

Participants 'Motivations for International Sporting Events in Oman: A Comparative Study between Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race

Raja Tumati

PhD., Oman Tourism College, Tourism & Management Studies,
(raja.tumati@otc.edu.om)

Mustafa Daskin

Assoc. Prof., Amasya University, Social Sciences Vocational School,
(mustafa.daskin@amasya.edu.tr)

Salim Al Hattali

Oman Tourism College, Tourism & Management Studies

Kenan Pala

(CORRESPONDING AUTHOR)

PhD., Amasya University, Social Sciences Vocational School,
(kenan.pala@amasya.edu.tr)

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Salim Al Hattali

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ÇANAKKALE

e-mail: fahrigoker@gmail.com

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Abstract

Sports events are considered as one of the pull factors for tourism activities today. Today, sports tourism has become phenomenological and has crossed the traditional geographical and cultural barriers between countries. The motivation of participants or tourists might result from a deep undefined physiological need of an individual who could relate inspiration with a need stimulus that forces an individual to a specific direction or behave in a certain way. This study aims to compare the level of motivation among participants at the different international sporting events in Oman. More specifically, this compares the participant's motivation for the following sporting events: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race. This study aims to attain three objectives: to assess participants' motivation level on the different international sporting events in Oman, namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race. To evaluate the differences in motivation among participants on the identified international sporting events in Oman. To determine the factors that affect the participant's level of motivation.

A quantitative research approach was employed to achieve the research objectives. Quantitative research is the most convenient way to explore and investigate a particular phenomenon and is usually done through a survey instrument containing close-ended questions. This study employed a purposive sampling technique, more specifically quota sampling. It has been found out that participants' motivation towards Muscat Marathon is "Very High" as a whole. Results revealed significant differences in participants' motivation level towards the three identified sporting events, namely the Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race. This implies that the participants have different views and insights regarding the events. Others might consider it reasonable and beneficial and think it is not

worth their interest or attention. Results showed that the most dominant factors that affect the participant's level of participation in the identified sporting events such as the Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race are experience, self-improvement, and pride.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Sports events is considered as one of the pull factors for tourism activities today (Ehsani, Sogdel, Heidaryc & Jamshidi, 2012). Cassidy and Pegg (2012) have noted that there was a marked inherent relationship between sports and tourism during the last decade of the 20th Century, it was then dubbed as sports tourism. Sports tourism today's is then considered as a growing global industry as noted by the various economic and socio-cultural importance especially to the host country.

Today, sports tourism has become phenomenological and has become a way towards crossing the traditional geographical and cultural barriers between countries. International sporting events do not only pave the way towards economic growth of the host country, but it opens its windows to the world for future developments. Sports events also serve as a catalyst and promoter of peace and understanding between nations (Bjeljac & Radovanovic, 2013).

Unlike other events, sports events can uniquely attract wide array of participants as each of them seeks to satisfy their motivations to engage in many different ways. This is because every sports event involves different athletes, coaches, spectators, tourists, non-residents, media, technical representatives and officials to the events (De Geus, Richards, & Toepoel, 2016).

On the other hand, motivation, say participant or tourist motivation might be a result of a deep unrecognizable physiological needs of an individual (Prayag & Ryan, 2011). Cassidy and Pegg (2012) was

able to relate motivation with a need stimulus that forces an individual to a certain direction or behave in a certain way. More specifically, this stimulus can direct an individual to a specific activity like sports which is drives a person's interest, notwithstanding the pleasure and leisure that can be benefited from participation or attendance. The latter constitute tourism's importance and thus, there are theories of motivation that are applicable to sports, leisure, and tourism behaviour like those explained in Murray's needs theory of personality (1938), Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (1943), and Berlyne's theory of optimal level of stimulation (1960) (Wood & Moss, 2013).

Further, James and Ridinger (2018) explained that sports tourism drives and regulate behaviors of the participants towards achieving a specific purpose, However, motivation on sports tourism as described in the aforementioned theories can also be combined with other motivational factors like socialization. In this context, the individual participants motivation can vary with respect to the levels as well as the orientation of motivation, which will be determined in this study.

Furthermore, the relationship between sports events as well as motivation of the participants have been explored and overrate in much global research, however, no studies has been conducted to explore the level of motivation of participants that compared three events. Also, no study has been conducted in the Omani context that explored the level of motivation of participants and specifically making comparison between three international sporting events namely Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race. Hence this study.

1.2 Research Aim

This study aims to compare the level of motivation among participants on the different international sporting events in Oman. More specifically, this aims to compare the participants motivation

of the following sporting events namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to attain the following objectives:

- To assess the level of motivation of among participants on the different international sporting events in Oman namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race in terms of in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.
- To evaluate the differences in the level of motivation among participants on the identified international sporting events in Oman in terms of in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.
- To identify the factors that affects the participants' level of motivation.

1.4 Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of motivation among participants on the International Sporting Events in Oman namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.
2. Are there significant differences in the level of motivation among participants on the identified international sporting events in Oman in terms of in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.
3. What are the factors that affects the participant's motivation?

1.5 Hypothesis of the study

Scholarly to research question number two and statement of objectives number to, the hypothesis below is advanced at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho: There is no significant differences in the level of motivation among participants on the identified sporting events namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race in terms of in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Sports events is considered as one of the most popular attractions for tourists today. It has moved many spectators which has contributed to economic development of host cities. The benefits of sports events do not only account to the tangible advantages that it can give, but the unseen benefits for the participants should also not to be take for granted (The World Financial Review, 2019).

The present investigation will dwell to explore the level of motivation as well as the factors affecting the motivation of the participants on the International Sporting Events in Oman. Aside from the contribution to academic literature, this study will also be beneficial to the following stakeholders:

The Sport Events Organizers. The results of the study will provide important inputs to the organizers of Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race which can be used to improve the future events that they will hold especially on the operational and management aspects of the event.

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT). As primary destination management agency that support the tourism sector, the inputs from the results of the present investigation will be of great help in future planning and organizing of similar events in the future especially those that involved the aspect of participants motivation.

The Participants. The results of the study will provide the participants with the knowledge that affects their behavior towards a particular event. In a way, the results make the participants understand the nature of the events.

Future Researchers. The present investigation will provide important inputs to researchers who will be conducting similar studies in the future. The results as well as the methods will serve as guide for their future undertakings.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This academic research will be conducted to explore participants level of motivation on International Sporting Events in Oman namely Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race. In this study the term participant refers to all those attendees to the identified events namely: the first party participants or the major players such as athletes, coaches, and event officials, the tourists and or the audience/attendees/spectators, and event organizers which constitute the staff and employees of the organizer of the event.

Purposive sampling will be done and requiring sixty (60) respondents to answer a researcher made survey questionnaire. Due to the current health restrictions due to COVID 19, data gathering will be done by floating through the internet.

The study will be using descriptive research design that will employ both quantitative and qualitative approaches. However, quantitative approach will be limited to the use of appropriate statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and ranks for the descriptive statistics and the Krukall Wallis test for the inferential statistics. The criteria for determining the level of significance were set at 0.05 alpha.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

This study will also set the limits of time, thus, participants during the most recent identified events will be tapped to give their responses. In this study, the qualitative part will be made by eliciting responses through open ended questions in the instruments and will be supported by documentaries from previously researched materials.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature that are related to the present investigation. These literatures taken from various materials such as books, articles, journal articles, and the like. This chapter will provide important information that will aid the different stakeholders of this study internalize its significance and grow bigger understanding regarding the subject matter. This chapter consist of the following sub-sections such as: Background of the International Sporting Events in Oman; Benefits of International Sporting Events to Host Cities; The Theory of Motivation; and Factors affecting Motivation of Participants towards Sporting Events.

2.2 Background of International Sporting Events in Oman

The Omanis are very active people. This is shown in their involvement to various sports activities which is actually a popular traditional event in the country such as Dhow racing, horse racing, falconry, camel racing, and bull butting. These sports are still played and preserved until today. are until now is played and preserved (Baporikar, 2011).

Due to influence of Western civilization, the country has been adapting many prominent sports today and been into organizing such events as well. For example, football was already acknowledged as a sporting event in Oman. In fact, in Oman, the Red Warrior Football team has been acknowledged and managed by the Football Association official team for the Sultanate aside from the Omani. In 2009, the red warriors have won the Gulf Cup of Nations. Along

with the team was Ali Al-Habsi, who was dubbed to the famous football athlete in Oman. Ali Al-Habsi also captains the national team and was able to represent Oman in 92 competitions since the start of his career in (Oxford Business Group, 2019).

Meanwhile, Aulia and Almandhari (2015) stated that the most recent economic diversification initiatives of Oman dubbed as Oman Vision 2040 was able to cascade the effort to tourism as per National Tourism Strategy (2015-2040). Positioning the tourism industry one of the major characteristics National Tourism Strategy 2040 (NTS). In 2016, the NTS was created by the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) and the National Programme for Economic Diversification (Tanfeedh) and initiated the moves to diversify the Omani economy through tourism. Other than ecotourism, wildlife tourism, and heritage tourism the NTS has positioned sports tourism as one of the components of the initiatives which highlighted activities such as sailing, fishing and adventure sports. The said initiatives enable the country to support the various activities in support for tourism, and among these activities are the International Sporting Events namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron man, and the Spartan Race. Baporikar (2011) also stated that sports tourism has being an emerging trend in Oman tourism industry. As such these events are participated by many domestic and foreign attendees like any usual events such as cultural and religious festivals held in Oman.

2.2.1 Muscat Marathon

In year 2012, the Muscat Road Runners organized the Muscat Marathon with only 135 competitors. The event became known to the whole country and was renamed as Al Mouj Muscat Marathon in 2017. This was named after the Al Mouj Muscat, the country's leading leisure and recreation destination. As such the event had joined the Oman Sail and Muscat Road Runners. In 2019, the sports event has reached international prestige wherein part of it was a marathon within the 10KM routes which has been acknowledged by

world-running organization called AIMS. The said so event was, aligned the standards of the International Association of Athletic Federation (IAAF). The event likewise included the 5 KM Charity Fun Run for a cause of raising funds that pulled out thousands of participants. Part of the Fun Run was the Kids' Run which was sold out in record time. Just recently, the eighth version of the Muscat Marathon was able to host more than 8000 runners that competed in a race with six categories which was held for two days. The said event was attended by 103 different nationalities from all over the world that paved the way towards promoting the reputation of Muscat Marathon as one of the most prestigious events that ever happened in the Sultanate of Oman's sporting calendar in 2020 (World's Sports Group, 2021).

2.2.2 Iron Man

Another International sport event that had placed the country into the spotlight is the Ironman Triathlon. This event includes a series of long-distance triathlon competition which was created and organized by the World Triathlon Corporation (WTC). The Iron Man is consisting of the following order of competition: a 2.4-mile (3.86 km) swim, a 112-mile (180.25 km) bicycle ride and a marathon 26.22-mile (42.20 km) run. This event is world renowned and was considered as the most interesting and tough one-day sport events in the world (World's Sprots Group, 2021).

Levinson (2020) stated that almost all of the Ironman events were time bounded and occurs to about 16 or 17 hours to put the race at rest. The usual starting time for IronMan is 7 o'clock in the morning and to start with the compulsory 2.4 mile or 3.86 kilometers swim which usually lasted for about 2 hours 20 minutes or until 9:20 in the morning; the mandatory biking competition starts after the swim which lasted until 5: 30 in the afternoon or about 8 hours 10 minutes; and lastly the compulsory marathon cut off to complete the competition which lasts for 6 hours and 30 minutes finishing in the

midnight . The participants who was able to accomplish the competition at the given time constraints will be held or designated as an IronMan.

The term "Ironman Triathlon" in Oman was benchmarked from the original Ironman triathlon which is now called that the Ironman World Championship. First of this event was held at Kailua-Kona, and with the world championship which was held yearly in Hawaii since 1978. The IronMan was originally held in Oahu in 1978 and then moved to Kailua-Kona in 1981 until the additional race of the same kind was founded in 1982 as it is today. The IronMan World Championship is very popular all over the world because of the exhausting length, and very crucial race conditions. The television coverage had also contributed to the events popularity. Aside from IronMan, there are other sporting events that are similar to such but were not give the same opportunity for production, owned, or licensed by World Triathlon Corporation. These are The Challenge Family Series' Challenge Roth and the Norseman Triathlon.

The IronMan was conceptualized and come into an idea of the producers during the awarding ceremony for the 1977 [O'ahu](#) Perimeter Relay. These events were also well represented by participants of Among the Mid-Pacific Road Runners and the Waikiki Swim Club which are also events that rises controversies on the capabilities of the runners of swimmers. (Athiparambathi, 2020).

2.2.3 Spartan Race

Another sporting event in Oman that have gained international recognitions is the Spartan Race. The competition is composed of obstacle race series that constitute different distances and difficulty. The race includes more than around 250 sports events held across 40 different countries on six regions constituting the Spartan Race. The completion is featuring the races with varied distances such as the: 5

kilometer and 20 obstacles of Stadion and Sprint: 10kilometer and 25 obstacles Of Super; half Marathon and 30 obstacles of Beast: 50kilometer and 60 obstacles of Ultra. Just a while ago the Spartan Race had introduced an indoor fitness decathlon named as the DEKAFIT, the said event was as functional as the original race. In addition to these events, the event is also offereing other events such as the trail races, endurance races, children’s races and championships (Bosrtncck, 2020).

According to Bosrtncck (2020) the Spartan Race competitions had also initiated the 48-hour endurance event in 2007 which was dubbed as “Death Race” because of its difficulty and athletic ability requirement among the participants. The first Spartan Race was founded by De Sena with the intension of having a manageable endurance race for many audiences. This event was held in a very prestigious hall known as the Catamount Outdoor Center in Williston, Vermont in 2010. Such fame had represented the city of Burlington, Vermont in which barely 500 competitors had joined to "run, crawl, jump and swim" and managed to complete the obstacle games. As a reward, the participants who finished the obstacles were rewarded with a medal, prizes, and held as top athletes of the race.

The Spartan race had gained recognition from investors, and in 2012 Raptor Consumer Partners filed a negotiation for investment with the Spartan Race management. Following this was another great investment opportunity in 2013 when ta well-known brand Reebok offered a title sponsorship for the event which has become the reason of renaming the races into "Reebok Spartan Race Series". Also, the Universal Sports was able to broadcast a special on December 7, 2013, that features the 2013 Spartan Race World Championships. Another good thing had happened to the Spartan Race when the parent network or company had signed the approval of Spartan-based television series, *Spartan: Ultimate Team Challenge* in August 2015. The said production was led by the producers of fellow NBC

series *American Ninja Warrior*. To this effect, in the later part of 2015, the Spartan Race initiated the "Spartan Agoge" which was referred to as the "60-hour physical, tactical, mental and team-based training and testing" competition which is planned to be held in Vermont twice a year. Due to the physical and mental agility that are required by the competitors, the Spartan Race was dubbed by the ESPN as "a true test of will (Bosrtneck, 2020).

In 2018, XDubai Spartan Race has come back to Jebel Sifah in Oman which is the region's first ever Trifecta event and was able to encourage a large number of spectators and participants from different countries all over the world (Oxford Business Group, 2019).

2.3 Benefits of International Sporting Events to Host Cities

In the last three decades, tourism has become the major catalyst for economic growth and development of many countries in the world. Governments all over the world are continuously taking initiatives to include this sector in their strategic roadmap in order to achieve prosperity and growth (Akgunduz & Coşar, 2018).

Dredge and Whitford (2011) argued that the emergence of niche tourism has become another opportunity for many tourist destinations. The niche tourism identified one specific niche that have emerge along with the rising popularity of major sports events in many countries and regions. Like any other tourism product, sport events have renowned benefits for the participants as well as the host city or country in general.

Like other tourism products, sports tourism is expected to provide various economic and socio-cultural benefits and opportunities for host countries. This is the reason that every city or country is aggressive towards bidding on hosting a sports event. Nevertheless, the economic benefits are being at the top of the line (Ehsani, et al, 2012). The authors added that the economic benefits of sports events cannot be underestimated and often are very gigantic, notwithstanding the different global opportunities and the

contributions of the sporting events in the boosting of trade and investments of different nations.

Directly and indirectly, there are various of income opportunities for wide array of stakeholders in sports tourism. This started from the moment that the participant booked its ticket towards the specific location of the event itself until the time they depart and go back to their respective origins (The World Financial review (2019). More specifically, direct spending of tourists attending the sports events incurred through the use of accommodation facility, food and beverage service, amusement and r entertainment venues arouses the movement of the local economy. The holding of this events also generates jobs which has risen the income and spending of the people which in the end generates income to the host communities through taxes (Dredge and Whitford, 2011).

More specifically, Pettinger (2019) stated that hosting a sports event promotes long term economic advantages that enhances the profile of the host city. One good example is when as city host events like the Olympics, the assurance for potential tourism activities are continuous, increasing, and was recognized in the long term. To cite an example, we have the following: Barcelona, Sydney, and Beijing which have experience these benefits from hosting of the Olympics. Hosting such event is more than just gaining economically, like for China that has a known records of controversies in human rights issues, to host the Olympics can be one way of gaining international acceptance. Meanwhile, the same thing has happened with South Africa when it hosted as well as the Football World Cup. This event was able to recast the old image and defined another moment as it highlighted the new ‘post-apartheid’ era for South Africa. The said events was able to erase negative image of the mentioned countries which is more important among other benefits it can give. Nevertheless, the usual tourism multiplier effects on the economy, attracting of tourists and business investment are not underwritten. This event was viewed differently by different cities. In particular,

the World Cup made a big difference to perceptions of South Africa. However, in the case of cities with already strong reputation, the effect of the Olympics would not that influential. To this effect the hosting of events can provide a relative generalization on the benefits it can bring towards a specific country or regions. For example. For cities like Manchester, the holding of a Commonwealth Games can be beneficial because of the differences in the surrounding environment and culture of the people in the city major event is the opportunity to stimulate long terms investments. This can be due to the implement of sporting venues and other support infrastructures which become one of the legacies of the event and the organizers. In addition to this, the places and city will grab the opportunity to share their investment of facilities and other infrastructures in preparation from the increase in tourist arrivals. In London, this was made through by making some significant investment in public transport projects all over the city. Such projects will leave a long terms effect and legacy to the people in the city. More specifically, East London was cited as an example due to the developments made from as a result of hosting the 2012 London Olympics (Thompson & Matheson, 2008).

Shah (2018) also commented that the long-term planning and stimulation of opportunities for investment facilitates the generation of the jobs and hence would be of big help to the depressed cities. This was made possible during the London Olympics wherein choosing East London as the cite for the event had alleviated the depressed conditions in the communities around. Reports had estimates that the London Olympics 2012 was able to create 8,000 full-time jobs which has led to boosting of the economy reaching a sound £2bn estimated outputs.

Malchrowicz-Mo'sko and Chlebosz (2018) also stated that there are always have a good reason to not host a big event like the Olympics. For example, debts and other community priorities. However, undeniably, these events can be one of the reasons of gaining

enthusiasm and excitement among the residents which can promote inclination to sports which can also be beneficial to the health of the people in the communities for a healthier nation. Nonetheless, international sporting events can also lead to a rise of spirit of volunteerism which eventually can promote civic virtues.

For Oman, sports tourism is just another niche in the tourism industry, which is basically placed into consideration in the country's strategic planning for diversification of the economy. The said strategy was part of the Oman's Vision 2040 and was streamlined by the Ministry of Tourism into the Oman Tourism Strategy 2040. The said initiative has a noted purpose to reduce the country's over-reliance on the oil industry and by opening another potential sector (Pettinger, 2019).

In Oman, international sporting events such as the Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and the Spartan Race were known to increase the tourist arrival in the country with notable economic benefits and socio-cultural significance (Oxford Business Group, 2019). For a country like Oman, that currently pursues the diversification of national revenues through other sectors like the tourism sector as a primary promoter of income. Herein, sports tourism as one of its sectors has gained the interest of the people which eventually can drive the nation towards its ambitions to be a renowned venue for sporting events in the world. Another example which was noted is the Americas Cup World Series held in the country. As such, reports were heard that for every RO 1 government spending, there is an expected RO 11 return to the country. Further, Oman was also gaining the opportunity to benefit on the long-term brand promotion, which was actually experienced when the Condé Nast Conference was held in Oman recently (Yousef, 2017).

We consider that sports tourism is still in the nascent stages of developments in the country at present and have seen to have the potential to become big, making the country to be the next best promising avenue given the due attention and nurturing (Baporikar,

2011). In an inclusive interview conducted by Yousef (2017) to the Chief Executive Officer of Oman Sail, David Graham explained that sports tourism is still in its nurturing stage in the country but have already shown a big potential to become a one of the prominent sectors and expected to help boost the country's income. Thus, more attention and encouragement must be given to the various stakeholders of the sporting events to maximize its potential as economic driver and promoter.

Yousef (2017) explained that Oman Sail is an extension of the Ministry of Tourism which is applying expertise of the staff to facilitate tourism development in Oman through sports. Sports as a platform for these intentions is expected to raise the country's global profile as a high-end tourism and investment destination. Further, sport was already seen to have an impact on tourism in general, like any other forms of tourism. Like other forms of tourism, it is also a huge and growing global sector which is equally significant as travel and tourism. It provides related benefits and subsequent economic impact on host destinations as well. Sports tourism also attracts international followers which comprises the upper sector in the socio-economic sphere. As to the international sporting events in Oman, the target audience comprises the adventurous individual from all walks of life, and then they are coming from difference places as well(Yousef, 2017).

According to Oxford Business Group (2019) compared to other countries Oman is expanding towards the right and operating at the right pace. The comprehensive long terms strategy of the MOT gives the sports events sector a boost that promotes these ideas and reiterates the benefits that can be given by the sporting events. More specifically, the expansion of Muscat airport and Salalah airport, as well as the key investments for tourism and hospitality support infrastructures for better services has led towards the increase in the influx of tourists to the country in the future can also aid tourist

inflow in the coming years and drive the success of the national sports events' strategy.

The sustenance provided by the sports industry in the country serves as an inspiration for young Omanis to settle for sports as they come forward with their sports talents. More than this, sports also promote the creation of a healthy generation as well as a more productive population which is actually empirical towards the attainment of a sound economy. A country with healthy people is prerequisite in the reduction of state burden as there will be lesser money to be on public health. Moreover, when the younger generation are into sports, there will be reduced opportunity for them to engage on drugs and other vices because their energy will be diverted to something with productive and proactive purposes. Other important life skills are also developed and maintained through sports such as discipline, responsibility, leadership and teamwork (Aulia, & Almandhari,2015)

2.4 Motivation as a Concept

Motivation refers to understanding of the reasons that drives an individual to work or pursue a specific objective or goal (Kocabulut & Kiliçarslan,2017). This might be a motivation towards work which was classified into two main categories such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The former, refers to the motivation that are associated by an individual desire to please their employers or reach a certain professional or personal goal. The latter, on the other hand, is associated with the external motivator such as salaries, compensation, bonuses, promotions that a person can achieve in exchange for hard work or the other way around if the goals are not met (Sands, 2020).

On the other hand, motivation as a concept refers to the power that directs the behaviors of an individual (Malchrowicz-Mo'sko & Chlebosz,2018). Prebensen, Skallerud, and Chen (2010) stated that motivation is considered as one of the innate factors that allows, promotes and completes one's individual behaviour. The authors also

argued there is a need for motivation to nurture the conditions that are necessary on attaining a particular kind of behaviour that promotes satisfaction among individual. Motivations is a reflection of the relative needs of an individual, of their different demands and expectations, and the continuous change on these needs can cause a relatively different demands on the tourism market. In most motivation studies, these needs and expectations are often investigated.

In this context, Kocabulut and Kiliçarslan (2017) explained that tourist motivation are expected to be expressed as a need or desire which motivates people to go to different places for travel and leisure. On the other side, these motivations are explained as group of necessary things that may lead towards participation of people on tourism activities. In other words, it can be said that tourist motivation is reliant on expectations, needs and desires, that serves as a reflection of the different the personalities and socio-economic characteristics of tourists.

In general, there are always a possibility of defining tourist motivation on the perspective that it can be considered as composition of needs and desires that are affecting the tendency for travel. The scholars in these areas most of the times take a look on the different justifications that affects may affect the behavioural patterns of the tourists as well as the different factors that stimulates or motivates the tourists. Much research on this topic was able to understand tourism as a socio psychological phenomenon. They also provide some recommendations to create a solution in the context of the managers (James & Ridinger, 2018). Yang, Gu, and Cen (2011) also made some discussions regarding the importance of tourist motivation towards the tourist decision-making processes and considered this as a main phenomenon which provide meaning and development of quality products and services for tourist satisfaction.

On the other hand, motivation for travel is related to number of factors that affects the participation of tourist on different activities and this can be associated with the with some inadequacies which resulted an impact towards travel (Wilson, Arshed, Shaw, & Pret,2017). The authors summarized this into eight socio psychological such as escapade, discovery of one’s self, escape, relaxation, prestige, regression, kinship-development and social interaction and two cultural motivations namely innovation and education.

2.5 Sport fan Motivation

According to Wiid and Cant (2015) to be motivated is to “be moved to do something or feeling impetus or inspiration to act”. Meanwhile, a fan of sport and being a costumer of sport events are dedicated to join any moment with the players and the team. Therefore, Shobian (2016), added that the motivation of a sport’s fan is therefore defined as “the motives of sports fans and their attitudes and behavior towards players and teams”. The author further explained that such is very important to understand the reasons of motivation and the benefits that are received by individuals especially when they participate in live sporting events or supporting particular teams or athletes.

Lee (2015) argued that these alleged advantages are important as they involve the critical benefits and motives of becoming a sports fan. According to Wiid (2015) explains regardless of the despite the fact that the consumption of sports motivation research has commenced, there are several social and psychological factors that are identified that motivate an individual to become sports fans and might as well be an attendee on the live sporting events.

2.6 Factors Affecting Participant’s Motivation to Attend Sport’s Event

There are various reasons for people’s travel intention and participation in sports events. Participation on sports is referred to as

a way of traveling for the purpose, wherein the purpose is participating in a sport, as well as having fun and leisure through sports activities (Wiid and Cant, 2015). According to Hirvonen (2014) these two kinds of involvement such as spectating and participating actions where the factors affecting their motivation to come.

Lee (2015) additionally argued that being a spectator and participant in a sports event are affected by the chance of spending more time members of the family, friends, and business associates. According to Gensler (2017) the relationships developed between peer and family through attending sports as well as the social interaction that are done among the participants could be an influencer of the performance of the participants. On the other side, Lee (2015) stated that the factors that motivates are usually employed to discuss participation on sports which be applied to sport spectatorship.

Further, Lee (2015) claimed that one factor that motivates people to participate in sports events is self-actualization. Wiid and Cant (2015) said that it can also be the increased team identification which was acknowledged by the fans. Such might lead to good record of attendance and positive word-of-mouth. James and Ridinger (2018) said that enjoyment can be very risky, but may create positive values, and lead towards fun and further develop the sense of belongingness among the individuals. This may aid in the encouragement to join the event as well.

As to being a spectator, Lee (2015) claimed that an enduring team support and values made possible by entertainment are the main factors for spectator's motivation on attending the sports event. It was suggested by James and Ridinger (2018) that for people to be motivated on watching the sports event requires nostalgic association with the tradition and thus would promote interest for the succeeding games. In addition to these the authors indicated that some factors such as pressures of society, as well as involvement in the previous

events can serve as influencers of the individual intention to watch the game again. To summarize this, the involvement on events, the attitudes of the participants, and their intentions in the future are considered as major reasons for motivation.

Lee (2015) stated that event involvement that an individual is a consequence of a person's interests in a particular sport. This involvement can be shown and maintained at different levels along with the event. Colombo and Marques, (2020) said that involvement was widely used variable in much research and also have various definitions when used in different context. More specifically, involvement in an activity is describes as “an unobservable state of motivation, arousal or interest toward a recreation activity or associated product” (Wiind & Cant, 2015).

In studies about leisure, “enduring involvement” has been referred to as theas stable and ongoing state with specified intensions and thus remaining to be consistent to evolve as time passes by. Some studies have suggested that attraction, centrality, and self-expression are premises to evaluate the enduring involvement and the best determinant of behavior towards leisure (Akyüz, Ağar, Akyüz, & Doğru, 2018). Lee (2015) employed the involvement on the activities of tourism to evaluate the outcomes and thus have found out that involvement on these events is directly related with the event image. The author also stated that the participants that are involved intensely in the event are more likely to have positive attitude than those people having low involvement. In the current study, involvement on events was considered important as well as the role of involvement toward individuals. Herein, the high level of involvement on the events, it is deduced that they also have higher knowledge about the event.

Moreover, the attitudes of the participants towards the events have important role in the promotion of the marketing strategies used in the event. Business organizations also employed the respinses of the

consumers to know the effectiveness of the events (Lee, 2015). Likewise, the more committed the consumers are, the more it can lead to long terms relationship with organizations. Which was translated towards a sport team, that is why they need to develop high commitment for long-term relationships with fans. The long terms relationship enables the identification of needs and wants which can make them feel valuable. The operators of the events Event operators with highly committed consumers have more managerial benefits than others. Researchers suggested that fans that highly identify with a sport team have a more favorable attitude toward the team. Akyuz, et al (2015) examined the impact of fan identification on event outcomes. The results indicate that identified fans with high involvement are more likely to have a significant effect on consumer's attitude toward the event.

Finally, the goals of future research were able to adopt the purchase intention theory which in a way can evaluate the consumer's behavioral tendency due to some difficulties that were measured by the actual sales. The continuous increase in the awareness for brands as well as the positive and favorable attitudes of the consumers are considered as the basis for future intention. It was said that individuals that identifies the products easily are regarded to have more favorable attitudes and can be easily motivated to consume the product (Akgunduz & Coşar, 2018).

Also, Ustun (2018) claimed there are there are positive relationship among cognition, affect, and purchase intention as revealed in the study, it was seen the future intention are directly correlated with attitude toward the event. Akyuz, et. al (2015) also stated that there are association between consumers' behavioral intent to purchase or use cause-related products with favorability and positive attitude toward the brand. Lee (2015) also argued that there is significance in understanding the effect of consumer's attitude on the behavioral intentions. By which it can be intruded that the good service at any sports events increases the possibility of more attendees to come.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the different methodologies used in the study. More specifically, this chapter consist of the following sub sections: research approach, research design, target and population size, data collection procedures, the instrumentation, data analysis procedures, and the limitations of the research procedures. The aforementioned sections have a very significant role in the attainment of the ultimate goals of the study. More specifically, this chapter also explains the criteria employed in the selection of the respondents of the study.

3.2 Research Approach

The present research focuses on exploring the participant's motivation towards the three international sporting events held in Oman. To make this possible quantitative research and qualitative research approaches will be employed to achieve the research objectives. Babbie (2010) explained that the quantitative research approach uses mathematical methods by employing statistical analysis to interpret and analyze the results. Mujis (2010) also commented that quantitative research is the most convenient way to explore and investigate a particular phenomenon and are usually done through the use of a survey instrument containing close ended questions.

Bhandari (2021) also added that quantitative research usually employs a structure research instrument in data gathering in which results are based on a more prominently huge samples that are representative of a particular population. This type of research has defined the research questions has clearly in order to seek the

answers by drawing the objectives. The gathered information or data are usually reflected in statistical form, which can be presented in tabular, graphical, and other non-textual forms.

On the other hand, qualitative research approach involved the collection and analysis of non-numerical data in which in depth analysis are undertaken regarding the phenomenon under study. Usually, this is done using a structured, semi-structured, or unstructured instruments with open ended formats delivered either through interviews or focus group discussion (Aspers & Corte 2019). However, according to Jost (2016) the documentary analysis can also be considered as one way of executing qualitative researchers just like in this study. Jost (2016) added that qualitative research is more personal and intense for it was able to tackle the deeper perspective and points of view of the respondents of a particular research endeavor.

3.3 Research Design

Basically, research designs presents the study's research process which is used to achieve the objectives of the study (Sileyew, 2019). In this study, the descriptive survey research design was employed. McCombes (2019) stated that such research design usually aims an accurate and systematic description of a certain population, give a specific situation, event or phenomenon. Further, the author emphasized that descriptive research designs are usually causal and answers what, where when and how questions.

The descriptive research design has been used to quantify and describe certain phenomenon. For example, in this study, the participants level of motivation towards the international sporting events in Oman will be employed. Understandable such event is phenomenal, but to prove this phenomenology a survey will be undertaken through the use of a survey instrument (McCombes,2019). Fox and Bayat (2017) added that the descriptive research design is applicable in either quantitative and qualitative

research approach and can be delivered through utilization of different methods aside from personal administration of the research instruments and conduct of face-to-face interviews or group discussions. The use of the internet through implementation of different platforms is very popular now a days because of the health restrictions due to the outbreak of COIVD 19 pandemic. For more effective way of data gathering, the researcher/researchers are also expected to guide the respondents as well give the former with ample time to answer the research instruments.

3.4 Target Population and Sample Size

The group of individuals that are targeted by the intervention to conduct research is referred to as the target population (McLeod, 2018). The target population for this particular study are the participants to the identified international sporting events in Oman namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and the Spartan Race. The participants will be categorized as: primary participants such as athletes, coaches, and sport event officials; secondary participants such as the organizers , employees, and those that are support staff to the execution of the event; and lastly the tertiary participants composed of the tourist, spectators, and the residents.

Meanwhile, Mcleod (2018) stated that sample size is the number of cases or samples that can be drawn as representative of the population. Sixty (60) respondents will fill up the sample size, which will be proportionately appropriated to each respondent category.

3.5 Data Collection

This study employed purposive sampling technique, more specifically the quota sampling. Rukmana (2014) is a method of non-probability or purposive sampling when the samples are selected based on the probability proportionate to the distribution of a variable in the population. In this study, the quota of sixty (60) respondents will be set to answer the survey questionnaires. Meanwhile, purposive sampling is initiated to allow viability of

responses from the most qualified respondents. In this study the respondents will be the participants of the international sporting events in Oman, these respondents will be categorized according their type as participant to the event namely: as spectator/tourist/ attendee; event organizer; or primary participant as athlete or official of the event.

Upon identification of the respondents, the survey questionnaires will be floated through the internet via google forms. The respondents will be identified through their contact numbers listed in the list of participants during the recent event that occur in Oman.

3.5.1 Research Instruments

The survey questionnaire used in this study are structures with both close ended and open-ended formats to elicit the necessary data that can answer the research problems and attain the research objectives. The survey instrument consists of four parts such as Part 1- to elicit the demographic profile of respondents; Part 2- will determine the level of motivation of the participants towards the International Sporting events in Oman. Part 3 will consist of an open-ended question that will determine the factors that affects the participants motivation towards the International Sporting events in Oman.

To interpret the scores in Part 2 of the survey questionnaire the following verbal descriptions will be assigned considering the scores from the responses and the computed means from the scores:

Part 3. Level of Motivation of Participants towards International Sporting Event in Oman

Score	Responses	Scale	Verbal Interpretations
5	Always	4.51-5.00	Very High
4	Often	3.51-4.50	High
3	Sometimes	2.51-3.50	Moderate
2	Seldom	1.51-2.50	Low
1	Never	1.00-1.50	Very Low

3.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study respectively follows the approaches used. The measurable and quantifiable variables such as the profile of respondents and data elicited using the survey questionnaires will be analyzed. The quantitative data will be dealt using the appropriate statistical tools such as the frequency, percentage, rank, mean and standard deviation. The statistical analysis will be conducted by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The SPSS is a software used by statisticians to compute the data that specifically draw the statistical values for the descriptive tools that are mentioned above (Rukmana 2014). For qualitative data, the analysis will be conducted with use of themes.

3.7 Limitations of research methods

This section explains the limitations of the research methods, in order to guide the researcher to conduct the study without dealing with issues in the future. This section identifies the boundaries of the research methods to be employed to avoid expectations of results that are not required in the study. More specifically, it specifies the limitations in terms of variables to be studied, geographical limits,

research methods and techniques, the number of respondents, and the procedures used in presentation and analysis of data.

This study will explore the participant's motivation to the International Sporting events in Oman mentioned above. In view of this, the participants during the recent events, say which fell within 2018-2019 will be tapped for the study. The participants will be identified base from the data base of the three events during the said year.

The survey questionnaires will be administered online using the google forms. This can be sent either in email, or social media. No face-to-face administration will be done sue to the health restrictions implemented by the Oman government.

The data analysis procedure will be limited to descriptive statistics only, which is congruent to the given statement of the problem or objectives of the study. No inferential statistics will be required in analysis of the results. The qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic analysis and narrative data analysis.

Chapter 4

Research Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

To convey the results and findings of the study, this chapter was presented. The results were presented using tabular and textual manner. The results presented in this chapter actually served the first level analysis especially of the statistical data collected using the survey instruments. For better understanding, the results were presented according to the arrangement of the statement of the problem. The analysis in this chapter will serve as the basis for the practical and theoretical discussions in the succeeding chapter of this paper. Meanwhile, the profile of respondents was also presented in this chapter although they are not part of the objectives. The purpose of this is to provide the reader with baseline information that can be used in the discussion.

4.2 Profile of Respondents

The profile of respondents according to gender, age, education, category (participation in the sporting event), and sporting events participated were obtained and the data were shown in Table 1. Data show that majority or 70 % (f=35) of the respondents who have answered the survey questionnaires were male and 30 % (f=15) are female. When rated according to age, it was revealed that 9(18 %) out of 50 respondents have ages under 20 years old, 12 (24%) of the respondents belong to the age category of 21-30 years old and 31-40 years old, 11 (22 %) are within 41-50 years old, while 6 (12 %) are within the age category of 50 years old and above.

In terms of education, data show that majority or 52 % (f=26) of the respondents have college or university level education, while 28 % (f=14) have secondary level education. Data show that there 5 (10 %) respondents with master's degree, and another f (10%) have doctorate degree.

Results reveal that most (f=20; 40%) of the respondents are competitor or participants to the event. Findings further reveal that 5(10 %) of the respondents are volunteer and sponsors, 8 (16 %) are either managers or supervisors, and 12(24%) are organizers. When grouped according to events participated or attended, results show that there are 22 (44%) respondents who have participated or attended in Muscat Marathon, while 15 (30 %) participated on Spartan Race, and 13 (26 %) on Iron Man. These results were also presented in the figures or charts below:

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Entire Group	50	100
Gender		
Male	35	70
Female	15	30
Age		
Under 20 years old	9	18
21-30 years old	12	24
31-40 years old	12	24
41-50 years old	11	22

51 years old	6	12
Education		
Secondary Level	14	28
College/ University Level	26	52
Master's	5	10
Doctorate	5	10
Participation in Sporting Event		
Volunteer	5	10
Sponsor	5	10
Management	8	16
Competitor/Participant	20	40
Organizer	12	24
Sporting Event Participated		
Muscat Marathon	22	44
Spartan race	15	30
Iron Man	13	26

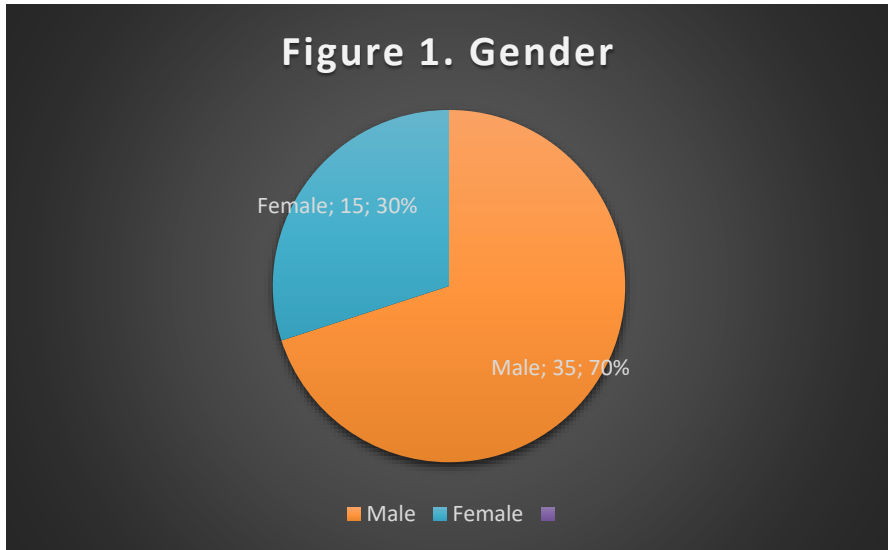


Figure 1. Profile of Respondents in terms of Gender

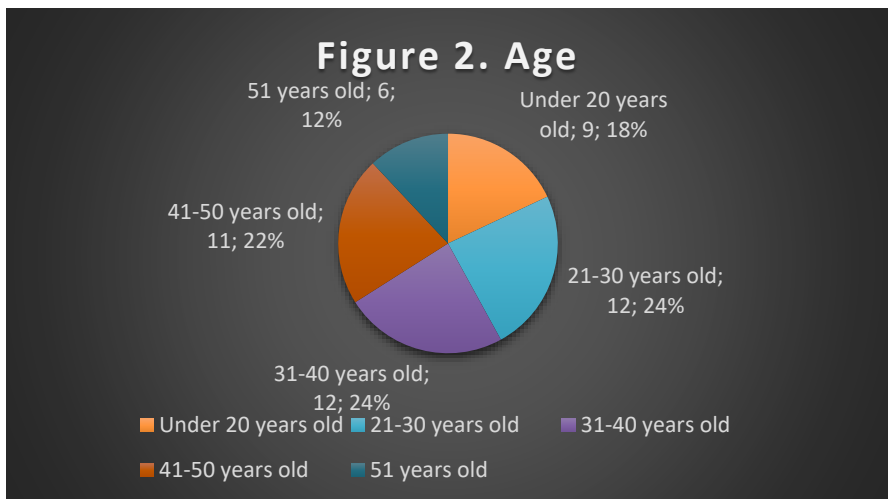


Figure 2. Profile of Respondents in terms of Age

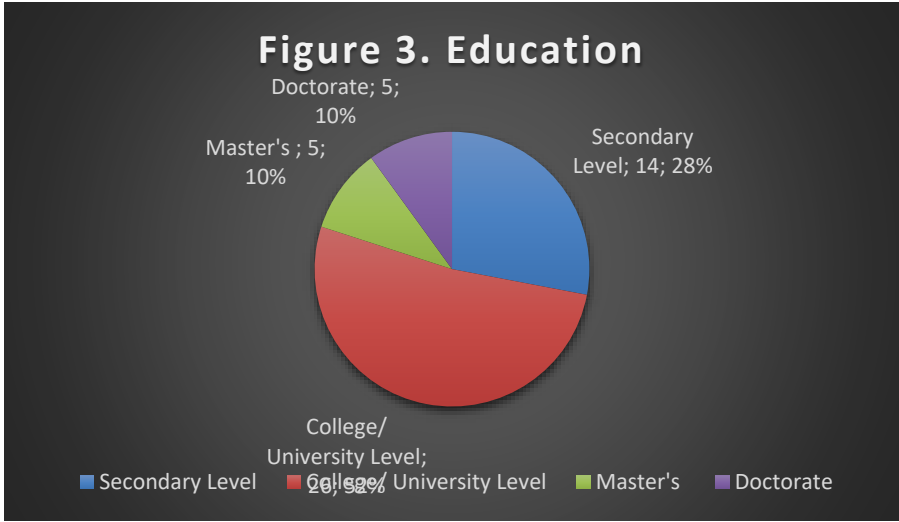


Figure 3. Profile of Respondents in terms of Education

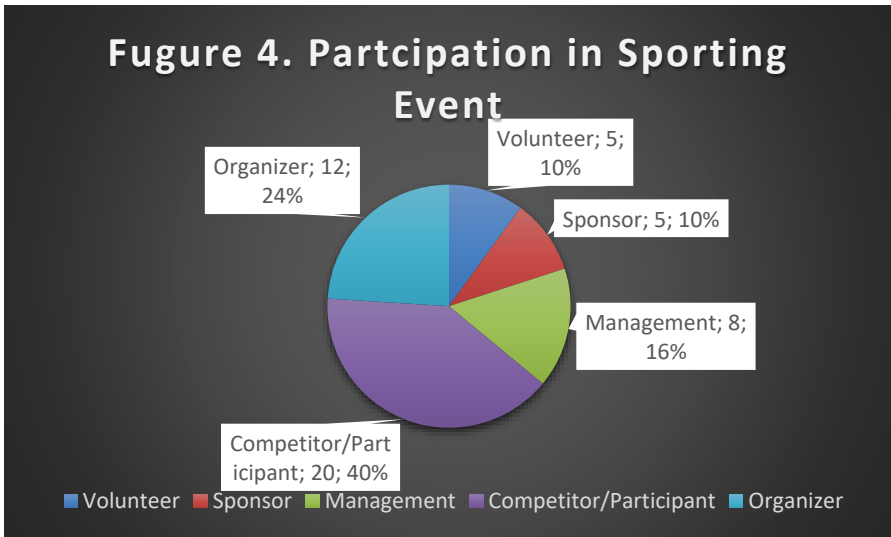


Figure 4. Profile of Respondents in terms of Participation in Sporting Event

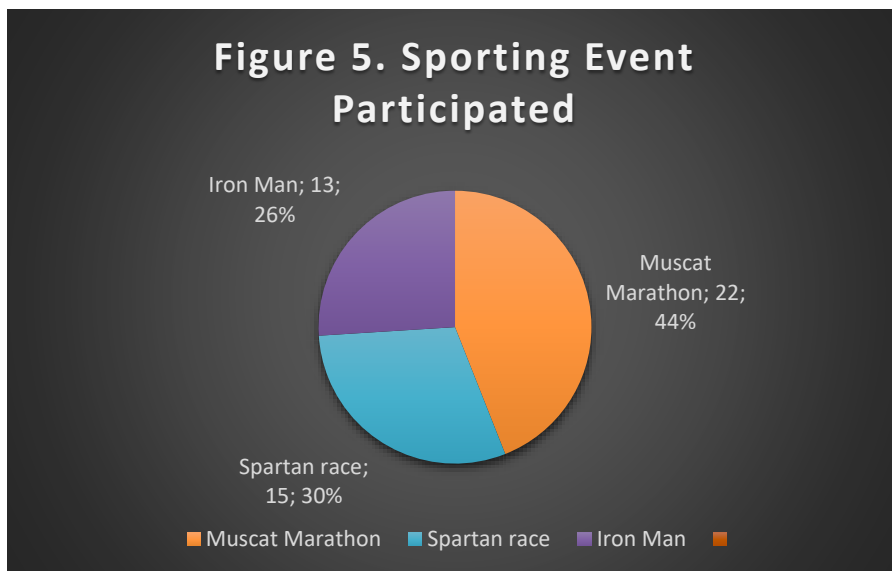


Figure 5. Profile of Respondents in terms of Event Participated

4.3 Results and Analysis

4.3.1 Objective 1

The level of motivation among participants on the different international sporting events in Oman namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.

The level of motivation among participants on the identified international sporting events in Oman were evaluated in terms of socio psychological and socio-cultural aspects. The results are reflected in Table 2. Data show that the level of motivation among participants towards Muscat Marathon is “Very High” in general, and when rated in terms of socio psychological and socio-cultural dimensions. This was revealed in the obtained mean score ratings which fell within the range of 4. 51- 5.00 scale.

Meanwhile, the level of motivation among participants towards Spartan Race is generally “High” as shown in the mean score rating

of $M=4.22$. The level of motivation of the participants towards Spartan Race is also “High” in terms of Socio Psychological aspect and “Very High” in Socio Cultural aspect as indicated in the respective obtained mean scores of $M=3.89$ and $M=4.55$.

Further, the overall level of motivation among participants towards Iron Man is “High” and in terms of the identified motivation aspects. This was shown in the obtained means scores which fell within the range of 3.51-4.50 scales.

The obtained value of standard deviation which fell within the range of 0.3421-0.4421 reveal a narrow dispersion which means that the data based on the means of responses were homogenous. This means that the responses of the participants based on the obtained means are more likely similar.

Table 2. The Level of Motivation among Participants on the Different International Sporting Events in Oman

Sporting Event	Motivation	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Muscat Marathon	Socio Psychological	4.55	0.3421	Very High
	Socio Cultural	4.52	0.4111	Very High
	Overall	4.54	0.3766	Very High
Spartan Race	Socio Psychological	3.89	0.3511	High
	Socio Cultural	4.55	0.4126	Very High
	Overall	4.22	0.3818	High
Iron Man	Socio Psychological	4.33	0.4421	High

	Socio Cultural	4.18	0.3512	High
	Overall	4.26	0.3966 5	High

Note: The level of motivation of participants on the International Sporting Events in Oman were measured according to the following scales and verbal interpretations: 4.51-5.00 (Very High); 3.51-4.49 (High); 2.51-3.50 (Moderate); 1.51-2.50 (Low); 1.00-1.50 (Very Low).

4.3.2 Objective 2

The differences in the level of motivation among participants on the identified international sporting events in Oman in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.

The differences in the level of motivation among the participants towards Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race were evaluated based on the overall mean and the means of socio psychological and socio-cultural aspects. Since there are three independent samples to be compared, the Kruskal Wallis was performed. The Kruskal Wallis is a non- parametric tool used to determine the significant differences between and among independents variables when that criteria for the use of parametric test was not complied, in this study, purposive sampling was used and thus, one of the criteria was not complied, and thus non paramedic test was used. This test was used in order to prove the null hypothesis which states, “there is no significant difference in the level of motivation of the participants towards the three identified sporting events.” The criteria for rejecting and accepting the hypothesis was set at 0.05 level of significance.

Data in Table 3 show that there are significant differences in the level of motivation of the participants towards the three identified sporting events in Oman, namely the Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and the Spartan Race, as a whole as indicated in the P value =0.003,

less than 0.05. With this evidence, the null hypothesis of no significant differences on the level of motivation towards the international sporting events in Oman was rejected at 0.05 level of significance.

Moreover, results also show that there are significant differences in the level of motivation of the participants towards the international sporting events in Oman in terms of socio psychological and socio-cultural aspects. This was revealed in the respective obtained p values of $0.008 < 0.05$ and $0.001 < 0.05$. Considering these evidence, the null hypothesis of no significant differences in the level of motivation of the participants towards the international sporting events in Oman is rejected at 0.05 level of significance in terms of the two motivation variables that were identified.

Table 3. Kruskal-Wallis results on the Significant Differences on the motivation among participants on International Sporting Events in Oman

Variables	X ² (Chi-Square)	p value
Socio Psychological	5.727	0.008
Socio Cultural	4.662	0.001
Overall	5.341	0.003

Sig. @ 0.05 Alpha

4.3.3 Objectives 3

The factors that affect the participants’ level of motivation

The factors that affect the participant’s level of motivation were ascertained using a multi response survey questionnaire. The responses were tallied according to the revealed frequencies and ranked from highest to lowest. The data were shown in Table 4.

Results show that the most prevailing factor that affects the participant's level of participation to the identified sporting events such as Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race is Experience (Rank 1) with obtained frequency score of $f=50$. This was followed by self- improvement (Rank 2), Pride (Rank 3), and Networking (Rank 4) with respective obtained frequency scores of $f=48$, $f=45$, and $f=36$.

Meanwhile, results revealed that the least prevailing factor that affect the participant's level of motivation to the identified sporting events in Oman were tokens/awards/ certificates/ gifts (Rank=5), cash incentives (Rank 6) , and Friends /Peers/ Family (Rank 7). This was revealed in the respective obtained frequency scores of $f=32$, $f=30$, $f=29$, and $f=25$.

Table 4. Factors that affect the participants level of motivation

Factors	Frequency	Rank
Experience	50	1
Self-Improvement	48	2
Pride	45	3
Networking	36	4
Tokens/ Awards/ Certificates/Gifts	32	5
Cash Incentives	30	6
Friends/ Peers/Family	29	7

Chapter 5

Discussion of Results

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the obtained results and findings. There are two phases of analysis that are presented in this chapter to complete the three phases of analysis of the results. The first phase was the interpretation of the statistical results which was made in the preceding chapter. The second phase the practical implications based on the statistical interpretations in the previous. The third phase is the theoretical analysis which was done by corroborating the results and implications with the arguments, study results, claims, and reports of the cited authors and organizations found in the literature reviews. In the phase, similarities, differences, and congruency of the results are the main purpose of the discussion.

5.2 Objective 1

The level of motivation among participants on the different international sporting events in Oman namely: Muscat Marathon, Iron Man and Spartan Race in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.

It has been found out that the level of motivation among participants towards Muscat Marathon is “Very High” as a whole and when rated in terms of socio psychological and socio-cultural aspects. These results might raise an implication that Muscat Marathon is very popular among the participants, or this sporting event is well anticipated or expected because they like it very much. This might be due to the enjoyment that the event can offer or the wellness that the participants can avail. More specifically, the participants are

motivated to join Muscat marathon because this might be a way for them to escape, discover themselves, relax, seek prestige, or develop kinship. To others, it is more than that especially to the sponsors, organizers, and management side. Directly involving themselves to the event would help them with their business through increasing their capacity to interact and seek networks with people and organizations with the same intention as to them.

The results agreed with the reports of the World Sport's Group (2021) that Muscat Marathon had gained the international prestige already. In fact, it was able to reach the 8000 participants for the six race categories across a two-day sporting event and attended by people from 103 countries in the world. Thus, had been considered as one of the iconic sporting events in 2020 despite the pandemic.

Further, regarding the very high level of motivation among participants on the socio psychological aspects this intruded an implication specific to personal well-being of the participants such as seeking for relaxation through experience, motivation towards developing themselves through physical activities or maybe wanting to prove something like gaining prestige or pride especially if they win the competition. On the other hand, the very high level of motivation among participants in relation to socio cultural aspects can deduce thoughts such as they just want to learn something through experience and seek for new things that they can apply later, maybe the participants are attending because they want to benchmark on the event.

The results are very similar to the claims of Wilson, et al (2017) as they grouped the type of motivation into socio psychological and socio-cultural aspects. From these they were able to classify escape, self- discovery, relaxation, prestige, regression kinship development, and social interaction within the socio psychological aspect, and that innovation and education in socio cultural aspect.

As to the results on “High” level of motivation among participants on Spartan Race and Iron Man when rated as a whole, an implication that these events are also popular and liked by the participants, but not as popular as Muscat Marathon. This might be due to the fact that Spartan Race and Iron Man are events that requires a lot of skills and physical strength of the participants unlike the Muscat Marathon. This was attested by the World’s Sports Group (2021) as it reported that the Iron Man is one of the world’s renowned and was considered as the most interesting and difficult one-day sporting events in the world which required a not only physical strength but also strong will among the participants. As to Spartan Race, the participants might also discourage because the sports is difficult indeed. According to Bosrtneck (2020) Spartan Race feature races at various distances such as the Stadion and Sprint which is the 5k and 20 obstacles; Super: 10k and 25 obstacles; Beast: half marathon and 30 obstacles; and Ultra: 50k and 60 obstacles. Recently, the Spartan Race was able to introduces the DEKAFIT, which is an indoor fitness decathlon. Additionally, Spartan offers trail races, endurance races, children’s races and championships which is also referred to as the “DEATH RACE” which last for 48 hours.

However, as to socio cultural aspects, results showed that the participants have “very High” level of motivation towards Spartan Race. From these results it was construed that the participants might be too interested in the event that they want to learn about it more. They might also found it new, that they want to benchmark or get some ideas about it. This might be the reasons why many sponsors have invested in the event. In fact, Bosrtneck (2020) reported that the 2012 Raptor Consumer Partners invested in the Spartan Race company and was sponsored by Reebok in 2013 and renamed "Reebok Spartan Race Series". Due to the gaining interest of the investors succeeding events similar to Spartan Race was held such as the Universal Sports broadcast in 2013 for the Spartan Race World Championships. Likewise, the parent network then approved a

Spartan-based television series, *Spartan: Ultimate Team Challenge* which led by the producers of fellow NBC series *American Ninja Warrior* in 2015. This claims of the Bosrtncck manifested that Spartan Race is gaining the interest of the participants and thus, supporting the results that reveal a “Very High” level of motivation of the participants in terms of socio-cultural aspects.

Indeed, the participants who included the organizers, the management, and the sponsors have seen the potential benefits of Spartan Race to the people of Oman, not only on the socio-cultural aspect but translated to the socio-economic realm. As greater multiplier impact, this socio-economic benefit can also induce the spirit of the local people and thus the entire Omani Community at large.

Putting this all into perspective, the results of the study on “Very High” as well as “High” level of motivation of the international sporting events in Oman supported the arguments presented by Ehsani, et al (2012). The authors claimed that sports events are considered as one of the pull factors for tourism activities today. For this Cassidy and Pegg (2012) also stated that there was a marked inherent relationship between sports and tourism during the last decade of the 20th Century which has manifested many benefits towards the participants in terms of their socio psychological and socio-cultural well-being.

5.3 Objective 2

The differences in the level of motivation among participants on the identified international sporting events in Oman in terms of socio-psychological and socio-cultural dimensions.

Results revealed that there are significant differences in the level of motivation among participants towards the three identified sporting events namely Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race. These results were evaluated as a whole and in terms of socio psychological and socio-cultural variables.

This imply that the participants have different views and insights regarding the events. Others might consider it good and beneficial, and others might consider it not as worth their interest or attention. On the socio psychological aspect, it might be that the participants consider the sporting events as way of seeking for relaxation, leisure, and pleasure or gaining new experience and spending time with friends and families, which are not agreed upon by all people. On the other side, the sporting events might also be one way of learning and gaining business ideas for others, and that other do not consider so. The differences might also be to some reasons that are contributed by other variables that are not included in the current investigation or other factors and aspects that are not mentioned in the present study.

The results of the differences in the level of motivation among the participants towards the three international sporting events in Oman might also be due to the differences in the popularity of the events from each other. Maybe Muscat Marathon is more popular compared to the two other international sporting events such as the Iron man and Spartan Race. This was revealed in the reports of World's Sports Group (2021) stating that the event has gained attention of many people from all ages and races from different parts of the world. In fact, in the recently held Muscat Marathon in 2020, which is in the middle of the pandemic crisis, still the event was able to gain the interest of 8000 participants from 103 different nationalities in the world.

Also, these differences might also be due to the individual differences of the individuals as well as the differences in their needs. Or maybe their attitudes towards the sporting events which can also affect their wants and needs.

In this regard, the benefits of Muscat Marathon both to the participants and the country are encompassing. It does not only provide people with new experience or venue for leisure, relaxation, and discovering new things for themselves but it goes beyond to the

higher level. These implications supported the claims of Ehsani, et al (2012) that every city like Muscat and any part of the Sultanate maybe are aggressive towards bidding on hosting a sports event, on top of the economic benefits, the international sporting events can raise and a boost to trade and investment. Such impacts can be translated into socio psychological and socio-cultural realm of the community and each and every member of the society.

5.4 Objectives 3

The factors that affect the participants' level of motivation

Results showed that the most prevailing factors that affects the participant's level of participation to the identified sporting events such as Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race are experience, self- improvement, and pride. This means is more concerned with their personal well-being which can be associated on the socio psychological aspects of their life. This is similar to the claims of This Malchrowicz-Mo'sko and Chlebosz (2018) and Prebensenet al (2010) stating that motivation is an internal factor that empowers, directs and completes the behaviour of the individual. The authors also argued that motivation as a need for conditions that lead to certain types of behaviour that are likely to satisfy the individual.

On the other hand, other factors which was seen at the bottom of the participant's list are external motivational factors such as tokens/awards/ certificates/ gifts, cash incentives, and Friends /Peers/ Family influences. This means that the participants are motivated on their own and that they cannot be readily influenced by external factors such as those mentioned in the study. These results might result to an implication that the participants are motivated because they want to nurture their socio psychological ascendancy compared to their socio-cultural norms. They want to attend or participate on the event because it is all they need, and they want to fulfill something within themselves which cannot be provided by people or

factors around them. In studies about leisure, the term used is “enduring involvement” which was described as stable and ongoing state with a specific service or activity and remains consistent or evolves slowly over time.

In their research Akyuz, et al (2018) explained this as attraction, centrality, and self-expression as indices to measure enduring involvement which has seen to be an effective predictor of leisure behaviour of the participants. In a way, the participants do not care about the material incentives or any other external factors but only want to satisfy themselves which was termed by Wiind and Cant (2015) as a “an unobservable state of motivation, arousal or interest toward a recreation activity or associated product”.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter culminates the entire study, wherein empirical results were given conclusions and then suggestions or recommendation were derived. The conclusions were intruded based on the results and the given practical ad theoretical implications. Whereas, the recommendations were drawn based from the results, implications, as well as conclusions. The recommendations were made in favor of the different stakeholders which are mentioned in the significance or importance of the study.

6.2 Conclusion

Based on the results the following conclusions were intruded:

The study reveals that the level of motivation among participants towards the international sporting events are “Very High” on Muscat Marathon, and “High” on Iron Man and Spartan Race. Thus, it was conclusive that Muscat marathon is more popular compared to the two other international sporting events.

The findings also reveal that there are significant differences in the level of motivation among participants towards the three identified international sporting events in Oman as a whole and based on the socio psychological and socio-cultural aspects. These results have construed conclusions that the participants have different views and attitudes regarding the international sporting events held in Oman. Putting it into perspective, this views and attitudes might be affected by factors such as varying level of enjoyment, expectations for experiences, views towards leisure and recreation, attitudes towards

relaxation. On the other hand, the variation on their responses can also be due to the varying needs and wants for more learnings and adventure.

The study has found out that the most prevailing factors that affects the participant's level of participation to the identified sporting events such as Muscat Marathon, Iron Man, and Spartan Race are experience, self- improvement, and pride. Based on these results, it was conclusive that the participants pay attention to their socio psychological wellbeing and that this construed with the fact that the participants attend the sporting events to enjoy and get more experience for self-development. On the other hand, those factors affected by external forces such as awards, certificates, friends and families were considered by participants as least prevailing factors. In this regard, it was conclusive that the participants are motivated towards the international sporting events based on their personal views.

6.3 Recommendations

The findings, implications, and conclusions of the study was able to derived the following recommendations:

1. It was concluded that the organizers and management of Iron Man and Spartan Race shall seek the support of the government through the Ministry of Tourism to facilitate the promotion and marketing other these events. The promotion and marketing efforts will also provide more information about the event which will become one to bets motivator among participants.
2. For a concerted effort and encouraging more participants to the international sporting events in Oman, the government shall assign an organized body to conduct careful planning that will hold the organizers formulate strategic actions for the improvement of the holding of these events. Since the sporting event is already considered a tourism attraction which are expected to deliver positive impacts to the socio-cultural well fare of the people, it is best that the

business operational areas of this events are taken into consideration. Putting everything in place to maximize benefits for various stakeholders.

3. Lastly, it is also recommended that further studies shall be conducted especially on optimizing the effect of other factors such as the socio-cultural aspects. In this regard a foundation can be created which will encourage the participation of many organizations that puts emphasis on learning and innovation like the academic community and educational institutions. These moves will not only encourage competition but also will embed the spirit of sportsmanship among the stakeholders of these institutions.

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