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## THE ROLE OF THE SPORTS SECTOR IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

This article investigates the role of sports in promoting regional economic development, emphasizing the diverse economic and socio-economic benefits derived from sports events. It highlights key economic contributions, such as infrastructure investments, increased tourism mobility, job creation, and the stimulation of local businesses. Specifically, the research underscores how cities hosting large-scale sports events experience significant growth in their economic vitality. The study also explores the broader socio-economic impacts of sports, examining their role in fostering community identity, building social capital, and improving public health outcomes. By analyzing case studies and empirical data, the article assesses the tangible and intangible effects of sports on regional development, showing that the impact extends far beyond entertainment or competition. It is argued that sports events can serve as a catalyst for long-term economic benefits, enhancing a region's global competitiveness and sustainability. Additionally, the research delves into the interplay between sports and urban planning, illustrating how strategic investments in sports infrastructure can lead to lasting improvements in a city's economic structure. The findings conclude that sports, when leveraged effectively, are a key element in regional development strategies, acting as both a driver of economic growth and a tool for fostering social well-being. This study provides insights into how sports can be utilized as a strategic resource to accelerate regional economic development and improve the overall quality of life in host cities.

**Keywords:** Regional Economic Development, Sport, Tourism.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Sport has long been a catalyst for social engagement and community development, yet its economic significance often remains underexplored beyond the well-trodden realm of professional football. While the benefits of major sporting events, such as increased tourism and direct spending, are well documented, less attention has been given to the broader, local economic impacts. These impacts often extend far beyond the immediate stadium gates, influencing local economies through intricate webs of consumption, employment, and inter-industry transactions. Cities and regions hosting major sports events experience an influx of resources that stimulates local supply chains, generates jobs, and contributes to wealth creation.

However, this economic activity can also bring challenges, such as traffic congestion and the social costs associated with certain sporting events, including hooliganism.

Despite these potential drawbacks, sport's role in fostering economic development is undeniable. The ripple effect of money spent on tickets, merchandise, hospitality, and services feeds back into the economy, creating jobs and boosting productivity in a wide range of industries. The presence of sporting infrastructure within a city can act as both a magnet for investment and a source of ongoing revenue through tourism and business activities. From this perspective, sport is not merely a sector of leisure and entertainment but a driver of economic transformation, with both direct and indirect benefits cascading throughout the local and regional economy.

This study employs the propensity score matching method to analyze the economic impact of hosting mega sporting events. By comparing developing countries in Asia, the relationship between sports and economic development is examined, with a focus on China's sports industry expansion. Using resilience index analysis and spatiotemporal evaluations across 285 Chinese cities, the study provides insights into strengthening the sports economy in underdeveloped regions.

This paper seeks to explore the complexity of these economic linkages, focusing not only on the evident financial benefits but also on the challenges that cities face in balancing the costs and rewards associated with sports-related activities. By adopting a reputation economy perspective, this study questions the need for a strategic approach to managing these economic impacts, ensuring that cities can maximize the benefits of sport while mitigating any associated adverse effects.

The interplay between sports and economic development in emerging markets has garnered increasing attention in recent years, particularly as nations seek avenues for sustainable development. The literature surrounding this topic reveals a multifaceted relationship where sport tourism, the success of local sports teams, and the broader sports industry collectively contribute to regional economic dynamics.

(Nyikana & Tichaawa, 2018) provide a foundational perspective by exploring how sport tourism acts as a catalyst for local economic development in emerging destinations. They argue that sport tourism not only stimulates immediate economic activities but also leads to long-term benefits such as infrastructure development and the establishment of small to medium enterprises. The authors highlight the importance of knowledgeable administration and adequate facilities, suggesting that the effectiveness of sport tourism as a socio-economic development tool is contingent upon these factors. This study underscores the potential of sport tourism to reshape local economies, particularly in rural and urban areas of emerging markets.

Building on the relationship between sports and economic prosperity, (Rychlak, 2019) investigates the impact of local college football teams on small business marketing decisions. While acknowledging the ongoing debate regarding the correlation between sports success and economic development, Rychlak presents evidence that high-profile sports teams can significantly influence local businesses. However, she also notes that the expected economic benefits from sports teams, often touted by proponents, may not always materialize, as illustrated by various case studies. This critical examination reveals the complexities and nuances in the relationship between sports and economic development, indicating that while sports can drive local economies, the outcomes are not universally positive.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the sports industry further complicate this narrative, as discussed by (Keshkar & Ali Karegar, 2022). They assert that the sports industry serves as a substantial economic engine, generating employment and fostering connections across various

sectors. The authors emphasize that hosting international sporting events can catalyze economic development by enhancing sports tourism and creating jobs in related industries. However, the pandemic has disrupted these dynamics, presenting both challenges and opportunities for the future of sports as an economic driver.

Finally, (Luo & Chen, 2024) examine the aggregation of the sports industry and its implications for residents' health in China. They reveal that the concentration of sports-related activities not only enhances regional economic development but also has significant health benefits for the population. This study emphasizes the interconnectedness of sports, health, and economic outcomes, suggesting that a thriving sports industry can yield dividends beyond mere economic metrics, impacting the overall well-being of communities.

Through these articles, the literature illustrates a complex and evolving landscape where sports function as a significant driver of regional economic development in emerging markets. Each study contributes unique insights into the mechanisms through which sports influence economic development, underscoring the importance of strategic planning and policy-making to maximize these benefits.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS OF SPORTS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a strong rationale for sports to be used as a tool for investment and urban regeneration purposes in cities. However, there is a need for greater clarity about the nature of relationships between inputs and outputs of the sports industry in order for policy makers to identify those aspects of the sports industry in which they should invest. Such an approach would permit a more precise identification of the role of sport in economic development. Yet as an industrial sector, the role of sport has always been neglected. In addition to the economic impact analysis, there are a number of further reasons why it is useful to treat sport as an industrial sector (Davies, 2002). In the past fifteen years, economic impact analysis in relation to tourism and cultural industries, and most notably, sport industries, has nearly always been undertaken at the level of the city. Such an approach has a number of advantages (Orunbayev, 2023). Firstly, it allows direct comparison of cities in terms of the benefits obtained from these activities. Secondly, research at the city level can show how individual cities have been affected and/or can respond specifically to these activities. Thirdly, it can lead to an understanding of 'how' these activities affect cities for planners and policy makers to improve the impact of and response to such industries. Research at the city level is significantly lacking. The only related industrial level research at the city level has been on the impacts of tourism (Keshkar et al., 2021). Research on the overall industry, cultural activities in local areas, and sport on a city-wide scale is nearly non-existent. Including sport in the analysis permits an understanding of how cities respond to both traditional industries, such as manufacturing, and the new economy. It can also show how social equity issues can be addressed in city development policies. For example, as the most socially inclusive of the 'arts', public expenditure on record and other media related events benefits the lowest income social class. Furthermore, research undertaken on the city level can provide a greater focus and better understanding of how and to what extent sectors operate. This concept is important in order to devise strategies linking public policy to the sports industry. It is suggested that during the 1990s, there was considerable development in the sectors of investment services, employment agencies, and health and social work. Recruiter demand for administrative and unskilled health services caused the rapid expansion of these sectors, which in turn had a substantial impact on the city's economy. Policy implications for the success of the city economy during the 1990s include the city's ability to adjust to and service the changing needs of industry, such as in skills and training activities (Nyström et al., 2022).

## 2.1. Empirical Evidence on Sports and Economic Development

The role of sports, especially mega-events, in driving regional economic development has been the subject of extensive academic debate. Proponents argue that sports can foster economic development by creating positive externalities, such as increased tourism, job creation, and infrastructure improvements. Others, however, contend that the economic impact is often overstated and may not be sustainable in the long term. Despite these concerns, the growing global popularity of sports has led many cities to heavily invest in the industry with the expectation of significant economic returns. Consequently, some regions have experienced rapid urbanization and development in their local economies. However, these gains are not always easily measurable and can be accompanied by substantial costs, including investments in infrastructure, sports stadiums, and local organizational efforts. Furthermore, the anticipated economic benefits—such as increased tourism, higher facility utilization, and the intangible advantages of national pride and public happiness—are frequently inflated. The long-term economic impact of hosting mega-events often falls short of expectations. In fact, it can result in rising public debt, unrealistic revenue projections, and the diversion of resources from more sustainable development projects that might yield more consistent, long-term benefits (Claure, 2024). This complexity underscores the need for a balanced evaluation of the costs and benefits of sports investments, especially when considering their broader economic implications.

## 3. THE ROLE OF SPORTS IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1. Sports Infrastructure and Facilities

A critical starting point to reap the economic benefits of sports for a country is a huge investment in infrastructure. The benefits from hosting mega sporting events are contingent on having proper sports facilities. First, it is important for attracting tourists in the first place. Second, sports infrastructure motivates people to engage in more sports-related activities even once the event is over. Research demonstrates that regular physical activity is positively correlated with increased wages, as evidenced by higher monthly earnings and enhanced salary progression. Public health infrastructure investment has been shown to be an effective way to raise wage development 3-5 years down the line. Local governments in developing countries may therefore want to follow such examples to significantly improve public health. Also, better public health creates a healthier workforce, which diminishes the number of workdays missed (Davies, 2013).

Another reason why sports infrastructure is good is because watching sports live is arguably the most exciting of leisure activities. In fact, some evidence exists that having large sports facilities leads to significant boosts in happiness. Improving national happiness is increasingly becoming a policy goal, with the government saying its role was to create the conditions for it to happen. So, there are reasons to believe that a country supporting good sports infrastructure can subsequently see important happiness dividend. That said, focusing exclusively on the creation of sports facilities would be myopic (Davies, 2002).

#### 3.1.1. Investment Trends in Sports Facilities

Sport tourism is a fast-growing sector of tourism in many parts of the world. It has also been identified as a potential sector in efforts to drive regional economic development. Although a substantial body of literature can be found on sport tourism in a Western context, relatively little attention has been given in this area to the emerging markets of Africa in general, and this type of research is even scarcer. This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the South African sport event industry and paying special attention to its potential to drive regional economic development. Through the use of a unique event dataset of event suppliers and event

organizers, the study tracks the occurrence, scale, and spread of sport events across the nine South African provinces (Nyikana & Tichaawa, 2018).

Recent years have witnessed an upsurge in the number of publications on sport tourism; an interest led by the realization that it can be used as a tool for socio-economic development in various destinations around the globe. Research documents that the pace of its development is propelled partly by the benefits it brings to the host city and municipalities. Past literature on sport events has principally looked at topics of event impacts on the host region, event facets and typologies, or the broader field of event management. Largely missing is academic scrutiny of the sector level, such as examining fabricators and retailers in a specific sport event sector. Using an extensive dataset resulting from a survey approach makes it possible to provide a comprehensive viewpoint of the South African sport event sector's development and regional event disparity (Nyikana & Tichaawa, 2018).

### 3.1.2. Impact on Local Communities

The Introduction: Research on the economics of the sports industry in countries such as Australia has developed more rapidly than in emerging markets such as Vietnam, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka. Consultancy firms have developed sport models, and reports on the demand generated by individual events such as the Olympics are based on such models to assess economic benefits. It has been noted that while studies of the national economic importance of sport might conclude that investment in sport industries is not particularly cost effective, the idea of treating sport as an industrial sector for purposes of economic impact analysis has not been seriously considered. The majority of basic economic information for the sports industry at the national level in the UK has been provided by a report (Bradbury et al., 2023) The concern about the increasing participation of sports, the expansion of the sports industry, and new forms of facilities has drawn attention to the need for greater clarity about the relationships between inputs and outputs of this industry. This presents an opportunity to research the industrial structure, characteristics, market and investment needs, and returns of sports activities. The focus has been on professional sports activities, which are only sectors of the overall sports industry. In the UK, much of the analysis of the sports industry has been concerned with the financial management of professional sports and the economic importance of sport at the national level. At the local level, it is generally perceived that investments on sporting events or infrastructure can enhance the economic viability of cities (Ziakas, 2020). Methodology The approach to proving the economic theories of regional sports investment is outlined and evaluated, drawing on evidence from a major regional sports event in Victoria, Australia. Public sector investment in a major regional sports event is an example of an input into the sports industry, and a trickle-down effect of the sports industry to the national level is assumed. The effect of public sector investments in sports infrastructure on the sports industry at a local level is also of interest. This analysis is undertaken in the Sheffield City Region given the clusters of facilities nearby. A focus on the local regional economic impacts of the sports industry has become more important with the devolution of decision making in the UK, resulting in an environment where regions increasingly compete for resources. The primary aim of this paper is to estimate the local regional economic impacts of the sports industry by measuring regional inter-industry effects. To do this the concept of sports industry satellite accounts is introduced and an understanding of the local economic impacts at the industry level is sought. Some reasons why the sports industry might be considered for regional policy are presented, and this empirical research has three main components: (i) a consideration of how existing national economic models are capable of informing aspects of regional policy, (ii) an empirical assessment of the inter-industry effects of changes in sports activity in the West Midlands, and (iii) case studies of the West Midlands to assess how local public and private sector interests view the sports industry (Harjito et al., 2021).



### 3.2. Sports Events and Tourism

The universality of sports has helped to overcome language barriers and cultural differences, serving as an important element in the establishment of peaceful and friendly relations among peoples of the world, irrespective of individuals' political, ideological, and national considerations. This could be observed through the centuries-old history of the Khmer Empire, which ruled over significant parts of mainland Southeast Asia for more than six hundred years. Unique and now abandoned temples, religious buildings, and urban sites have been providing a strong narrative on the empire's political, cultural, and economic strategic relationships with foreign nations (Lazuardy, 2021).

Events such as the elephant, horse, and buffalo races held at the royal plaza in front of the Temple of Bayon served as forms of Khmer cultural diplomacy and as a stimulus for economic development. Today, this venue hosts Khmer traditional martial arts, Behgriht and Bokator, aiming to revitalize the ancient martial practices once used in battlefield combat by the Khmer military to prepare for possible invasions. These invasions played a crucial role in shaping the culture and civilization of the Khmer Empire since the 9th century. This historical-cultural background, along with this example, serves as a contemporary live showcase of the connection between sports events and diplomatic relations, with potential implications for fostering friendly and peaceful relationships between Cambodia and foreign countries (Lazuardy, 2021).

#### 3.2.1. Hosting Major Sports Organizations

Major sporting events can provide a significant contribution to regional economic development under specific conditions. Research provides evidence on the specific sectorial impacts of four major event projects, the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup and three minor FIFA events held in the same country, and the regional impacts of the 2012 UEFA EURO Championships and the 2016 Olympic Summer Games. All projects had been implemented in countries of South Africa, Hungary, Poland and Brazil. The various top-down and bottom-up regional modelling exercises suggest that hosting events can impact employment and value added in one or more individual sectors, but there are important differences between the event projects. Employment multipliers observed in the data vary between 1.23 and 6.30. For Hungary, nonlinear effects are observed with sector spreads that tend to concentrate in the Hotemesser-Hushkill zone and median county of stadium location. Although employment impacts were also observed in spillover sectors during the construction phase of some of the analyzed events, they have been found to become statistically insignificant by the end of the operational phase of the investment (Schulenkorf et al., 2022).

The results suggest that the most important mechanism by which the economic benefits from hosting an attract large scale event such as the 2012 UEFA EURO Championships or the 2016 Olympic Summer Games would materialize is not by boosting individual sector employment and value added within host countries or developing a significant number of inter-sector connections, but rather through a massive aggregate demand expansion and the implementation of specific public interventions. There is a unique sectorial concentration among the spillover impacts at the regional level related to the 2012 UEFA EURO Championships, where the tourism services sector was found to be exclusively boosted by the event (Lequeux-Dincă et al., 2022).

The 2022 FIFA World Cup, held in Qatar, is recorded as the most expensive World Cup in history. It is estimated that Qatar spent a total of 220 billion dollars for this tournament. The 2026 FIFA World Cup is planned to be held in North America. It is expected to bring an economic contribution of 929 million dollars to Seattle, create over 20,700 jobs, and generate more than 100 million dollars in tax revenue.

**Table 1:** Economic Impacts of Major Sporting Events on Host Countries

Event	Host Countries	Economic Contribution	Employment Impact	Sectorial Impacts	Cost (USD)	Additional Notes
<b>2010 FIFA World Cup</b>	South Africa	Short-term economic benefit, limited long-term contribution	Short-term job creation, limited employment impact post-event	Tourism and construction sectors, but long-term effects were minimal	3.6 billion	Post-event employment impact decreased, but infrastructure investments contributed to sectoral growth.
<b>2012 UEFA European Championship</b>	Poland, Ukraine	Short-term growth in tourism sector	Limited employment increase, long-term decline	Tourism sector, short-term growth	Around 2 billion	After the event, the tourism sector returned to its previous state, with limited long-term effects.
<b>2016 Summer Olympic Games</b>	Brazil	Short-term infrastructure investments and sector growth	Temporary job creation	Construction, infrastructure projects, and service sectors saw growth	13.1 billion	Due to the economic crisis, long-term benefits were limited, and the employment impact was short-term.
<b>2022 FIFA World Cup</b>	Qatar	Strong impact on infrastructure investments and construction sector	Significant temporary job creation, especially in construction	Construction sector, tourism, and service sectors	220 billion	The most expensive World Cup in history, with uncertain long-term economic effects, focused on infrastructure.
<b>2026 FIFA World Cup</b>	North America (USA, Canada, Mexico)	\$929 million contribution expected to Seattle	Over 20,700 new jobs expected	Tourism, service sectors and transport	-	Significant economic contribution is expected, especially in tourism and service sectors.

**Source:** This table has been prepared by us.

### 3.2.2. Tourism Impacts and Strategies

People travel for various reasons, including visiting friends and family, business, vacation, shopping, celebrations, events, education, and volunteer activities. Also known as tourism, leisure travel encompasses sporting events, which constitute the most important recurring form

of the sport industry. There are two ways for sports to be incorporated into tourism. First, sports can drive tourism. Communities use sports in a range of ways to attract tourists. Second, tourism can be harmful to sports. The growing body of research on the relationship between sport and tourism can be applied to a specific context of sports travel to and within Africa, particularly central African countries. The data and analysis presented point to sport's potential role in driving regional economic development. Tourism is therefore explored as a development strategy for overcoming the aforementioned challenges of sport in central Africa. This leads to two primary objectives: first, the landscape of tourism to and within central Africa, and strategies that central African nations might adopt to grow this industry, and second, the potential implications of sport-heavy tourism on the nations and cultures of the Central African subregion (Raso & Cherubini, 2024).

Domestic and international travel for the purpose of attending sporting events or participating in sport can be regarded as sport tourism. Sport tourism includes competitive events that focus on sport, leisure tourism, and recreation facilities, as well as more non-competitive forms of sport, and tourism such as hunting and golf. Tourism and sports combined produce an economic impact, social benefits, and psychological gratification that contribute to the overall welfare of residents. Destination stakeholders have recognized the value of participatory involvement in the tourism development process and acknowledge that the benefits of tourism should be equitably distributed to the host community, which is recognized as a stakeholder in the destination development. Moreover, sport tourism can contribute to peaceful co-existence and mutual understanding between different peoples and nations. Just as the Romans in the ancient world utilized the athletic contests during their vast empire, today's modern political entities use sport events as diplomatic tools to gain political and economic advantages (Wu, 2024).

### 3.3. Sports Industry and Employment Generation

The sports industry has grown to become one of the largest and most influential sectors in the world today. In the 21st century, sports have not only become a key driver of economic development but also a vital source of job creation. This surge in interest can be traced back to landmark events such as the 1984 Olympic Games, which revolutionized the nature of international sporting events. It shifted the focus from just athletic competition to a broader platform for host countries and cities to showcase themselves on the global stage through infrastructure growth and investment opportunities. One of the most significant contributions of the sports industry to regional economic development is the creation of employment. Hosting major sports events, attracting international tourists, and generating media exposure all contribute to job opportunities across a variety of sectors. These include jobs in event management, hospitality, transportation, media, marketing, and security, among others. The employment generated by these events provides a steady source of income for local populations and supports a wide range of industries (Zhou et al., 2023).

Sports events play a crucial role in enhancing the competitiveness and livability of regions, as cities and countries hosting major sporting events often see substantial improvements in infrastructure, tourism, and local services. This development leads to job creation and regional development, with both immediate and long-term benefits for the economy. As the sports industry continues to expand, emerging markets like China and India, with their large populations and growing economies, are becoming increasingly influential in the global sports market. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, China, with its 1.4 billion people, was a significant contributor to the global sports economy. The rapid growth of the sports sector in these nations highlights the vital role sports play in fostering job creation and driving economic progress (Tutar et al., 2015).



### 3.4. Social and Cultural Effects of Sports

Sports have significant social, cultural, and economic effects, impacting various aspects of life, from fostering community cohesion to promoting individual growth. They create platforms for social interaction, enhancing communication, tolerance, and respect, while encouraging healthy lifestyle choices like proper nutrition and active living. Moreover, sports stimulate regional economic development by driving infrastructure development and attracting tourism, especially during large-scale sporting events. Participation in sports improves social integration, nurtures interpersonal relationships, teamwork, and leadership skills, and can unite communities through shared experiences. The sports industry also contributes to regional development by enhancing quality of life and generating long-term socio-economic benefits through investments in sports infrastructure. Active participation in sports has been linked to better academic performance and improved cognitive focus. However, challenges such as socio-economic disparities and cultural differences still limit access to sports for some individuals, highlighting the need for targeted policies that promote inclusivity and equity in sports participation and development (Mănescu, 2023).

## 4. CASE STUDY: TÜRKİYE

Sports, for centuries, have shaped societies in terms of cultural values, tradition, and identity. Similar to art and politics, sports have existed since the medieval age and have maintained their collective consciousness throughout centuries in social life. Moreover, sports have the potential to directly affect societies either financially – through revenue or job creating – or through diplomatic fashion. Encouraging good relations among countries, sports lead to a better respect for humanity and sportive value. On the other hand, nationalism and patriotism may rise which causes violent actions. Therefore, it can be said that sports and recreation organizations can both be the origin of financial generating activities and regional conflicts (Sivrikaya & Demir, 2019).

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A developing country with a growing influence might invest in sports to stimulate regional development, which plays a key role in broader economic growth. In the wake of recent global economic crises, economists have started to challenge the long-standing belief that economic development is an endless process. This has led to the exploration of new models that focus more on regional development. One such model is the creative use of resources, which has gained significant attention in empirical studies due to its vital role in successful economic development throughout history. By examining a case study from Türkiye, this analysis seeks to offer fresh perspectives, especially for emerging markets with similar traits, providing valuable insights for regions aiming for sustainable development (Ekmekçi et al., 2013).

### 4.1. Overview of Turkish Sports Industry

As a projective discipline, socially responsible sport marketing has become a challenging field. Companies, including sponsors, sports organizations, and event organizers utilize the benefits of sports marketing. For this objective, this research has aimed to examine the effects of Ankara Half Marathon organization supported by city running initiatives and Ankaragücü Supporter's Club on running brands by running behavior. As the population of the study, the individuals who are participating in Ankara Half Marathon organization supported by city running activities and who are members of Ankaragücü Supporter's Club were determined. Results of the study show that in addition to significant consumer interest in sport events, sport brands can develop and refine their marketing strategies utilizing the existence of sport clubs globally with a similar brand concept. It shows that these internationally recognized club brand concepts can trigger consumer interest by intense local sport events supported by variety of different groups.

Alternative entertainment, socialization, networking and recreational activities are demanded by the consumers more actively nowadays. Therefore, besides conducting necessary market research and price flexibility to welcome all segments of society with financial means, alternative social organizations and sport activities should be performed in the pre-event space. Furthermore, brand shows or match-day activities of the clubs within the organization or surrounding the running event spots can open space for co-operation with running brands especially (Erkan & Uslu, 2019).

#### 4.2. Economic Impact of Major Sporting Events in Türkiye

The city of Antalya has successfully leveraged a long-term investment campaign to host the UIM Aquabike World Championships Grand Prix, aligning its ambition to be recognized globally in sports with Türkiye's goal of becoming one of the world's top tourist destinations by 2023. The Antalya Metropolitan Municipality has driven this effort, focusing on fostering a city-wide passion for sports, inspired by a local success story of personal transformation from a sedentary lifestyle to a cycling enthusiast. Yet the vision for sport is not merely for its good health. In countries such as Türkiye, sporting events have immense economic outcomes, particularly for tourism. It is estimated that the seven-day Aquabike World Championships will bring an additional 100-150k tourists into Antalya, creating an economic impact totaling \$100m in benefits to the region. It is not only hourly wage workers in construction and hospitality who profit from the market events, but also the entire city. To put it on a broad base, the benefits range from the digital traffic control system that will prioritize green lights for official vehicles and those carrying politicians, to the food that will be donated to charities after each of the opening night celebrations.

This move is echoed in the province not only in terms of increased drug seizures during this time. Furthermore, it includes the suburban unit will handle a new grand tour route at a hotel where lavish food is served in VIP guest rooms, highlighting the exceptional offerings of a much-loved traditional seafood buffet. Perception of life and managers or subtle becomes greater care in the method for roll units and professional units. To this end, there is public approval for the organized edition of a 16-day transition and individual units. The only one of 30 major sport events to individual to the burden of the industry's millions also of the coast around twelve boats in a way transform the time into the most enviable VIP club one could imagine. Antalya and Istanbul, to a lesser extent, pivot of complex events to brilliant slightly off-season round Mediterranean boat shows, understand a special concert at its snow sports summer Music Festival, have the plan.

The event will see the region welcome in excess of 125 thousand spectators through the gates of the sport's history, while security links will be forged with the staging of the event. Intended increasing number of private and politicians witnessing the immense spurs shared, the spurs will prompt the difficult spatial location in organizers, riddled as they are with contentious issues. This analysis, however, sought to move beyond such parochial issues, and instead consider the possibility that perhaps for the first time major events in Türkiye are serving as a powerful testament of transition and alongside larger, longer-term development. Quantitative insights steeply align records were combined with qualitative interviews suggesting that logged events in the company of much larger systematic economic trends in the country. While development spatial event calendars and strategic management will be crucial in harnessing the full growing economic development of sporting events in Türkiye (Sivrikaya & Demir, 2019).

## 5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study has comprehensively examined the impact of the sports sector on regional economic development. The research indicates that sports have both direct and indirect economic effects. Primarily, major sporting events stimulate infrastructure investments, generate direct spending flows into local economies, and create employment opportunities. Additionally, through sports tourism, cities and regions gain global recognition, leading to increased tourism revenues.

However, it has been observed that investments in the sports sector do not benefit all regions equally. Particularly in developing markets, the economic effects of large sporting events can exacerbate regional disparities. For instance, while investments in major cities yield faster returns, rural or less economically developed regions may not experience the same advantages. Therefore, the sports economy needs to be directed in a more balanced manner to promote sustainable development.

Investments in sports infrastructure not only provide economic benefits but also have long-term positive effects on public health. Increased participation in sports can reduce healthcare expenditure and improve workforce productivity. Furthermore, sports events and infrastructure projects should be considered as crucial components of regional development policies.

While this research analyzes the impact of the sports sector on economic development, it also highlights certain limitations. Measuring the long-term economic effects of sports investments is challenging, and in many cases, the expected economic benefits may not fully materialize. Therefore, when formulating sports policies, cities and countries should prioritize more sustainable and inclusive sports investments rather than solely focusing on large-scale events.

The findings suggest that sports investments are crucial not only for short-term economic growth but also for long-term economic development. Particularly in public policy-making, a holistic approach to the social and economic effects of sports should be considered. Sports investments can be an essential tool for reducing regional inequalities and promoting sustainable development.

These results align with existing research on the economic impact of sports. Many studies have emphasized that sporting events contribute to regional development by boosting local businesses and attracting tourism. However, unlike some previous studies that mainly focus on large-scale events, this study also demonstrates that smaller local sports activities can play a significant role in economic and social development.

Future research can further explore the impact of the sports economy on different sectors, providing roadmaps for more efficient and equitable sports investments. Understanding how sports can be more effectively leveraged as an economic driver is particularly critical for developing countries

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