

Fan Impact on Home Court Advantage

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Home court advantage is a part of every sport and can be built by a number of factors such as attendance and the passion of fans. In the NBA, it is well known that some teams have stronger home court advantages than others. In this project, I will look at the impact of not only fan attendance, but ticket prices. Does price gouging and high ticket costs not only limit fans from being able to attend games, but impact the teams performance? And in a sense, do wealthier fans not cheer as loud as fans with a lower income? Without analyzing the data, I would think that the Warriors home court advantage changed when they moved from Oracle (roaracle) across the bay to the Chase Center and ticket prices skyrocketed. I might also be inclined to believe that the Clippers, playing in the same arena as the Lakers, could have a better home court advantage because their fans are not paying the same premium as those going to Lakers games.

Being as it is not feasible to access the financial data of fans, I have elected to look at gate receipts for NBA teams from 2011-2023. In a perfect world I would have access to individual game ticket prices and attendances but for the scope of this project I will be using season averages for each team. Using season averages however will minimize the impact of single game outliers such as Christmas games or visiting team impact where ticket prices increase due to the opponent. Additionally I would also like to use game statistics such as free throw percentages and turnovers for opposing teams but with the scope of this project I will focus on Wins/Losses. I will be scraping data on attendance¹ and results² from ESPN and using Statista for data of ticket sales³.

Obviously, better teams drive up the cost of tickets. More people want to see teams that win. This will lead to some biases. By looking at data over the last 13 years, I hope to diminish the effects of winning on ticket cost. Additionally teams in bigger markets such as LA and NYC are going to have higher ticket prices but they will also bring those high prices with them on the road.

There is a decent amount of research and discussion regarding the impact of home court advantage. Some think it makes a difference and others think the impact is minimal. In basketball specifically, getting home court for the 7 game playoff series is often seen as a significant advantage. Most of the discussion, for regular season and playoffs, relates to traveling and total attendance. Obviously, traveling across the country the day before while the other team gets to sleep in their beds is going to have

¹ [2023-2024 NBA Attendance - National Basketball Association - ESPN](#)

² [NBA Standings - 2023-24 Regular Season League Standings - ESPN](#)

³ [Golden State Warriors gate receipts 2023 | Statista](#)

an impact. Similarly there will be a notable difference in the atmosphere between an empty and a full arena. There is not much relating to who is in the seats themselves however and how their passion can impact the atmosphere of the arena that can benefit their team.

I think the results of this will be significant and applicable to affecting a team's success in both the NBA but also other sports. Unfortunately teams do not sell tickets purely to help win games, but this project can be a useful tool in helping team's determine how much to sell tickets for in an effort to both win games and turn a profit.

Bibliography⁴

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⁴ For both ESPN citations, I am using multiple years that each have their own unique web address which I scrapped individually. For the Statista data, the combined data for all teams is behind a paywall but each individual team is free so I combined them manually. I am happy to add citations for each individual cite but that seemed redundant.