frequency suggests that interviewees and other data sources identified infrastructure limitations as a significant barrier to implementing a corporate hospitality framework. This could include issues related to stadium facilities, space constraints, or outdated infrastructure that hampers the creation of desirable fan experiences. One of the participants argue that;

"The outdated infrastructure in our stadiums is holding us back. We need modern facilities and amenities to provide a top-notch corporate hospitality experience for fans.

Resistance to change: The data contains 17 code references discussing resistance to change as a challenge. This indicates that interviewees expressed concerns about stakeholders' reluctance or resistance to adopting new approaches or initiatives. Overcoming resistance to change is crucial for successfully implementing corporate hospitality initiatives in the Premier Soccer League. One of the participants had this to say;

"There is resistance from some stakeholders who are hesitant to embrace new approaches. They prefer to stick to traditional fan experiences and are reluctant to invest in corporate hospitality initiatives."

Regulatory and legal considerations: The data includes 7 code references related to regulatory and legal considerations. This suggests that interviewees recognized the importance of compliance with regulations and legal obligations when implementing corporate hospitality initiatives. Addressing regulatory requirements is necessary to ensure the legality and safety of the fan experience. One of the participants had this to say;

"Complying with the ever-changing regulations and legal requirements is a significant challenge. We need to ensure that our corporate hospitality initiatives meet all safety standards and licensing obligations."

Limited technology adoption: The data contains 8 code references highlighting limited technology adoption as a challenge. This indicates that interviewees recognized the need to incorporate technological advancements to enhance the match-day fan experience. However, the limited adoption of technology in the current context hinders the implementation of innovative corporate hospitality initiatives. Some of the participants had this to say

"We are falling behind in terms of technology adoption. The lack of advanced digital systems, mobile apps, and interactive displays hinders our ability to provide a seamless and immersive fan experience."

"The reluctance to invest in new technologies like cashless payment systems and digital platforms limits our ability to offer convenient and modern corporate hospitality services to fans"

The data suggests a consensus among interviewees and questionnaire respondents that the lack of resources and technology is a significant challenge that hinders football stadiums from meeting fan expectations. This aligns with the common understanding that adequate resources and modern technology are crucial for creating enhanced fan experiences. However, it is noteworthy that interviewees have expressed deep concerns regarding two other critical challenges: resistance to change and lack of compliance. These challenges have had tangible consequences, as some stadiums in the city have been banned as a result.

4.5.4 Research question 4: What strategies can be put in place to ensure the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing match day fan experience in the premier soccer league in Harare?

The participants described several strategies to ensure the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing the match-day fan experience in the premier soccer league in Harare. The views of the participants were grouped using NVivo version 14.

NVivo code	No Code References
Foster a culture of innovation and adaptability	37
Ensure compliance with regulations and safety standards	28
Collaborate with sponsors and partners	23

Implement premium hospitality areas	34
Invest in infrastructure and technology	44

Based on the word frequency data from NVivo, it is evident that certain strategies have been mentioned more frequently in relation to ensuring the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare.

Based on the word frequency data from NVivo, it is evident that certain strategies have been mentioned more frequently in relation to ensuring the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare. Here is an analysis of the strategies based on the provided word frequency:

Invest in infrastructure and technology (44 references): This strategy highlights the importance of allocating resources to upgrade stadium infrastructure and embrace technology. By investing in modern facilities, amenities, and digital solutions, the league can enhance the overall fan experience and provide more convenient and immersive services.

Foster a culture of innovation and adaptability (37 references): This strategy emphasizes the need to create an organizational culture that encourages innovation and adaptability. By fostering an environment that embraces new ideas, technologies, and approaches, the league can continually improve and stay ahead of evolving fan expectations.

Implement premium hospitality areas (34 references): This strategy focuses on the creation of premium hospitality areas within stadiums. By designing and developing dedicated spaces that offer exclusive services, comfortable seating, and enhanced amenities, the league can cater to the needs of corporate guests and high-end fans, providing them with a superior match-day experience.

Ensure compliance with regulations and safety standards (28 references): This strategy highlights the importance of adhering to regulatory and safety requirements. By establishing strict protocols, conducting regular safety inspections, and complying with relevant regulations, the league can provide a safe and secure environment for fans, ensuring their well-being during match-day events.

Collaborate with sponsors and partners (23 references): This strategy emphasizes the value of forming partnerships with corporate sponsors and industry experts. By collaborating with

sponsors and partners, the league can leverage its expertise, resources, and networks to enhance the match-day fan experience through initiatives such as exclusive events, promotional activities, and sponsorship activations.

These strategies, as indicated by their word frequency, are considered essential for the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework. By focusing on these strategies, the Premier Soccer League in Harare can significantly improve the match-day fan experience, create a competitive edge, and foster a positive reputation for the league

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter has presented an analysis of the findings from the investigation. The following chapter will delve into a comprehensive examination and discussion of the results, providing a detailed exploration of the key findings and their implications

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents an analysis of the results obtained from both the questionnaire and interview methods, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perspectives. By combining these two strands of data, a clear and holistic picture emerges, enabling the development of a robust framework for optimizing the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare. This integration of insights from both sources is a crucial step toward formulating an effective strategy that encompasses the diverse viewpoints and preferences of the stakeholders involved.

5.2 DISCUSSION

5.2.1 Research question 1: What types of corporate hospitality activities are currently provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days?

Based on the provided data, Table 4.12; and Table 4.13 show that the Premier Soccer League Stadiums in Harare offer VIP packages. This suggests that offering exclusive VIP packages is a relatively common practice in Harare Premier Soccer League stadiums. However, a gap has been raised concerning the logistics for concessions, food and beverage services, and VIP suites form the foundation of guest services. Concession service providers have little opportunity to build long-lasting relationships based on worthwhile exchanges, making the concession experience one of the most impactful and controlled. Accordingly, Herod et al. (2021); Jensen et.al (2018) purport that high-quality food and drinks that satisfy fan expectations and give a memorable game-day experience are essential. To guarantee variety in the food and beverage offerings, more income, and greater fan pleasure, as well as "peace of mind" from a management aspect, Harare Premier Soccer League stadium organizers should outsource concessions service providers.

The results show Harare Premier Soccer League stadium organizers carry out fan engagement activities. According to the qualitative strand, the engagement activities include live music performances and dance routines, which align with global practices. Participants argued that;

"Fan engagement activities are sporadically organized, but there is a lack of consistency and creativity, resulting in a repetitive and uninspiring fan experience."

"While there are opportunities for meet and greets, the access to players is limited, and fans are often left disappointed due to the lack of availability.'

Considering that these activities are arranged, it seems that there is a lack of interest from fans, resulting in football clubs missing out on significant attendance that could generate substantial income. Dollies and Solderman (2005) suggest that there has been a shift in revenue streams in professional sports since the late 1980s in Europe. As a result, the reliance of football teams on gate receipts has been called into question.

Stadium management in Harare recognizes the potential of technology in enhancing the fan experience and has taken steps to leverage mobile apps and augmented reality to provide interactive experiences. The activity of utilizing technology-based solutions has received a moderate mean score, indicating that there is some level of implementation in this area. By incorporating mobile apps and augmented reality, stadium management aims to offer fans innovative and immersive experiences during match days. Mobile apps can serve as a convenient platform for fans to access information such as match schedules, player statistics, and ticket purchasing options. Additionally, these apps can provide features like interactive maps of the stadium, allowing fans to navigate easily and locate amenities. Augmented reality (AR) technology presents exciting possibilities for enhancing fan engagement. By overlaying virtual elements onto the real-world environment, AR can offer interactive games, virtual player appearances, or even virtual tours of the stadium. These experiences can provide fans with a unique and memorable connection to the team and the stadium.

However, it is important to note that the moderate mean score suggests that there is room for improvement in terms of the vibrancy and extent of technology-based interactive experiences. While some efforts have been made to integrate mobile apps and augmented reality, it appears that stadium management in Harare may not be fully maximizing the potential of these technologies. To enhance the vibrancy of technology-based interactive experiences, stadium management could consider expanding the features and functionalities of mobile apps to encompass a wider range of services, such as personalized content, fan forums, and interactive challenges. Furthermore, exploring more immersive and creative applications of augmented reality could captivate fans and provide them with truly unique experiences within the stadium. By continuing to invest in and refine technology-driven initiatives, stadium management in Harare can further enhance the fan experience, foster greater fan engagement, and ultimately increase fan satisfaction and loyalty.

Corporate sponsor activations are one of the activities raised. According to participants, partnerships with corporate sponsors for interactive activations, such as photo booths and mini-

games, might be less prevalent in Harare Premier Soccer League stadiums compared to other global practices. Some sponsors had this to say *"Corporate sponsor activations are mentioned, but they are not integrated seamlessly into the match day experience, causing them to feel disconnected and irrelevant."*

When Harare Premier Soccer stadiums neglect corporate sponsor activations and fan engagement activities, they miss out on various revenue streams and potential opportunities, as identified by Litman (2018) and Balliauw (2019). Corporate sponsor activations serve as a valuable platform for businesses to promote their brands and products to a captive audience. By not engaging in such activities, stadiums forfeit sponsorship deals and the associated financial benefits. Sponsorship revenue plays a significant role in ensuring the overall financial sustainability of football clubs and stadiums. Furthermore, effective fan engagement activities have the potential to drive increased attendance at matches, as highlighted by Balliauw (2019). When stadiums fail to actively engage fans and provide an appealing match-day experience, they are likely to experience lower ticket sales. By prioritizing corporate sponsor activations and fan engagement, stadiums can attract a larger number of spectators, thereby boosting ticket revenue. Additionally, corporate sponsor activations and fan engagement activities create opportunities for ancillary revenue, as pointed out by Balliauw (2019). This can include revenue generated from advertising, hospitality packages, VIP experiences, and other auxiliary services. Overlooking these activities means stadiums miss out on potential income sources that can complement ticket sales and sponsorships.

In short, the absence of corporate sponsor activations and fan engagement activities in Harare Premier Soccer stadiums results in missed opportunities for revenue generation. The loss of sponsorship revenue reduced ticket sales, and the failure to capitalize on ancillary revenue sources all contribute to a potential financial setback for the clubs and stadiums. Implementing these activities is crucial for maximizing revenue streams and ensuring the long-term financial viability of the stadiums and football clubs.

In addition to corporate sponsor activations and fan engagement activities, literature has identified other missing elements in Harare Premier Soccer stadiums that could contribute to improved customer satisfaction. Herold (2021) highlights two specific areas: the management of parking and traffic, and assistance with tailgating. Efficient and well-managed parking and traffic systems are crucial for providing a seamless and enjoyable experience for fans attending soccer matches. However, the literature suggests that Harare Premier Soccer stadiums may lack

effective parking and traffic management strategies. Insufficient parking spaces, inadequate traffic flow control, and a lack of clear signage can lead to congestion, delays, and frustration for fans. Implementing proper parking management systems, including designated parking areas, traffic control personnel, and clear directions, can significantly enhance the match-day experience by reducing stress and ensuring smooth entry and exit for attendees.

Tailgating, a popular pre-game ritual in many sports cultures, involves fans gathering in parking lots before the match to socialize, enjoy food and drinks, and build excitement for the game. However, the literature suggests that Harare Premier Soccer stadiums may overlook the potential of tailgating as a fan engagement opportunity. By providing designated tailgating areas, stadium management can create a vibrant and festive atmosphere, fostering camaraderie among fans. Offering amenities such as grilling stations, seating areas, and entertainment options can further enhance the tailgating experience, increasing fan satisfaction and participation.

5.2.2 Research question 2: What is the impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare?

Based on the correlations presented in Table 4.15, there is no significant association between stadium management's utilization of technology such as mobile apps and augmented reality to offer interactive experiences and fans sharing positive experiences and becoming loyal customers. The correlation coefficient of -0.069 indicates a weak negative relationship, but it is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.621). Therefore, based on the available data, the research cannot establish a direct link between the use of technology-based interactive experiences and fans' inclination to share positive experiences or their loyalty as customers. Furthermore, the provided NVivo code references highlight participants' sentiments regarding the current corporate hospitality activities. Among the interviewed participants, 10 code references indicate satisfaction with the existing corporate hospitality initiatives, while 4 codes express dissatisfaction. The results indicating a negative impact of stadium management in Harare stadiums can be attributed to several factors, including revenue loss and poor attendance. These issues highlight the challenges faced by stadium management in effectively running and monetizing the venues.

The negative impact may stem from a lack of effective revenue-generation strategies. Stadiums heavily rely on various revenue streams such as ticket sales, sponsorships, concessions, and ancillary services. If stadium management fails to optimize these revenue

sources, it can lead to financial losses. For example, if corporate sponsor activations are not actively pursued, stadiums miss out on potential sponsorship deals that can significantly contribute to their financial sustainability. Additionally, if fan engagement activities are not prioritized, it can result in lower ticket sales and reduced revenue from concessions and other ancillary services.

 The negative impact may also be reflected in poor attendance at matches. Stadiums depend on attracting a significant number of spectators to generate revenue. If stadium management does not invest in fan engagement activities, the match-day experience may become lacklustre, leading to decreased interest from fans and lower attendance numbers. This can further exacerbate revenue loss issues as ticket sales and concession revenue decline. Another contributing factor to the negative impact may be a lack of effective marketing and promotion strategies. Stadium management plays a vital role in creating awareness and excitement around matches and events. If marketing efforts are inadequate or poorly executed, it can result in limited visibility and reduced interest from potential attendees. This, in turn, can lead to poor attendance and revenue loss.

The condition of the stadiums and the quality of facilities provided can also impact attendance and revenue. If the stadiums lack necessary amenities, such as modern seating arrangements, clean restrooms, adequate parking, and comfortable access, it can deter fans from attending matches. This, coupled with a lack of investment in stadium infrastructure, can contribute to the negative impact experienced by stadium management.

5.2.3 Research question 3: What are the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the premier soccer league in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences?

The ANOVA table 4.17 provides valuable insights into the challenges faced when implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, to improve match-day fan experiences. Specifically, table 4.17 presents the results of a regression model, where the dependent variable is *"The existing stadiums and facilities may not be designed to meet the requirements and expectations of modern corporate hospitality."* The predictors in the model include a constant and the factor *"Lack of resource.".* The qualitative data collected in the study Table 19 supports the findings presented in the ANOVA Table 17. The challenge of "Lack of resources" is referenced 11 times in the data, indicating its

significance as a barrier to implementing a corporate hospitality framework. The high frequency of this challenge suggests that interviewees and other data sources consistently identified infrastructure limitations as a major obstacle to creating desirable fan experiences through corporate hospitality. These limitations may include issues related to stadium facilities, space constraints, or outdated infrastructure. One of the participants in the study expressed their opinion on this matter, stating, *"The outdated infrastructure in our stadiums is holding us back. We need modern facilities and amenities to provide a top-notch corporate hospitality experience for fans."* This sentiment aligns with the findings from the ANOVA table and highlights the importance of addressing infrastructure-related challenges to enhance corporate hospitality in Harare stadiums.

The results reveal that the coefficient associated with the lack of resources variable is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.205). This indicates that, based on this analysis, there is no strong evidence to suggest that a lack of resources significantly affects the ability of existing stadiums and facilities to meet the requirements and expectations of modern corporate hospitality. Although the perception of a resource constraint may exist, the available data does not support its significant impact on corporate hospitality implementation. However, it is important to note that the qualitative findings shed light on additional challenges beyond the lack of resources and outdated stadiums. One prominent challenge mentioned by participants is resistance to change, which was referenced 17 times. One participant expressed, *"There is resistance from some stakeholders who are hesitant to embrace new approaches. They prefer to stick to traditional fan experiences and are reluctant to invest in corporate hospitality initiatives."* This indicates that some stakeholders within the industry may resist adopting new strategies and fail to recognize the value of corporate hospitality. Consequently, regulatory and legal considerations may be disregarded, and there may be a reluctance to adopt technology-driven solutions. These qualitative insights highlight the need to address not only the lack of resources and outdated infrastructure but also the resistance to change within the industry. Overcoming these challenges requires engaging stakeholders, promoting the benefits of corporate hospitality, and emphasizing the importance of regulatory compliance and technological advancements in delivering enhanced fan experiences.

5.3.4 Research question 4: What strategies can be put in place to ensure the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing match day fan experience in the premier soccer league in Harare?

Respondents expressed the need to address gaps in infrastructure and technology investment, as highlighted by Herod et al. (2021). Their recommendations include upgrading stadium facilities and amenities, ensuring reliable and high-speed Wi-Fi connectivity, providing interactive fan experiences such as virtual player meet-ups (Aicher, 2018), and implementing energy-efficient lighting systems (Bradford and Sherry, 2015). These suggestions collectively aim to enhance the match-day fan experience through improved infrastructure and advanced technological capabilities. All these initiatives are meant to encourage a culture of innovation and adaptability has been highlighted by respondents. This strategy emphasizes the need to create an organizational culture that encourages innovation and adaptability. By fostering an environment that embraces new ideas, technologies, and approaches, the league can continually improve and stay ahead of evolving fan expectations. Accordingly, these strategies are meant to improve collaboration with sponsors and partners hence the league can leverage its expertise, resources, and networks to enhance the match-day fan experience through initiatives such as exclusive events, promotional activities, and sponsorship activations.

5.3 Conceptual Framework

This research aims to propose a comprehensive conceptual framework that serves as a guide for implementing a corporate hospitality framework to achieve an optimum match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe. The framework takes into account various factors and elements that contribute to enhancing the overall fan experience and ensuring their satisfaction.

The proposed conceptual framework incorporates multiple dimensions, including infrastructure and technology, compliance with regulations and safety standards, collaboration with sponsors and partners, premium hospitality areas, and fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability.

Figure 2: A corporate hospitality Conceptual framework for optimum match day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe.
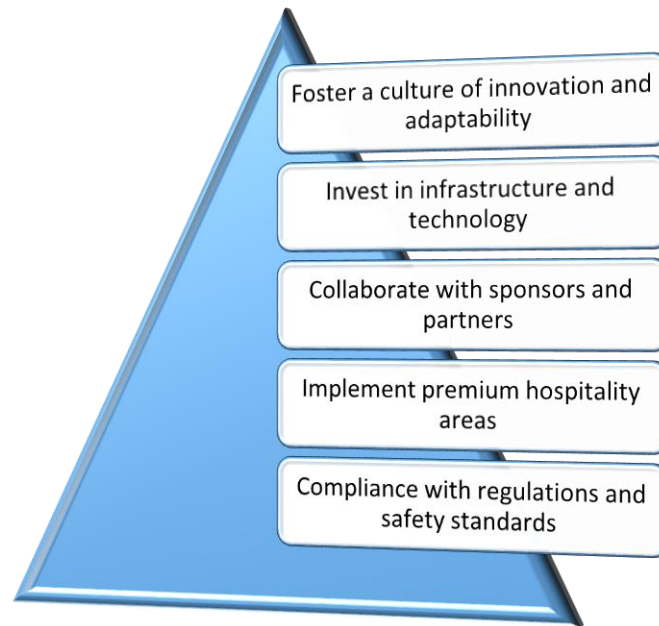
Firstly, the framework emphasizes the importance of investing in infrastructure and technology. This involves upgrading stadium facilities and amenities to provide a comfortable and enjoyable environment for fans. It also includes the implementation of advanced technologies such as high-speed Wi-Fi connectivity, digital displays, and interactive features to engage and entertain fans throughout the match-day experience.

Secondly, the framework emphasizes the need to ensure compliance with regulations and safety standards. This ensures that the match-day experience is conducted in a secure and controlled environment, prioritizing the safety and well-being of fans, corporate guests, and stadium staff.

Thirdly, the framework highlights the significance of collaboration with sponsors and partners. By establishing partnerships with corporate sponsors, local businesses, and hospitality service providers, the league can leverage its expertise, resources, and networks to enhance corporate hospitality offerings. This collaboration can lead to the creation of unique and memorable experiences for fans, including exclusive access to events, personalized services, and promotional activities.

Furthermore, the framework emphasizes the implementation of premium hospitality areas within the stadium. These dedicated spaces provide fans with luxurious seating, exclusive amenities, and personalized services, elevating their match-day experience and catering to the needs of corporate clients.

Lastly, the framework emphasizes fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability. By encouraging a mindset of continuous improvement and embracing new ideas, technologies, and approaches, the league can stay at the forefront of providing an exceptional fan experience. This includes exploring innovative technologies, engaging fan experiences, and personalized services that cater to the evolving preferences of fans.

5.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The framework aims to optimize the match-day fan experience by addressing key elements such as infrastructure, technology, safety, collaboration, and innovation. By implementing this framework, the league can create a more engaging, immersive, and enjoyable experience for fans, leading to increased satisfaction and loyalty. Moreso, a well-executed corporate hospitality framework can provide a competitive advantage for the Premier Soccer League in Harare. By offering premium amenities, personalized services, and unique experiences, the league can differentiate itself from competitors and attract a larger fan base. This can contribute to increased attendance, higher ticket sales, and greater revenue generation. The framework is specifically tailored for the Premier Soccer League in Harare, Zimbabwe. The applicability of the framework to other soccer leagues or sports organizations, especially those operating in different cultural, economic, or geographic contexts, may be limited. Adaptation and customization would be necessary to suit the unique characteristics and needs of other leagues.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study acknowledges limitations in terms of the representation of women who responded to the interview and questionnaire. Despite efforts made to include a diverse range of participants, there was a shortfall in the number of women respondents. This limitation may affect the generalizability and validity of the findings, as the perspectives and experiences of women may not be adequately captured. Nevertheless, the representation of women represents the population in soccer activities in women and their voices were captured accordingly. Additionally, it was observed that certain questionnaire items were not utilized in the presentation of the results. This omission could be due to various reasons, such as missing data, data quality issues, or intentional exclusion based on the research objectives. While every effort was made to ensure the comprehensive analysis of the collected data, these unutilized questionnaire items may contain valuable insights that were not fully explored in the study.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter offers a comprehensive and insightful discussion of the results presented in the previous chapter, shedding light on their implications and significance. It critically analyzes the findings, explores patterns and trends, and provides a deeper understanding of the research questions and objectives. By holistically examining the results, the chapter highlights key themes, relationships, and correlations that emerged from the data analysis. It delves into the nuances and complexities of the findings, considering alternative explanations and potential limitations. Furthermore, the chapter contextualizes the results within the existing body of knowledge, drawing connections to relevant theories, concepts, and prior research. It identifies areas of agreement or divergence with existing literature, contributing to the broader scholarly discourse. The subsequent chapter serves as a culmination of the research journey, offering a conclusive statement of the results. It synthesizes the main findings, reiterates their significance, and addresses the research questions and objectives formulated at the outset. This chapter provides a sense of closure, summarizing the key takeaways and implications for theory, practice, or policy.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter represents the culmination of the research journey, providing a definitive summary of the results. It consolidates the main findings, reaffirms their significance, and directly addresses the research questions and objectives established at the beginning of the study. By offering a comprehensive overview, this chapter brings a sense of closure to the research, highlighting the key takeaways and outlining their implications for theory, practice, or policy.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

6.2.1 Research question 1: What types of corporate hospitality activities are currently provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days?

Based on the views of the participants, several key observations can be made regarding the current corporate hospitality activities provided by Premier Soccer League stadiums in Harare to enhance the fan experience on match days. Firstly, organizers tend to focus on engagement activities such as live music performances and dance routines. While these activities can create an energetic atmosphere, the utilization of mobile apps and augmented reality is reportedly minimal. This suggests a potential missed opportunity to incorporate innovative technologies and interactive experiences that could further enhance fan engagement. Secondly, there appears to be a neglect of corporate sponsor activations. Partnerships with corporate sponsors for interactive activations, such as photo booths and mini-games, seem to be less prevalent. This indicates a potential gap in leveraging sponsorships to create unique and engaging experiences for fans. Lastly, the VIP packages offered by the stadiums are reported to lack world-class concession services. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in delivering high-quality food and beverage options to enhance the premium experience for VIP ticket holders.

6.2.2 Research question 2: What is the impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare?

Based on the research question regarding the impact of the current corporate hospitality activities on the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare, several key findings emerge. Firstly, the absence of corporate sponsor activations and fan engagement activities in the stadiums is identified as a missed opportunity for revenue generation. The lack of partnerships with corporate sponsors for interactive activations, such as photo booths and

mini-games, suggests a potential loss of potential sponsorship revenue. This, in turn, can have a direct impact on ticket sales and overall financial stability for the clubs and stadiums. Furthermore, the failure to effectively capitalize on ancillary revenue sources, such as VIP packages with world-class concession services, indicates a potential financial setback. VIP packages that lack premium concession services may fail to attract fans who are willing to pay a premium for an enhanced match-day experience. This lack of effective marketing and promotion strategies for these packages could result in a missed opportunity to generate additional revenue.

6.2.3 Research question 3: What are the current challenges for implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the premier soccer league in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences?

In conclusion, the research findings shed light on the current challenges faced in implementing a corporate hospitality framework in the Premier Soccer League in Harare to improve match-day fan experiences. Firstly, resistance to change emerges as a major obstacle. There may be a reluctance to adopt new approaches and technologies that could enhance the fan experience. This resistance could stem from various factors, such as a fear of disrupting established practices, cscepticism about the benefits of change, or a lack of awareness regarding the potential positive impact of implementing a corporate hospitality framework. Secondly, the lack of adherence to regulatory and legacy considerations poses a challenge to the adoption of technology-driven solutions. The existing regulatory framework and entrenched legacy practices may present barriers to implementing innovative technologies and strategies. This can hinder the introduction of mobile apps, augmented reality, and other digital solutions that could enhance the match-day experience for fans. Additionally, a minor but significant challenge is the lack of resources to drive modern facility improvements. The availability of financial and human resources plays a crucial role in implementing and sustaining a corporate hospitality framework. Limited resources can impede the necessary investments in infrastructure, technology, and personnel required to create a truly enhanced match-day experience.

6.3.4 Research question 4: What strategies can be put in place to ensure the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing match day fan experience in the premier soccer league in Harare?

In conclusion, the research findings highlight several key strategies that can be implemented to ensure the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework for optimizing the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare. Firstly, the introduction of a regulatory framework that mandates and encourages authorities to embrace change is essential. This framework can outline the importance of adopting innovative technologies, fan engagement activities, and corporate sponsor activations. By establishing clear guidelines and incentives for change, stakeholders can be motivated to proactively implement new strategies to enhance the match-day experience. Secondly, developing new infrastructure is crucial for creating a fan-centric environment. This may involve upgrading stadium facilities, improving seating arrangements, enhancing concession services, and incorporating modern amenities. Investing in state-of-the-art technology, such as mobile apps and augmented reality, can also significantly enhance the fan experience. Lastly, collaboration with partners is vital for the successful implementation of a corporate hospitality framework. This includes forming strategic alliances with corporate sponsors, local businesses, and community organizations. Collaborations can bring valuable resources, expertise, and innovative ideas to the table, enabling the implementation of engaging fan activities, interactive activations, and other initiatives that optimize the match day experience. By combining these strategies, authorities, clubs, and stakeholders in the Premier Soccer League in Harare can work towards creating a dynamic and fan-centric environment. This will result in an enhanced match-day experience that attracts and retains fans, increases revenue streams, and contributes to the long-term success and sustainability of the league and its clubs.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Premier Soccer League in Harare is encouraged to;

- Foster strong partnerships and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including clubs, stadium authorities, corporate sponsors, local businesses, and fan organizations. Engaging stakeholders ensures a collective effort and shared commitment towards enhancing the match day experience

- Allocate resources to upgrade stadium facilities, improve seating arrangements, and enhance amenities such as concession services, restroom facilities, and Wi-Fi connectivity. Additionally, invest in technology-driven solutions, such as mobile apps, augmented reality experiences, and fan engagement platforms, to create a seamless and interactive match-day experience

- Prioritize fan satisfaction and engagement by implementing fan-centric initiatives. This may include interactive activations, exclusive fan experiences, meet-and-greet opportunities with players, and opportunities for fan feedback and involvement in decision-making processes.

- Forge strong partnerships with corporate sponsors and maximize their involvement in enhancing the match day experience. Encourage sponsors to activate their brand through interactive experiences, innovative activations, and promotions that resonate with fans

- Regularly assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the corporate hospitality framework and its initiatives. Gather feedback from fans, conduct surveys or focus groups, and analyze data to identify areas for improvement. Use this feedback to make informed decisions and implement necessary adjustments to continually enhance the match-day fan experience

- Develop effective marketing and promotional campaigns to raise awareness and generate excitement about the improved match day experience. Utilize various channels, such as social media, traditional advertising, and partnerships with local media outlets, to reach a wide audience and attract new fans

- Ensure that staff and volunteers involved in implementing the corporate hospitality framework receive proper training and support. This includes training on customer service, technology usage, and event management to ensure a seamless and positive experience for fans.

- Encourage a culture of innovation, adaptability, and continuous improvement within the league and its stakeholders. Embrace feedback, learn from best practices in other leagues or industries, and remain open to implementing new ideas and strategies that can further optimize the match day fan experience.

6.3.1 Recommendations to the Future Study

Future studies can explore the potential impact of emerging technologies, such as virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and wearable devices, on enhancing the match-day fan experience in the Premier Soccer League in Harare. These studies can investigate how these technologies can be effectively integrated into the corporate hospitality framework and assess their influence on fan engagement, satisfaction, and revenue generation. By examining the implementation and utilization of these technologies, researchers can gain valuable insights into their effectiveness in meeting fan expectations and enhancing the overall match-day

experience. Moreover, future studies can conduct in-depth research on fan preferences and behaviour, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of their expectations, motivations, and decision-making processes. By exploring factors that influence fan attendance, participation in corporate hospitality activities, and willingness to spend on premium experiences, researchers can provide valuable insights for tailoring the corporate hospitality framework to meet the specific needs and desires of the fans in Harare. This research can inform the development of targeted strategies and initiatives that enhance fan engagement and satisfaction.

6.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter serves as a comprehensive and conclusive summary of the research, consolidating the main findings, reaffirming their significance, and addressing the research questions and objectives. It brings a sense of closure to the research journey, highlighting the key takeaways and outlining their implications for theory, practice, or policy.

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