

An In-depth Exploration of the Societal Impact of Athletic Events in a Developing Country – A Study of University Students

Sherbaz Khan

Managing Editor – Pakistan Business Review, CBM – IoBM, Karachi
analyzeus@gmail.com

Mustafa Hyder

Asst. Prof. Department of Public Administration, University of Karachi
mustafahyder@uok.edu.pk

Rizwana Rasheed

Asst. Prof, Department of Business Administration, Iqra University, Karachi,
rizwana.rasheed@iqra.edu.pk

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impact of sports events and participation in sports on social cohesion, social impact, and community development. This study investigates the relationship between said variables and their potential impact on community development. The study utilized an online survey to collect primary data from 400 participants. The study utilized a Likert scale to examine participants' perceptions concerning the effects of athletic events. The sampling strategy employed in this study was convenience-based and non-probabilistic due to limitations in both time and budget. The results of our study indicate a statistically significant and positive association between engagement in sports activities and social cohesion. Analogous outcomes were observed in athletic competitions. Furthermore, the degree of social cohesion substantially impacted both social outcomes and community advancement, underscoring the positive societal ramifications of engaging in sports and hosting sporting events. The study was subjected to various limitations. The study's participant pool was restricted due to temporal and spatial constraints. Consequently, the outcomes lack universal generalizability. Additionally, using online data collection methods could have led to participants withholding their genuine preferences. The findings of this study suggest that sports events and participation in sports can have significant implications for societal outcomes. The comprehension of this concept can be advantageous for policymakers and event planners in developing nations, as it can aid them in utilizing sports as a strategic tool to promote community development and enhance social cohesion

Keywords: Sports Participation, Sports Events, Social Cohesion, Social Impact, Community Development

Introduction

The present study explores the prospective advantages of sports for the community. The notion that significant sporting events can influence the global economy and culture has been widely acknowledged for a considerable period. The notion that sporting events may yield positive social outcomes has garnered increasing attention in contemporary times. According to Chalip (2006), these gatherings evoke the universal sentiment of solidarity, pride, and sporting freedom. At a smaller scale, Fredline and Faulkner (2001) suggest that local investment can be enhanced and individual well-being can be improved. The predominant focus of scholarly inquiry on athletic events has been on their financial ramifications, including fresh employment opportunities, heightened tourism, and the establishment of new infrastructure (Getz, 2008). The commensurate significance of these events is observed regarding their impact on society. The intangible benefits experienced by the public, such as heightened national pride and a sense of solidarity, were perceived to have a more significant impact than tangible economic benefits during the 2012 London Olympics. In contemporary times, political entities, public institutions, and sports governing bodies are inclined to utilize sporting events to advance their political, social, and economic objectives (Chalip, 2006).

Acknowledging the potential positive and negative effects of such occurrences on individuals' social lives, prior studies have investigated the non-cognitive social implications thereof. The widely accepted approach to understanding popular perceptions of the social impact of sporting events is through social exchange theory. This theory examines individual attitudes, awareness, and intentions. (Fredline & Faulkner, 200q). This aspect of tourism holds significant importance, as Getz (2008) stated. Hence, it is imperative to establish a correlation between the two viewpoints of urban development theory and the objectives of urban development to enable individuals to endorse the sports community actively. This

study aims to examine the potential application of the theory of community development in the pursuit of community development goals within the framework of athletic events.

Through this endeavor, she aims to contribute novelly to the discourse on the societal advantages of sporting events by providing fresh insights and empirical evidence.

The objectives of the study

The primary objective of this study is to determine the social impacts of sporting events. Determining the variables that will be examined and those that will be regulated constitutes a fundamental aspect of any research endeavor. Within the scope of this study, the terms "sports events" and "sports participation" are considered as distinct factors, while "social cohesion," "social impact," and "community development" are regarded as dependent variables. This research aims to investigate the correlation between sports participation and social cohesiveness and explore how this relationship can lead to positive social outcomes. The study seeks to determine if an increase in sports engagement can promote social unity and trigger beneficial social effects. This study aims to elucidate the function of sporting events in fostering positive communal development.

Related Literature

Background On Social Impact

Social Impact theory defines social influence as fields of social force that affect us, forcing us to think or act in a specific way. The physical forces that control the propagation of light, sound, gravity, magnetism, etc have been equated with these social forces. For instance, the amount of light that falls on a tabletop results from the intensity of the lights reflecting on the table, their distance from the table, and the number of lights present. The social impact a person feels should be a function of the power, immediacy, and number of individuals who are present analogously. Thus, the social force a target person feels should all directly influence these three components, or definitions, of source individuals. Social Impact shows

us the benefits of such events that have an internal focus on the local population (Crompton, 2004); hence, it has garnered a reputation to be the primary source of evaluating the potential value of an event (Chalip, 2006). It is a fact that sports tourism events held at a mass scale can grab a lot of attention, such as the FIFA World Cup, around the world. These sporting events are “hallmark” events, resulting in positive and negative impacts on the country hosting these events (Ritchie & Aitken, 1985; Ritchie, 1984). Much attention has been shifted toward the social impact that sports events can create (Balduck, Maes, & Buelens, 2011; Chalip, 2006; Crompton, 2004). The “Social Exchange Theory” refers to the interaction of two interdependent variables, where the action of one variable impacts the other.

Sporting Events and Their Impact on Community Development

According to tourism research findings, people’s positive interpretation of the impact created by tourism would create a positive inclination towards development in that regard, which is prevalent in the social exchange theory as the expected effect. The reliability and accuracy of the research are a bit questionable as the questionnaires were constructed using existing research which may not cover the entirety of the topic as well the mixed notions and perceptions of the respondents. Various studies have been conducted on the role of sporting events on the social impacts that it has on the community and amongst the population living in the sporting events area. However, one of the most significant contributions to this area of research was given in the study by (Taks, et al,2015), in which the scholars determined the impact of sporting events on the area's local communities. In the study, he explored the various impacts that sporting events have on the community like the more obvious economic impacts as well as the boost in tourism of the area during those sports events, but also the less apparent impacts like the social benefits that the community receives as a result of those events. The above point was contrasted in the study by (Taks (2013), which compared the observed social impacts and outcomes of the more significant and local sporting events by

using several perspectives like the human capital, power relations, socialization, and urban regeneration.

The outcomes from the study showed that the local sporting events or the events that were held on a smaller scale yielded more beneficial outcomes for the local communities regarding social benefits than the mega sporting events. This finding was based on the fact that these events held on a local scale allowed for more opportunities for the community to strengthen their social network and the connections between the communities due to the event (Taks, 2013). Moreover, another study that contributed significantly to the literature already present was by (Pranić, et al, 2012), which was conducted to investigate the perceptions of the local community of the area after the World Men's Handball Championship hosted in 2009 in Split, which is a Croatian city. The study was conducted with a quantitative method which included the convenience sampling method used on the primary data collected as surveys of 92 participants. The findings from the study showed that the respondents' perceptions were primarily positive, and there were positive social impacts within the local community as a result of the social events. However, the study's findings also showed that a small percentage of the respondents would have liked the finances from the public spending to be used for facilities that were much needed, like healthcare centers and educational purposes, instead of for one-time events. This study is significant as it is one of the few pieces of literature that tries to accurately measure the level of social impact that these sporting events cause, and it also includes the social exchange theory in its research and obtains its findings of the social impacts by first validating them with the social impacts scale (Pranić, et al, 2012).

Social Cohesion and Link to Sporting Events

Social Cohesion has been described as the shared connections and values between the different members of the community and the sense of solidarity among them. It makes them

aware that they are surrounded by various members within the same community and face similar shared challenges that the community faces (Schiefer, and Van Der Noll, 2017). One way that was derived from measuring social cohesion was to measure the social capital that the community has, which is described as the shared resources and information amongst the community. According to the study by (Fonseca, et al, 2019), social cohesion is considered an essential feature of a resilient city. Various initiatives are taken to help the communities develop social cohesion to face the challenges that society faces as a whole. Sporting events are one such initiative taken by the community to promote growth for the community within the area, whether in terms of economic growth or of healthier lifestyles and increased social cohesion within the population in the area (Sherry, et al, 2015).

Having sports events within the area allows the diverse population of the community to gather together in the sport and physical activity programs of the local events, and it also allows for the members of diverse cultural, ethnic, social as well as geographical communities. Hence, these sports events allow the community to develop and increase social capital. The study by (Bruening, et al, 2015) is based on managing sports events and organizing them to manage social change within the community. The study aims to determine the impact of participating in these sporting events as volunteers organized and managed for the development of the community. The methodology used for conducting the study was a mixed method approach to determine the community's social capital after a sport learning event had been organized for the alums to develop the social capital. The findings from the study showed the practical results obtained from organizing and managing the sports events to promote and develop the community's social capital, increase the social cohesion of the members in the area, and allow them to build their networks and connections further. Moreover, another source that significantly contributed to the literature present on social cohesion achieved through sports events was the study by (Schulenkorf, and Edwards, 2012),

which was carried out to investigate the sporting events that were organized for the sole purpose of development of the community socially in terms of the social capital as well as the social cohesion and unity of the community.

The findings from the study showed significant results of the sporting events, and there was development observed in the social capital of the community members after the sports event had been hosted. The significance of the results of the study showed that sports events organized for the social development of the community are an effective measure to increase the social interactions of the members of the community through these various sports as well as ancillary event opportunities to build the social cohesion of the community and increase the networks and connections of the various members of the community. Organizing sports events within the local community is divided into several direct and indirect impacts on the community, including economic, physical, political, and social impacts, among various others. Much of the planning behind organizing and managing sports events within the community is done due to the economic and political impact on the community. However, these events also significantly impact the social as well as cultural environment of the community. According to the which was done to investigate the relationship between sports events and social capital, the findings from the study show that having sports events within the community leads to the development of social capital as well as increasing the connections of the community and the promotion of the social justice and well-being of the members of the community. Participation in these sports events provides the members of the community with multiple opportunities to socialize together with the other members and develop connections with them and increase the social cohesion of the community as well as increasing communication between them and the sense of unity too (Schulenkorf, and Edwards, 2012).

Sports Participation Effect on Social Impact

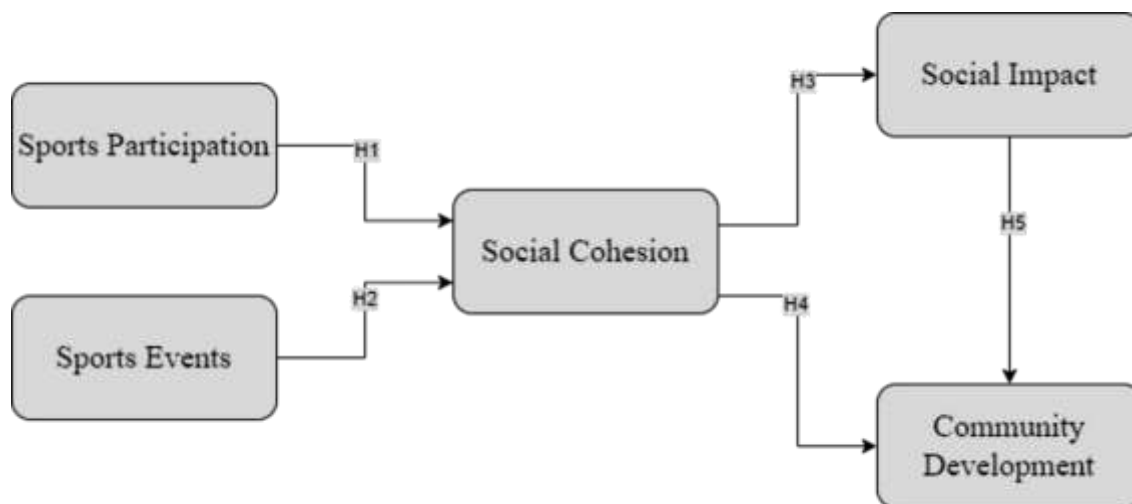
The general benefits of sporting activities and spectatorship can include: (1) improving health and exercising the excess energy of students; (2) compliance with the competition or community laws and restricting delinquent activities (such as stealing, behaving aggressively, consuming illegal drugs, and drinking excessive alcohol, etc.); (3) fostering social standards, honesty and building character; (4) improving confidence, encouragement, empowerment, and self-esteem; (5) providing social engagement, fun, and enjoyment; (6) providing opportunities for sports education and career; (7) expanding life experience and making more friends; (8) learning how to cope with disappointment and challenging circumstances; and (9) developing life skills. Participation in sporting activities is positively related to casual socialization and encourages partnerships. Participation in sports groups is essential for friendship and peer relationships. Regarding political commitment, consider a strong relationship between sport and social involvement. However, studies mentioned in this article use cross-sectional data and do not consider problems originating between sports participation and social capital formation.

Sports Events Effect on Social Cohesion

Sports events can have a positive social impact, as suggested, because of the consequence of the atmosphere being created; major sporting events positively impact social interaction. Major sports events. The Rugby World Cup 2015 can significantly enhance social cohesion and local community if organized and executed correctly. The impact of the particular event is not fully approximated in the articles because of the less amount of information which is a bit vague. Participation of people in inter-community sporting activities may serve as the initial point for the development of community networks and bonds that are essential for social cohesion. Sport can serve as a 'sociological superglue,' it is argued, linking people together through pride and shared goal. Social cohesion acting as a

mediator has both its impact on sports events and social impact. Social cohesion is the continuous process of creating a culture of common values, shared problems, and equal opportunities, centered on a sense of faith, trust, hope, and mutuality due to sporting events. The sport will contribute to community growth and civil regeneration by creating social capital. This principle extends from the supposed beneficial characteristics of the sport, such as improved contact, teamwork, tolerance, respect, cohesion, etc. Historically, the suggestion that sports can help develop a sense of community has been crucial to legitimizing the provision of public leisure, and it is also believed that sports can bring people together across cultural, ethnic, and class divisions.

Conceptual framework



Proposed Hypotheses

Sport Participation and Social Cohesion

Participation of people in inter-community sporting activities may serve as the initial point for the development of community networks and bonds that are essential for social cohesion. Participation in sporting activities is positively related to casual socialization and encourages partnerships. Participation in sports groups is essential for friendship and peer relationships. The general benefits of sporting activities and spectatorship can include abiding by the community laws and restricting delinquent activities (such as stealing, behaving

aggressively, and doing drugs) ; fostering social standards, honesty, and building character; improving confidence, encouragement, empowerment, and self-esteem; providing social engagement, fun, and enjoyment; providing opportunities for sports education and career; expanding life experience and making more friends; learning how to cope with disappointment and challenging circumstances; and developing skills of life."(Sage 2008)". Therefore, we can propose the following hypothesis based on the above argument on the relationship between Sports Participation and Social Cohesion.

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between Sports Participation and Social Cohesion.

Sports Event and Social Cohesion

Sports events are widely recognized as an essential part of society since they provide enjoyment and foster social cohesiveness, which is the willingness of people to work together for the common good. The theory that sporting events have a significant beneficial association with social cohesion can be justified by looking at the situation in Pakistan. Pakistani sporting events, whether cricket, hockey, or kabaddi, create a community platform that attracts fans from all walks of life, including those of different religions, languages, and regions. When Pakistanis of all socioeconomic backgrounds come together to cheer for the national teams, a shared identity emerges that transcends the underlying differences. Having a common bond like this helps people stick together better.

Furthermore, the widespread involvement and engagement in these sporting events drive social contact and integration, thereby reducing social boundaries and building a sense of belonging among citizens. Rooting for the same team or sharing in the joy of shared success are two examples that can bring people together and foster better relations. Cultural values and standards can also be promoted through sports events. Sports may be a unifying force for society because of the values they instill in participants, such as honesty, respect,

and teamwork. In addition, sporting events, especially those on an international scale, have been shown to increase national pride dramatically. Winning as a group can strengthen bonds and solidarity in a community, which are essential ingredients for social cohesion.

Last but not least, sporting events can be used to settle disputes. In a country as ethnically and religiously diverse as Pakistan, sports events can significantly reduce tensions and promote harmony. These shared experiences and emotions can help bring people together and heal old wounds. So, it's fair to say that sporting events in Pakistan do a lot to unite the country, serving as a unifying platform that encourages people to appreciate one another and their traditions, embrace diversity, and celebrate national pride.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between Sports Events and Social Cohesion.

Social Cohesion and Social Impact

Social cohesion is the continuous process of creating a culture of common values, shared problems, and equal opportunities, centered on a sense of faith, trust, hope, and mutuality due to sporting events. Historically, the suggestion that sports can help develop a sense of community has been crucial to legitimizing the provision of public leisure, and it is also believed that sports can bring people together across cultural, ethnic, and class divisions. This principle extends from the supposed beneficial characteristics of the sport, such as improved contact, teamwork, tolerance, respect, cohesion, etc. A study on social impact stated that social impact could refer to the mode in which sports event prompt changes in collective and somebody, value systems, behavior patterns, culture, social structure, lifespan style, and life quality "(Taks, 2013)". Therefore, we can propose the following hypothesis based on the above argument on the relationship between Social Cohesion and Social Impact.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between Social Cohesion and Social Impact.

Social Cohesion and Community Development

Community development is a process where people come together to take action on what's important to them. Community development has been characterized by a wide range of courses in the writing, contended for a community development way to deal with improved correspondence furthermore, a joint effort among network accomplices associated with the sporting event locally. Having recognized the importance of process, there is very little empirical work that shows how community development is shaped by process. It has been contended somewhere else that sporting events may fill in as a method for creating social capital and adding to community development. This political philosophy has brought a market-arranged way to deal with community development, like numerous urban areas around the globe endeavoring to utilize sport for advancement. Therefore, we can propose the following hypothesis based on the above argument on the relationship between Social Cohesion and Community Development.

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between Social Cohesion and Community Development.

Social Impact and Community Development

Countries worldwide invest money in sports events intending to promote feelings such as self-belonging to a community or nation. It is also considered that the sense of belonging plays a positive role. After thorough research figured out that conducting the Olympics, the football world cup or the European Football Championship played a significant role in Also, they figured out that a particular effect occurs by World Cups, which is not present at other events, calls attention to the fact that network advancement is about a change cycle that may be encouraged by others yet is self-decided by the network. Notwithstanding, when attempting to discover experimental proof that sports events have added to intergroup fellowship and general community development, it gets evident that significantly more subjective and quantitative research is expected to either affirm or dismiss

this case "(Chalip, 2006). the happiness of European countries for almost three decades. We can propose the following hypothesis for the above argument on the relationship between Social Impact and Community Development.

H5: There is a significant positive relationship between Social Impact and Community Development.

Research Methodology

Method of Data Collection

The data has been collected from people who have played and have been participating in a sports event. This was done to gather perceptions and opinions about their understanding of the term sport and its effects. The data has been collected through an online questionnaire survey to get better reach. The respondents of this survey were individuals ranging between the age barrier of 18 and above with no filters of the background of education and learning. It also did not entertain any gender bias. We used the Likert scale for the responses to understand their point of view.

Sampling Method

This study employed a nonprobability convenience sampling approach due to various limitations such as Time limitations, financial limitations, and difficulty getting to know the population of athletes. Although not entirely arbitrary, this sampling technique facilitated a certain feasibility level in the data-gathering process.

Sample Size

The magnitude of the sample in the study is a crucial factor to be considered. The relationship between sample size and representativeness of the population is positively correlated, whereby an increase in sample size leads to a higher degree of accuracy in representing the population, thereby enhancing the reliability of the outcomes. The sample

utilized in this study was representative of the nation regarding geographical location and demographic characteristics. A sample size 400 was selected from a hypothetical population of 21 million to attain statistical dependability. The data collection for the study primarily focused on university students in Karachi. Furthermore, the advent of social media has facilitated data acquisition from a broader spectrum of individuals. The survey instrument employed a five-point Likert-type scale to effectively assess the participants' viewpoints.

Instruments for Gathering Data

The investigation exclusively employed digital means to collect data. The utilization of online platforms for distributing and administering questionnaires has enabled a more efficient and precise data collection process, thereby enabling early statistical analysis.

Methodology for Conducting Research

A quantitative research methodology was utilized to establish causal relationships by the principles of positivism and empiricism that originate from David Hume's causality theory. According to Hempel and Oppenheim's (1948) proposition, scientific reasoning for particular events is founded on the fundamental conditions and general principles governing the interrelationships among significant variables. The regularity theory of causality holds significant importance in quantitative research, particularly in social sciences. The scholarly investigators responsible for "An In-Depth Exploration of the Societal Impact of Athletic Events in Developing Countries: Implications for Policy and Practice" employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with Smart PLS 4 software to scrutinize their data. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was chosen for this study's modeling, estimation, and testing requirements due to its adaptability in handling intricate models frequently encountered in the behavioral and social sciences. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) enables the concurrent examination of multiple associations among heterogeneous variables, thereby facilitating a

more comprehensive comprehension of the interrelationships among constructs such as sports enthusiasm, sporting activities, social frameworks, communal unity, and societal advancement.

The present study showcases the efficacy of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as a robust analytical instrument, owing to its ability to effectively manage intricate models that encompass latent variables and multiple pathways. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) possesses a distinct advantage over alternative methods by explicitly accounting for measurement imperfections, resulting in estimations with reduced bias and more reliable outcomes. Moreover, the utilization of Partial Least Squares (PLS) in structural equation modeling is facilitated by Smart PLS 4, which is known for its efficacy in addressing non-normality, a prevalent issue in social sciences. The principal objective of employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in this investigation was to validate a pre-existing theoretical construct. This investigation aimed to employ structural equation modeling (SEM) with Smart PLS 4 software to scrutinize the interconnected factors connecting. As a result of the heightened rigor of this methodology, the outcomes can guide policy implications and stimulate future research.

Result

The Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs surpass 0.7, indicating a substantial internal consistency among the items within each construct. This outcome is suggestive of dependable and valid measurement. The composite reliability values (ρ_a and ρ_c) of each construct exceed 0.7, indicating high internal consistency and reliability. All constructs' Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceed 0.5, indicating robust convergent validity.

Table 1

Cronbach's alpha values

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	(AVE)
Community Development	0.730	0.732	0.653
Social Cohesion	0.779	0.782	0.695
Social Impact	0.770	0.776	0.685
Sports Events	0.765	0.770	0.680
Sports Participation	0.744	0.790	0.665

The discriminant validity assessment is conducted by utilizing the Fornell-Larcker criteria. The Fornell-Larcker criteria matrix displays the diagonal entries as the square root of AVE. These diagonal entries are observed to be greater than their off-diagonal counterparts. The previous observation suggests a strong discriminant validity exists among the constituent elements, as each individual concept exhibits a greater degree of shared variance with its corresponding indicators than with those of the other concepts.

Table 2:

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Items	VIF
1	1.813
10	1.606
11	2.045
12	1.553
13	1.483
14	1.570
15	1.647
2	2.074
3	1.290
4	1.703
5	1.432
6	1.687
7	1.841
8	1.777
9	1.223

The collinearity statistics are meager, as determined by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). This observation suggests that the predictors exhibit genuine independence, given the model's absence of multicollinearity issues. The study's results suggest a robust and dependable framework that effectively elucidates the beneficial impacts of Sports competitions on the development and unity of communities. The constructs' exceptional reliability and validity provide a robust foundation for comprehending the outcomes and their theoretical ramifications.

Table 3:

R-Values

Variables	R-square	R-square adjusted
Community Development	0.477	0.474
Social Cohesion	0.677	0.675
Social Impact	0.565	0.564

The R-squared values for community growth, social cohesion, and social impact are 0.477, 0.677, and 0.565, respectively. If the adjusted R-squared values closely resemble the original R-squared values, it can be inferred that the model is not exhibiting overfitting. The findings suggest that the model effectively explains a significant portion of the unexplained variance in the dependent variables.

Table 4:

Variables	Community Development	Social Cohesion	Social Impact
Community Development			
Social Cohesion	0.191		1.301
Social Impact	0.053		
Sports Events		0.387	
Sports Participation		0.247	

The matrix's f-square values indicate how much the exogenous latent variables impact the endogenous latent variables. An elevation in the f-squared metric can demonstrate the statistical significance of an impact. Sporting events significantly impact social cohesion (0.387) and a comparatively more minor yet considerable impact on sports participation (0.247).

Table 5:

Outcomes of the Proposed Structural Model

Path Analysis	Beta	(SD)	T	P values
Social Cohesion > Community Development	0.670	0.039	17.339	0.000
Social Cohesion > Social Impact	0.752	0.024	31.634	0.000
Social Cohesion > Social Impact > Community Development	0.190	0.042	4.514	0.000
Social Impact > Community Development	0.253	0.055	4.638	0.000
Sports Events > Community Development	0.332	0.038	8.744	0.000
Sports Events > Social Cohesion	0.496	0.046	10.762	0.000
Sports Events > Social Cohesion > Community Development	0.238	0.037	6.442	0.000
Sports Events > Social Cohesion > Social Impact	0.373	0.035	10.613	0.000
Sports Events > Social Cohesion > Social Impact > Community Development	0.094	0.021	4.459	0.000
Sports Events > Social Impact	0.373	0.035	10.613	0.000
Sports Participation > Community Development	0.265	0.035	7.525	0.000
Sports Participation > Social Cohesion	0.396	0.047	8.489	0.000
Sports Participation > Social Cohesion > Community Development	0.190	0.028	6.663	0.000
Sports Participation > Social Cohesion - Social Impact	0.298	0.039	7.570	0.000
Sports Participation > Social Cohesion > Social Impact -> Community Development	0.075	0.020	3.681	0.000
Sports Participation > Social Impact	0.298	0.039	7.570	0.000

The table above presents crucial information for understanding the estimated outcomes of the proposed structural model, precisely the path coefficients (Original sample (O)), their standard deviations, T statistics, and P values. The results indicate that all constructs have a statistically significant influence on their target constructs, with p-values less than 0.05 and T2 values greater than or equal to 1.96. Social cohesion exhibits a

significant positive impact on community development ($\beta=0.670$). Thus, an increase of one unit in social cohesion is associated with a corresponding increase of 0.670 in community development. The correlation coefficient between social cohesion and social impact is considerably high ($r=0.752$), signifying that social cohesion has a significant and advantageous influence on social impact.

The observed path coefficient of 0.238 indicates a positive relationship between sports events and community growth, suggesting that sports events may indirectly impact community growth by promoting social cohesion. Sporting events may be perceived as fostering community development, as evidenced by the positive correlation between social cohesion and social impact ($r = 0.094$). The aforementioned mediated effects indicate that sports events and participation in sports facilitate community development through means beyond the ones that are readily observable. The study reveals a significant correlation between sports events ($r=0.496$) and sports participation ($r=0.396$) with social cohesion ($r=0.373$) and social impact ($r=0.298$). The data presented provides evidence to substantiate the hypothesis that both Spectator Sports and Active Participation in Sports significantly contribute to enhancing Social Cohesion and Social Impact. In conclusion, the analytical findings provide robust support for the hypothesized theories. These findings contribute to our understanding of the various mechanisms, both direct and indirect, by which sports and sporting events facilitate community development by fostering social cohesion and generating social impact. This research provides additional insights into the diverse mechanisms by which sports events enhance communal and societal consequences.

Discussion

The results of our study offer strong validation of the anticipated associations. The path coefficient of 0.396 indicates a substantial and significant relationship, thus providing robust evidence in favor of H1, which posits a positive and significant correlation between

engagement in sports activities and social cohesion. This discovery aligns with the social dimension of sports, which has been demonstrated to enhance social solidarity by uniting individuals toward a shared objective. The path coefficient 0.496 supports H2, which posits a favorable association between sporting events and heightened social cohesion. The outcome of this study provides evidence to suggest that sports events, characterized as communal gatherings centered on shared interests and experiences, can significantly enhance Social Cohesion by promoting feelings of unity and fellowship among those involved.

The results of our study offer robust evidence in favor of H3, which hypothesized a positive and statistically significant correlation ($r=0.752$) between social cohesion and social impact. The high coefficient underscores the significance of social cohesion in effecting substantial societal transformations, reinforcing the idea that closely bonded groups are more inclined to bring about positive societal changes. The path coefficient of 0.670, both substantial and statistically significant, serves as additional evidence that H4, which posits a significant and positive correlation between Social Cohesion and Community Development, is upheld. The enlightening above supports the notion that societies characterized by robust social cohesion are more likely to succeed in their endeavors towards community development due to the widespread existence of shared principles, confidence, and mutual objectives among their constituents.

Hypothesis H5, which posited a positive correlation between social impact and community growth, is supported by a path coefficient of 0.253 which is statistically significant. This implies that the progress of community development is facilitated by enhancements in social factors, commonly referred to as social impact. This study illuminates the complex interconnections that bind sports, sporting events, community advancement, social unity, and social influence. The results emphasize the significance of sports in fostering social cohesion, yielding favorable outcomes for the larger society, and contributing

to the prosperity of neighboring communities. The present research enhances our understanding of the societal significance of sports, extending beyond their immediate health advantages. Future research endeavors could delve into the intricacies of these interrelationships within diverse socioeconomic and cultural contexts.

Conclusion

The objective of this comprehensive examination was to ascertain the extent to which engagement in sports enhances individuals' overall well-being. The researchers employed primary data and robust statistical models to examine the interconnections between sporting events, sports participation, social cohesion, social impact, and community development. Although the study above offers specific perspectives on the favorable societal outcomes linked with athletic competitions, it is crucial to thoroughly assess its merits and limitations. The sample size of 400 individuals in the research study is relatively limited compared to the entire population, potentially leading to a decrease in the overall generalizability of the data. The study's scope was restricted due to geographical limitations and the pandemic. Therefore, it is advisable to exercise caution while interpreting the findings. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge the potential existence of supplementary, inexplicable impediments to utilizing sports to foster community development in impoverished nations.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the present study constitutes a significant addition to the expanding corpus of literature concerning the societal impacts of athletic competitions. While the economic impacts have traditionally garnered the most attention, there is a growing focus on the beneficial social outcomes. Consistent with prior research, we emphasize the societal importance of athletic competitions, showcasing their capacity to enhance communal unity, collective support, and accountability. Existing literature indicates that engagement in sports has the potential to enhance social capital through the facilitation of community development and social cohesion. It has been observed that smaller-scale sporting events may

have a more pronounced and immediate impact on this outcome. To conclude, the results of this research enhance our understanding of the beneficial societal impacts of athletic competitions. Subsequent research endeavors should employ more inclusive samples to corroborate and reinforce the findings. Future research endeavors must consider the financial implications of athletic events and the broader social ramifications. In summary, the outcomes of our study indicate that athletic competitions can significantly contribute to promoting social unity, stimulating regional development, and generating favorable societal outcomes.

Limitations and Recommendations

Caution should be exercised in interpreting the findings of this study owing to various factors. The study's findings are limited in their applicability due to various factors, including time constraints preventing more extensive sample recruitment, geographical limitations, and the ongoing presence of pandemic conditions. Additionally, it is imperative to consider other factors beyond athletics to attain social development in developing countries. The reported preferences may have been influenced by respondent bias due to the virtual nature of the data-gathering process. Removing these obstacles would significantly enhance the potential value of this work for future academic inquiries. The scientific significance of the findings is amplified by the potential that increased public awareness regarding the impact of sports and athletic events on fostering social unity could result in more efficacious and targeted governmental interventions.

The significance of this study extends beyond its specific geographical contexts, as it holds global implications that offer substantial opportunities for cross-cultural analysis and practical implementation. In future research, employing focus groups and other qualitative techniques as complementary to online surveys to mitigate potential response biases may be advantageous. The findings of this research provide compelling evidence for the need to

conduct further investigation into this subject matter, potentially resulting in the identification of novel ethical and societal tenets. The results hold significant ramifications for advancing sports policies that are more comprehensive and socially advantageous, encompassing the responsibilities of both event coordinators and governmental officials. Promoting enhanced communication and comprehension among individuals from diverse backgrounds may be a positive outcome of sporting event organizers' efforts in society. The study underscores the significance of governmental involvement in promoting enhanced availability of sports initiatives, which subsequently generates favorable ramifications for the community.

References

- Balduck, A., Maes, M., & Buelens, M. (2011). The social impact of the Tour de France Comparisons of residents' pre- and post-event perceptions. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 11(2), 91–113. doi10.1080/16184742.2011.559134
- Bruening, Jennifer E., et al. "Managing Sport for Social Change The Effects of Intentional Design and Structure in a Sport-Based Service-Learning Initiative." *Sport Management Review*, vol. 18, no. 1, Feb. 2015, pp. 69–85. ScienceDirect, doi10.1016/j.smr.2014.07.002.
- Chalip, L. (2006). Towards social leverage of sport events. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 11(2), 109–127. doi10.1080/14775080601155126
- Crompton, J.L. (2004). Beyond economic impact: An alternative rationale for the public subsidy of major league sports facilities. *Journal of Sport Management*, 18(1), 40–58.
- Fonseca, Xavier, et al. "Social Cohesion Revisited: A New Definition and How to Characterize It." *The European Journal of Social Science Research*, vol. 32, no. 2, Apr. 2019, pp. 231–53. Taylor and Francis+NEJM, doi10.1080/13511610.2018.1497480.

- Heere, Bob, et al. "The Power of Sport to Unite a Nation: The Social Value of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa." *European Sport Management Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 4, Sept. 2013, pp. 450–71. DOI.org (Crossref), doi10.1080/16184742.2013.809136.
- Liu, Dongfeng. "Social Impact of Major Sports Events Perceived by Host Community." *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, vol. 17, no. 1, Jan. 2016, pp. 78–91. Emerald Insight, doi10.1108/IJSMS-02-2016-005.
- Pranić, Ljudevit, et al. "Host Population Perceptions of the Social Impacts of Sport Tourism Events in Transition Countries Evidence from Croatia." *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, edited by Richard Shipway and Naomi Kirkup, vol. 3, no. 3, Jan. 2012, pp. 236–56. Emerald Insight, doi10.1108/17582951211262684
- Ritchie, J. R. B. (1984). Assessing the impact of Hallmark event Conceptual and research issues. *Journal of Travel Research*, 3)22(1), 2e11.
- Ritchie, J. R. B., & Aitken, C. E. (1985). Olympulse II evolving resident attitudes toward the 1988 Olympic Winter Games. *Journal of Travel Research*, 23(1), 28e33.
- Schiefer, David, and Jolanda van der Noll. "The Essentials of Social Cohesion A Literature Review." *Social Indicators Research*, vol. 132, no. 2, June 2017, pp. 579–603. Springer Link, doi10.1007/s11205-016-1314-5.
- Sherry, Emma, et al. "Managing Sport for Social Change The State of Play." *Sport Management Review*, vol. 18, no. 1, Feb. 2015, pp. 1–5. ScienceDirect, doi10.1016/j.smr.2014.12.001.
- Schulenkorf, Nico, and Deborah Edwards. "Maximizing Positive Social Impacts Strategies for Sustaining and Leveraging the Benefits of Intercommunity Sport Events in Divided

Societies.” *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 26, no. 5, Sept. 2012, pp. 379–90.

journals.humankinetics.com, doi10.1123/jsm.26.5.379.

Taks, Marijke, et al. “Impacts and Strategic Outcomes from Non-Mega Sport Events for Local Communities.” *European Sport Management Quarterly*, vol. 15, no. 1, Jan. 2015, pp. 1–6. Taylor and Francis+NEJM, doi10.1080/16184742.2014.995116.

Taks, Marijke. “Social Sustainability of Non-Mega Sport Events in a Global World 1.” *European Journal for Sport and Society*, vol. 10, no. 2, Jan. 2013, pp. 121–41. DOI.org (Crossref), doi10.1080/16138171.2013.11687915