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Master's Thesis of Global Sport Management

**The Effect of Hosting a Mega Sport
Event on the Levels of Participation:
AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018**

메가스포츠이벤트 개최가 참여도에 미치는 효과:
2018 AFC 요르단 여자 아시안컵을 중심으로

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AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018

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Abstract

The Effect of Hosting a Mega Sport Event on the Levels of Participation: AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018

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The effect of hosting a mega sport event on the levels of participation goes down to the ordinary citizens in the host country. The study focused on the effect of hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 on the participation levels.

This study took a qualitative approach method where 16 participants were involved among them 10 were players, 3 were administrators and 3 managers who were either influenced directly or indirectly with the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018.

The findings of the study indicate that the Jordanians perception towards football changed after the event. There were radical changes in the

Jordan Football Association (JFA) aimed at accommodating many men and women in football as the demand of the sport also grew.

The findings show the increase in participation level among registered football players of both genders in the season of hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018, then a slight decrease the following season. The findings indicate the effect of the hosting mostly impacted the women and kids sports participation compared to men.

Keywords: Mega sport event, sport participation, Hosting mega events, AFC Asian Cup.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Sport stakeholders, policymakers, and scholars all share the common idea that success in elite sports increases mass sports participation. They claim that hosting elite sports event will influence and inspire others to take up the sport and participate in sport related activities (Lovett et al., 2020). The founding father of modern Olympism, Baron de Coubertin, assumed that hosting the Olympic Games would raise the levels of sport participation because sports can function as a pyramid, with the top inspiring the larger base (Coubertin, 1935).

Mega events are the biggest of all events, they receive massive media coverage, and attract attention not only from the host city area, but beyond that. Additionally, mega events cost a lot more to manage and attract those mega events. They are a rare commodity that few communities can hope to host, perhaps due to their scope.

Governments frequently use the success of elite athletes and the hosting of big sports events and the favorable outcomes it brings as justification for huge investments in elite sports. These favorable outcomes include a strengthened feeling of national pride, diplomatic

acknowledgement, particular growth and progress of top players, and the ability to encourage and influence more people to participate in sport activities (Houlihan & Green, 2007; De Croock et al., 2012).

Governments at all levels can employ this strategy by using mega sports events as promoters to encourage and inspire individuals to participate in physical activity. They can leverage mega sports events to motivate individuals to become more dynamic and involved in sport activities, and also leverage the possibilities they bring, as those events happen infrequently, so they must seize all chances and take advantage of that.

Additionally, hosting an event has the power to completely change a city and transform it, therefore, it is vital for policymakers, stakeholders, and the population of the host nation. The bigger public funds invested; the more interesting the nation's transformation develops. Regardless of the recreation and worldwide marketing benefits of the short mega sport event, it is difficult to rationalize paying billions of dollars on it. Therefore, the government and policy makers need to be alert of any potential change and opportunity that such events might create.

Prior to FIFA U17 Women's World Cup 2016 (WWC) in Jordan, the Jordanian government spent 20 Million JDs to renew four of the country's

venues, each with a range of 13,000 seating (Collet, 2015). Besides these renovated sports stadiums, seventeen training fields were constructed (Maier, 2020). These infrastructures were used later for the next sport event hosted; the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 (Schneider, 2018).

For many years, the country's choice to host a mega sports event has been affected by politics. However, nowadays, making residents part of the decision-making processes is now common practice in a democratic country. It is generally acknowledged that a community's involvement and residents' support are crucial to an event's success and sustainability (Prayag et al., 2013).

Consequently, more and more democratic countries link their bid to host the Olympics on a positive public referendum.

1.2. Problem Statement

The AFC Women's Asian Cup kicked off in April 2018 in Amman, where the Jordan became the first West Asian country to hold such event gathering the continent's top sixteen teams to an Arabian country. The event attracted the attention of all people regardless of religion, gender and age.

It was not the first time that Jordan hosted a mega sports event; in 2016 Jordan successfully hosted the fifth FIFA U17 Women's World Cup, where sixteen teams from six different confederations participated in it.

These two unprecedented historic football mega sports events that all Jordanians had witnessed, exposed the country to mega sports and activities that surround it. These mega football events had the ability to influence Jordanians to become engaged and take part in football activities through their legacies.

Apart from hosting events, Jordan women's football national team is the highest FIFA ranked among all Arab teams, at a score of sixty-five (FIFA, 2022), but in spite of the efforts made by the Jordanian government, institutions, and the associations concerned with the development of women's football in Jordan, which includes the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Education, the Jordanian Football Association (JFA) and its president His Royal Highness Prince Ali Bin Al-Hussein, who was a proactive leader in the Arab sporting world to take serious steps towards developing a clear identity of women's football, and as a result, this had a clear impact on improving the societal view towards the participation of females in football in Jordan, there is still an unbalanced gap between what has been done and the expected outcomes, in terms of female engagement in

football in Jordan. It is worth to be mentioned that Prince Ali's efforts were not only limited to Jordan, as he opposed FIFA's worldwide ban on Muslim women football players covered with the headscarves (hijab) in 2012 and led a campaign to change the rules which were already enacted, and the ban was lifted a few months later.

In Jordan, football is the number one sport, and although generally, males are more involved in its different fields than females, the study not only focused on the effect of hosting a mega sport on females' football participation but on males' too.

The rates of obesity play a main role in encouraging the participation in sports and being physically active, it was confirmed that the prevalence of obesity among adult population (eighteen years and above) has raised from 33.1% in 2012 to 35.5% in 2016 (FAO et al., 2021). FAO et al. (2021) also confirmed the increased rates in the prevalence of obesity among kids (under five years), 5.7% in 2012 reaching 7.1% in 2020.

1.3. Significance of the Study

Football is a significantly growing game in Jordan, however, and despite this fact, there are not enough academic or scholarly works found to facilitate the elaboration of work related to this subject nor enough academic

research made to examine the sport participation benefits of hosting any mega sport event in Jordan, that would be efficient and can leverage the level of participation while focusing on the results of the study for hosting any upcoming mega sport events in the future. Consequently, the abovementioned reasons made it difficult to carry out research and studies related to this topic. However, for these same reasons, it is a triggering point that encourages and inspires researchers to conduct studies contributing to the enhancement of both this subject and the levels of participation in Jordan.

This study will address this gap in the literature and can be used to direct and recommend the people in charge of governmental and nongovernmental sport organizations. It will help to come up with new necessary strategies to encourage an actively healthy life as a way to raise the sports participation levels in Jordan generally and clubs and academies specifically.

Due to the few numbers of empirical studies done on the effect of hosting a mega sport event on sports participation subject, stemming from the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018, this study will contribute significantly to understand the relation between hosting mega sporting events and sports participation among the citizenries.

1.4. Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan in 2018 on the participation of Jordanians in football.

The research will also uncover what has happened in Jordan, following the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018, with regard to the level of sports participation amongst registered footballers of both genders in the Kingdom.

The research will find the strategies that can be best used to maximize the benefit of hosting a mega sport event in Jordan in terms of participations.

1.5. Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to attain the intended purpose of the study:

RQ1. What changes were made in Football participation levels after hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 in Jordan?

RQ2. How did the hosting of the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 affect the level of participation among registered football players?

RQ3. What strategies can be used to maximize the benefits of hosting mega sport events?

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. Mega Sports Events

Mega sports events, according to Roche (2017), have the potential to amaze people and equip them with a glance of more general trends that play a big part in the world. Ludvigsen et al. (2022) also argue that mega sports events can aid individuals in better comprehending the world and its setting as they make things seem more reasonable. Mega sports events in the host country receive widespread media coverage due to a variety of reasons, like the destination image, urban alterations and changes, and the attraction of tourists (Müller, 2015).

Today, the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup are recognized as the most popular, and powerful events in the whole universe that spectators show interest in. They are one of a kind that athletes' dreams get fulfilled once every four years (Shone & Parry, 2004). According to Roche (2003), Mega sport event is full of aspirations for winning, breaking records, and significant moments and atmosphere. However, nations today are using it as a tool for public diplomacy, country promotion and marketing, and soft power and as an urban policy instrument to reconstruct and reshape the entire city and its neighborhoods (Azzali, 2019; Rookwood & Adeosun, 2021).

Mega sports event portrays an image of remarkable harmony and collaboration on a global scale, and it may reflect how international politics are conducted (Segrave, 1988). Segrave (1988) also claimed that it serves as a chance to promote significant ideas like equality, freedom, and democracy around the globe.

Cities have been competing fiercely in recent years for the privilege to host mega sports events like the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics, with the possibility of significant economic growth predicted by impact studies serving as the most persuasive justification (Barget & Gouguet, 2007). While competing to ensure financial profit, the host cities attempt to rebuild and reshape their cultural, economic, and urban goals throughout the event (Viehoff & Poynter, 2016).

These huge events could get either a pleasant or bad impact on the hosts cities. The host candidates only focus on the positive aspect of hosting the event, without considering the expected negative impact that would happen to the host cities due to the hosting (Brent Ritchie, 1984; Kim et al., 2006).

2.1.1. Mega Sports Games Legacies and Impacts

In the past ten years, scholars and policymakers have been more interested in the concepts of legacy and impacts (Leopkey & Parent, 2012, Taks et al., 2012). Mega sport events are usually described in the form of impact and efforts to create long lasting positive and pleasant legacy. Now that both concepts have frequently been used indiscriminately, it is important to differentiate one from another.

Impact is typically used to refer to short term effect (Preuss, 2007). Although there are many other types of impacts stated, economical, touristic, physical, sociological, psychological, and political ones are the most often cited (e.g., Brown & Massey, 2001; Ritchie, 1984). Scholars, policymakers, and event planners are becoming more interested in social impacts despite the fact that researches on the economical and touristic impacts have predominated the debates. The social impacts of an event are frequently invoked to justify investment in events, especially governmental ones (Jago et al., 2003). The rationale of mega sport events' abilities to inspire sport participation has grown aligned with the important need for increasing the population physical activity's on policy agendas (Taks et al., 2012).

On the other hand, legacy may have many facets and fall under several categories Chappelet (2012). According to Preuss (2007) Legacy describes structural alterations that live more than the event, even when it's over.

Different stakeholders believed these structural alterations might be tangible or intangible, positive or negative, planned or unplanned (Chappelet, 2012). Scheu and Preuss (2017) identified the following aspects of legacy:

- (1) urban development
- (2) environment enhancement
- (3) policy and governance
- (4) skills, knowledge, and networks
- (5) intellectual legacies
- (6) beliefs and behavior

According to the researchers Li and McCabe, (2013), it has become a significant rationale while the bidding processes and hosting the events to leave good legacies. But it must be acknowledged that legacies do not just happen. To optimize the legacies behind hosting mega sport events, a strategy must be established (Leopkey & Parent, 2012).

2.1.2. From Legacy to Leveraging Events

Legacies are often predictable or at least wished for because there is typically very little strategic planning for event outcomes (Taks et al., 2022). As noted by Jago et al. (2010), when achieving legacies, a clear strategic approach must be taken, and resources must be set properly to avoid being used for other event-correlated activities not in line with the legacy.

Leveraging emphasizes on the ways and methods to achieve desired outcomes (in this case, sport participation) through integrating a specific event into the current community's marketing and managerial strategies (Chalip, 2014).

Therefore, throughout the event planning and implementation procedures, strategy development and implementation are the main points of attention.

The following two stages are important to achieve the anticipated results (Taks et al., 2022):

- Planning stage: To study the challenges and opportunities of leveraging sports events to foster and improve the sport.
- Implementation stage: To create an action plan for leveraging.

The only way to exploit the event to generate any opportunity for favorable outcomes through pre, during, and post event plans is through strategic marketing. According to Chalip (2004), the main focus of the leveraging theory is on "those activities which need to be undertaken around

the event itself which seek to maximize the long-term benefit from events". Such events provide huge chances; however, it is the responsibility of such sports national associations and other related bodies in the host cities to take advantage of the opportunities through business opportunities, related marketing efforts, and related occasions (Misener & Mason, 2008, 2009; O'Brien, 2007).

According to researchers O'Brien and Chalip (2007) in general, marketing opportunities are the focus of the leveraging framework. It is proposed that event outcomes depend less on whether an event really occurred and more on how its resources are used to achieve intended outcomes and often in conjunction with other marketing and management resources. Event leveraging has been linked to effects on society, culture, the environment, politics, the economy, or sports. Cities that have attempted to profit from events have created initiatives to use event-related resources for a variety of advantages, such as increased tourism visitation (O'Brien, 2007), support for small businesses (Chalip & Leyns, 2002), the provision of new housing (Olds, 1998), heritage restoration (Ramshaw, 2010), employment creation, new training opportunities, as well as other type of social development (Grix, 2012; Kellett et al., 2008; Mules & Dwyer, 2005). As for sport development and according to Masterman (2014), events can

provide the attention needed for the growth of sport while simultaneously serving as significant sources of new participation opportunities while having suitable planning.

According to Wicker and Sotiriadou (2013) it is crucial for future host cities of mega sporting events to plan an upsurge in sports participations and create knowledgeable strategies that can capitalize and leverage on sports development results.

Accordingly, it is utmost important to know which target group is most expected to be influenced and how. In the sense of on this point, former mega sporting events can guide policymakers and concerned bodies for the most appropriate choices to attract several citizenries and especially the ones in need.

2.2. Sport Participation and Physical Activity

The most significant elements of having a healthy lifestyle are physical activity, together with sports participation (Bauman, 2004; Janssen & LeBlanc, 2010; WHO, 2010). Koivula (1999) stated that "...sport participation on a regular basis has been shown to have positive effects on physical health, psychological enhancement, stress reactivity, and mental wellbeing".

Sport participation takes the shape of organized and nonorganized activities in clubs. Increased participation in sports translates into more physical activity, which raises the chance of living a healthy life. However, there is no any specific terms to define sport participation and physical activity in the literature, hence it is crucial to do so. According to some academics, sport participation means engaging in physical activity within the previous four weeks (Humphreys & Ruseski, 2009), unlikely for Leslie et al. (2004), it means participating in sports within the previous two weeks. The overall concept of sport and sport participation both intrinsically encourage physical activity, regardless matter how intensive the sport or activity is. The researchers Scheerder et al. (2006) described sport participation as "...being involved in leisure-time sports activities whatever the level of sports participation may be". This is a vital idea to know since all sports, regardless of their intensity, give their participants the opportunity to engage in some type of physical activity.

On the other hand, Physical activity is stated as "...sports training (hours spent weekly, the type of sport) and the total amount of leisure time spent on physical activities, including sports and other forms of exercise" by (Hegaard et al., 2008). According to Bauman et al. (2006), Physical activity

is described as "...behaviors that result in 'any movement contributing to human total energy consumption".

According to Koivula (1999), participating in physical activity and sports has good physical and intellectual effects on the individual. Due to this, it is essential to inspire people of all ages to engage in physical activity, that may be done through participating in sports. According to what is being said, a country is more inclined to be seen as healthy than those who do not encourage sport participation, if it focuses more on encouraging and promoting sport participation and sports itself. Therefore, it is necessary that sport federations and bodies at all levels effectively transfer the advantages of greater physical activity and to leverage the mega sport events to stimulate sport participation (Hindson et al., 1994).

Hindson et al. (1994) claimed that sport organizations must effectively manage the advantages and potentials that mega sport events hold through innovative marketing strategies, in order to benefit from the increased exposure, which means that sport organizations and bodies of all levels are responsible to effectively market both their products and the sport in general, specifically during mega sport events and to leverage from it for future mega events.

2.2.1. Motivation

It is a concept that takes into account how someone is treated by others or how someone feels about a particular activity that they are expected to complete. According to Koçel (2003), the definition of motivation may be described as "...an individual's own willingness to fulfil a given task". It is crucial for the analysis and justification of people's behavior in sporting contexts (Hogg, 1997). It is one of the most important study subjects for many different sports divisions since it has a large impact on how social contexts and behavioral changes like competitiveness, learning, performance, continuousness, and behaviors are developed (Duda, 1989; Vallerand et al., 1987). The two types of motivations that will be discussed are as follows:

2.2.1.1. Intrinsic Motivation

It happens when a person drives their own motivation and engages in an activity out of delight and satisfaction (Nicholas & Robert, 1992; Deci, 1975). People that are intrinsically driven have a desire to improve themselves and can typically control themselves to accomplish a task (Nicholas & Robert, 1992). A person who is intrinsically motivated will demonstrate a particular behavior voluntarily also if it is impeded through outer conditions (Deci & Ryan, 1985). It is due to the fact that if a person

learns new things about a particular activity (in this case, sports), they will find it more intriguing and feel a sense of inner fulfillment, which will inspire them even more to continue the activity (Deci, 1975; White, 1959).

2.2.1.2. Extrinsic Motivation

It is initiated by other people and can have both good and bad impacts. Due to varying material or spiritual values, it may also raise or reduce the possibility that a behavior would occur again (Iğdır PDR Kom, 2016). Extrinsic motivation, in contrast to intrinsic motivation, frequently entails a wide range of behaviors and efforts focused on achieving a specific objective instead of the person's inner happiness. To put it another way, those who are extrinsically motivated only demonstrate behaviors that are encouraged and stimulated by something outside of themselves, like a "...reward, appraisal, acceptance, or compliment" (Ryan et al., 1990).

In this research, the mega sport event and its elite players serve as extrinsic motivations for individuals to take up exercise and participate in football activities.

2.3. Elite Sport, Mass Sport Participation and Hosting a Mega Sport Event

In different literatures, the increasing physical activity through hosting events where elite athletes or elite sport events have the power to inspire spectators and individuals to become more active sport participants and take up exercise at the mass participation level (Sotiriadou et al, 2008; Weed, 2009) has been referred to as the trickle down effect (Hindson et al., 1994; Hogan & Norton, 2000, Sotiriadou et al., 2008), the demonstration effect (Weed, 2009), the Boris Becker effect (Van Bottenburg, 2001) or the festival effect (Mansfield et al., 2010).

Despite any term used to describe the effect, the trickle-down effect's core idea is "...a process by which people are inspired by elite sport, sports people or sports events to participate themselves" (Weed, 2009). According to this description, being influenced by elite sports may result from:

- (a) The influential role of elite performances;
- (b) The influential role of elite athletes (sport stars as personalities); and
- (c) The influential role and legacy of elite events.

In particular, the trickle-down effect is generally believed to be connected to event hosting (Potwarka & Leatherdale, 2016), sporting success (De Bosscher et al., 2013), and role modeling (Wicker & Frick, 2016).

The term “trickle-down effect” was used for the first time in sport related literature by Hindson, et al. (1994). These scholars defined the trickle-down effect as a demonstrative effect that influences people to be more engaged in physical activities and take up exercise. Based on the trickle-down effect and as previously described in the above section, it is when the society's inner desire to emulate the high class society, in this case, to emulate the elite athletes (Hindson et al., 1994).

It is revealed after reviewing Hindson et al.'s (1994) description of the trickle-down effect that there is not inevitably a clear definition. According to researchers conducted in several nations on the trickle-down effect (Boardley, 2013; Coalter, 2004; Hogan & Norton, 2000; Potwarka & McCarville, 2010), Hindson et al. findings (1994) were frequently cited in the studies in order to define the term.

According to Craig and Bauman (2014), Taks et al. (2014) and Weed et al. (2012) this effect is the ability of elite sports through a mega sport event to boost the sport and physical activity participation among the host country's population.

Where Frawley et al. (2009) defined it as "...the process by which mass sports participation is stimulated by public exposure to elite sport". Promoters of events frequently assert that holding mega sporting events

would influence and encourage individuals to select sports and increase long-term participation rates. Given its detrimental impact on the risk of developing numerous diseases and reducing life expectancy, decreasing physical inactivity is a desirable result of the investment that is shared by policymakers globally (Lee et al., 2012).

However, there is mixed and little evidence to support the idea that major sports events like the Olympics have a "demonstration effect" or "trickle-down effect" that stimulates individuals to engage in more physical exercise in the host nations (Weed et al., 2015). To showcase the trickledown effect findings in the context of sport from several researches, that mixed evidence will be further reviewed in the below section titled "Mega Sport Events Effect on Sport Participation in Different Studies."

2.3.1. Demonstration Effect

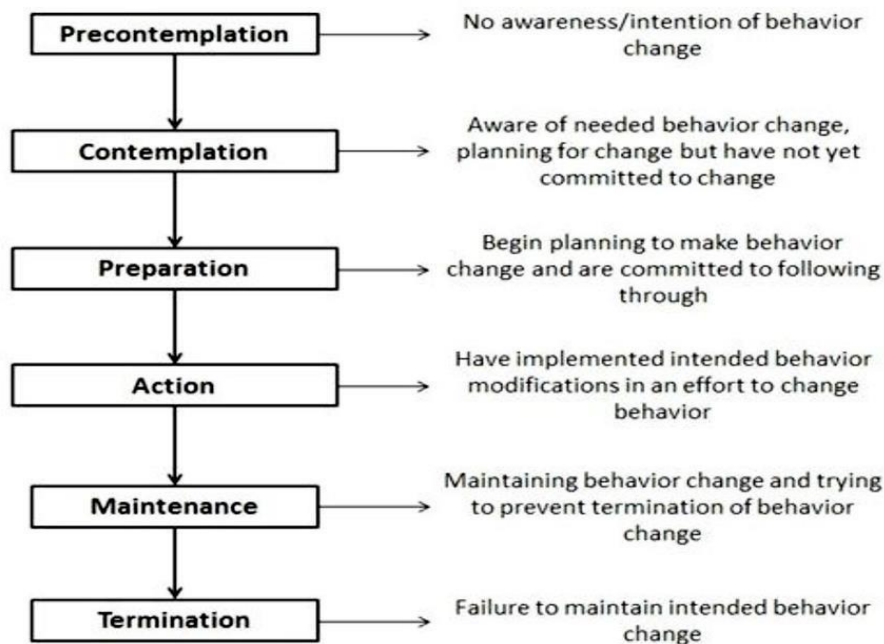
The demonstration effect is basically the trickle-down effect in sports. Both the trickle-down effect and the demonstration effect, as previously mentioned, are referred to as the motive or the drive that encourages the population to be dynamic and engaged in sports. The demonstration effect refers to the general population imitating elite athletes, which increases participation rates across the host country (Hindson et al., 1994).

It is based on the supposition that a mega sports event increases the levels of participation by motivating people to take up exercise and increasing the duration of their sport engagement and frequency; increasing their level of interest in physical activity or sport; or changing the attitudes toward exercise (Wicker & Sotiriadou, 2013).

This has been more elucidated by an adapted version of the transtheoretical model (TTM), the most widely recognized model that pertains to engaging in exercise and physical activity, as shown in Figure 1 (Hillsdon et al., 2005; Mair & Laing, 2013; Ramchandani et al., 2015).

Figure 1.

The Transtheoretical Model (TTM)



According to Ramchandani et al. (2015), the pre-contemplation, contemplation, and preparation stages of the transtheoretical model are the ones that are particularly exposed to the points received from events and on which the demonstration effect might have affect the most.

Whereas the last phase of this version -action and maintenance- might be achieved by further community actions and processes that are carried out in conjunction with or after the event.

However, the demonstration effect theory is just an assumption. Although hosting these Mega events may boost the publicity of the performed sport, that does not always mean that the host country will be inspired to expand participation (Hogan & Norton, 2000; Pringle, 2001). Since obtaining a nation's desire and intention to engage, and also persuading the people to start becoming more physically active, is one of the primary challenges in turning this exposure into participation (Bauman et al., 2003).

Parties such as national or communal sport association, have take advantage of the publicity of the sport and the motivational tales and stories related to the achievement of the host country's athletes for such Games to stimulate the general public to become actively engaged in sports (Cashman, 2006; Coalter, 2004; Coalter, 2007; De Bosscher et al., 2013; Frawley &

Cush, 2011). However, Potwarka and McCarville (2010) noticed that it is challenging for these parties to apply any of the frameworks that would assist them to harness and leverage the Games due to the lack of knowledge and the theoretical evidence that supports the trickle-down and demonstration effects. Considering that the demonstration effect does not always have an impact on a nation's whole population, it is also a question of whom to target (Mansfield et al., 2010).

The Demonstration Effect method, according to Mansfield et al. (2010), can be associated with event hosting and/or performance accomplishments and works best when participants feel locally engaged to the larger event. According to Mansfield et al. (2010) and Ramchandani et al. (2015), the demonstration effect only affects the ones that now or previously participated in sports and got good connections or feelings toward sport.

He also explained the existence of three possible impacts of the demonstration effect, which are:

- (1) motivating former participants to return to sport;
- (2) motivating occasional and rarely participants to participate more frequently; and

(3) motivating existing and active participants to explore new sports and activities.

Mansfield et al. (2010) also believed that the demonstration effect, in which sports motives, characteristics, and capabilities mix with the qualities of the Olympics and Paralympics and are utilized to motivate sport participation, is the leverageable process for sport activities.

Researchers Mansfield et al. (2010) and Ramachandani et al. (2015) discovered that sedentary individuals, those who are inactive and uninterested in physical activities and sport, are not affected by the demonstration effect, and that more effort is needed to help these individuals change their lifestyle habits. However, Mansfield et al. (2010) proposed another procedure known as the festival effect to persuade these certain individuals to engage in physical activities, as will be discussed furtherly in the next section.

2.3.2. Festival Effect

The concept of the festival effect, which is directly linked related to the social leveraging of a mega sport event (Chalip, 2006; Weed, 2009), is connected to the potential rise in people's desire to be involved in and participate in a collective, enjoyable event like the Commonwealth Games, Olympics, or FIFA World Cup (Weed, 2009). The effect, according to

Mansfield et al. (2010), is intended to "...create in people a desire, if not urge to participate in some way, and this desire is stronger if the event is perceived to be bigger than and beyond sport".

Similar to the demonstration effect and in connection with the transtheoretical model of behavior change, the festival effect is also believed to be best suited to the individuals who are less physically active and will help create a "nudge" or change towards seriously considering participating in sport, becoming more physically active, or becoming frequently physically active for the very first time (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997) as the festival effect is best adapted for the individuals who have "negative attitude towards sport and formal physical activities" (Mansfield et al., 2010).

According to Pricewaterhouse Coopers (2009), it is crucial to realize that these Major Games are more than just sporting events when trying to promote physical activity and sport participation through the festival effect, as those games also reflect the traditions, way of life, and culture of the host country.

Therefore, since the festival effect "builds a sense of community involvement in the occasion to promote celebration of the Olympic and Paralympic Festival" it can be used to boost national pride brought on by the Games and encourage high levels of physical exercise within the individuals

(Mansfield et al., 2010). This can be also beneficial to the sport bodies like national or communal sports associations to leverage the Games and motivate individuals of the population to take up exercise and be active, once they focus and take advantage of the increased sense of national pride that is developed (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2009; Mansfield et al., 2010).

2.4. Mega Sport Events Effect on Sport Participation in Different Studies

There is a conflict of opinions regarding the effect of the hosting on sport participation. Scholars argue that the relation between hosting a mega sport event and participation levels might be strong or weak. For example, the trickle-down effect might not occur to people who did not practice any form of sports before the event (Coalter, 2004; Weed, 2009). It can have a positive effect on people who already practice to practice more (Weed, 2010).

Hanstad and Skille (2010), for example, observed a temporary rapid increase in engagement following the Olympic Games in Lillehammer in 1994 and Sydney in 2000. A couple of years after Australia hosted the 2003 Rugby World Cup, further research suggested an increased growth in the number of rugby players there (Frawley & Cush, 2011; Veal et al., 2012). Yet, Hogan and Norton (2000) discovered no connection between

Australian Olympic achievement and levels of widespread participation. Similar to this, Vanden Heuvel and Conolly (2001) found no difference in Australians' involvement rates in sports or physical activity before or after Sydney hosted the 2000 Olympic Games. In relation to the Melbourne CGs, Veal et al. (2012) discovered that between 2005 and 2007, participation in 13 of the 18 CGs sports decreased in Victoria while it increased in five other states.

According to Coren and Fiore (2009), there is no credible scientific proof that mega sports events have a trickle-down effect on participation. Further investigation is recommended in order to clarify the impact of big sports events on individual's choices to start exercise or increase the frequency with which they do so.

Mega sports events can have several effects on various populations, depending on factors including age, gender, education level, occupation, and country of origin. However, there is a little prior study examining the impacts on particular population groups. Age-related studies have found that important sports events are more liable to motivate young people to start up exercise (Feddersen et al., 2009; Frawley & Cush, 2011). Therefore, the probability that older people would be motivated to start practicing sports as

due to a mega sport event was lower (Frawley & Cush, 2011). Therefore, it is hypothesized that age is unfavorably related to trickle-down effects.

In a study on the effects of the Olympic Games in Barcelona by Truno (1995), researchers looked at participation patterns by gender and discovered that women's participation increased the greatest, from 35% in 1989 to 45% in 1995. Therefore, it is considered in that study, women are more affected than men by hosting mega sports events. However, having kids has a negative impact on participating in sports and fitness (Verhoef et al., 1993). Married parents were discovered to have the lowest likelihood of exercising (Verhoef et al., 1993). Therefore, having children and being in a committed relationship can reduce any potential negative impacts.

People with greater levels of education may gain more than others from having their nation host a mega sports events and are more expected to participate in and connect with sports more frequently. However, occupations can be indicators of work hours and free time, and degrees of education may be favorably correlated with them. Therefore, heavy workloads every week might counteract any potential impacts that trickle down.

2.5. Gender Differences and Mega Sport Events Effect on Participation

According to Lyle (2009), the gender of the idol and the gender of the spectator plays a big part in inspiring spectators themselves to be active and engage in sports, in view of the fact that "males and females differ in their identification with role models".

Youth of both genders might respond differently to elite role model players and their athletic accomplishments. As that according to the researchers Frick and Wicker (2016), and Wicker and Frick (2016), youth's level of inspiration from elite players may depend on their gender.

According to Hargreaves (2000), sports heroes are linked to masculine qualities such as being strong, aggressive, and brave, where heroism is genderized by the stereotypical beliefs of the people in the society.

The prevailing gender belief favors the achievements of male athletes, despite the fact that female athletes continue to fight and challenge this prevailing belief through their athletic achievements which usually get belittled and understated (Coakley, 2017; Wicker & Frick, 2016), yet their male counterparts are turned into sports heroes easily (Hargreaves, 2000; Wicker & Frick, 2016), therefore it is possible that this understating of the female player's achievements is a major obstacle to their status as elite role

model players and limits the motivational and influential effect of their performances and successes to the population, even if these female athletes are playing a masculine type of sports such as boxing with meeting all the qualities related to the heroism, yet they still lack acceptance by the people in the society (Hargreaves, 2000).

2.6. Football in Jordan

Jordan's sports movement traces back to the days of King Abdullah I and the Emirate of Transjordan, during the British Colonial period (100Jordan, 2021). Football games between Jordanian and British youth were organized and played during that time, specifically in 1926, when the game of football was brought to Jordan by British forces members who were serving in the Arab army at the time.

The game was then spread among some school children and gradually to the public.

The first sports club, known as the Jordan Club, was founded in the Emirate of Transjordan in 1928 exclusively for football only. A new club called the Prince Talal Club was founded in 1933 by some of the Jordan Club members. However, due to the fact that the bulk of their players were

college students studying abroad, these clubs did not continue long and eventually closed.

The Al-Ashbal Club, one of the most well-known clubs in Jordan, was founded four years later, in 1937. It is now known as the Al-Faisaly Club (100Jordan, 2021). The first football league was established in the emirate in April 1944 upon King Abdullah I's request. Four clubs competed in the league, and a cup for the champion was presented by the king. This League was one of the oldest football leagues in the Arab world.

2.6.1. Men's Football in Jordan

Three years after Jordan gained its independence, the Jordan Football Association was established in 1949. As it joined the Asian Confederation (AFC) in 1975 after becoming a member of the International Federation (FIFA) in 1958. The football movement in Jordan was notably active, that the Jordanian national team competed in its first international match at the first Arab sports tournament in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1953.

Today, football is the most popular sport in Jordan. Despite never making it to a World Cup, the Men's National Team has improved significantly in recent years, as seen by their improvement in FIFA ranking from 120 in 2007 to ninety-five in August 2021 (FIFA Ranking, 2021).

2.6.2. Women's Football in Jordan

Women's football in Jordan dates back to the early 1920s, when clubs and universities first took the initiative (100Jordan, 2021).

The Jordan Football Association (JFA) officially covered women's football in 2005. Three months after the team's first practice, the women's national team competed in the West Asian Football Federation Championship. Despite having few players to choose from, they won the Championship in their first official appearance (Schneider, 2018).

A few years later, the FIFA decided to prohibit head coverings on the field in 2010. However, it was only after Prince Ali Bin Hussein, the president of both the West Asian Football Federation and Jordan Football Association and one of its most well-known and devoted supporters, intervened that they decided to lift the ban (Schneider, 2018).

In 2005, the first league was created with the participation of four teams. The competition evolved over time, as in 2019 it transformed into a professional league known as the JFA Women's Pro League (FIFA, 2019).

According to FIFA Ranking (2021), Jordan is the highest-ranked Arab team in the world, coming at position fifty-one.

2.6.3. Mega Sport Event in Jordan

The country set a record and became a pioneer in the Arab world and the Middle East (Deutsche Welle, 2013), as it showed its capability of hosting mega sports events, when it successfully hosted the U17 FIFA Women's World Cup in 2016.

This tournament was a significant milestone for Jordan as well as the MENA region. The historical aspect and the contribution to national identity were hugely valuable developments, the Jordanian government spent 20 Million JDs to renew four of the country's venues, each with a range of 13,000 seating (Collet, 2015). Besides these renovated sports stadiums, seventeen training fields were constructed (Maier, 2020). These infrastructures were used later for the next sport event hosted; the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 (Schneider, 2018), where the country also demonstrated its ability to host an event this big for the second time.

Jordan was the only participating team from the MENA region that includes nineteen Muslim countries in both hosted tournaments (Arab News, 2016).

Chapter 3. Research Method

In order to investigate the effects of hosting a mega sport event on sport participation, a qualitative research method was considered appropriate to efficiently collect data and analyze it, along with the research questions.

This chapter presents the research design, data collection, and data analysis procedures, which have been used to carry out this research.

3.1. Research Design

This study used a qualitative research method to better understand, define, and identify precisely the situation and the effect of the hosting on the football participation. Teherani et al. (2015) defines qualitative research as the systematic inquiry into social phenomena in natural situations on how people behave, experience aspects of their lives, and how organizations function. According to Pathak et al. (2013) a qualitative study helps to understand beliefs, attitudes, behavior, and interactions of people.

This study analyzed all aspects of the effect of hosting the Women's Asian Cup 2018 on the football participation, throughout statistics provided by research participants and observed trends. Firstly, through registration data and reports among the whole country provided by research participants to better explain the situation in numbers, and secondly by exploring the

players, administrators, and managers' experiences, perceptions and suggestions.

3.2. Qualitative Method

Qualitative data was collected in order to understand some of the experiences of the players, administrators, and managers from different clubs and academies. As this approach allowed for more in-depth data to be collected and analyzed to better understand the influence the event had on sport participation.

Football registration statistics and reports, of all regions in Jordan, over a seven years data period, from 2016 to 2022 (since the year Jordan was originally awarded the Competition until the available data of 2022) were provided by an administrator from Jordan Football Association who is one of the research participants, to best describe the changes that occurred on the levels of participations in terms of numbers.

Registration statistics included players of all age categories from grassroots centers, academies, and clubs of both genders.

The data provided was capable of showing whether the football registration data increased or decreased over the seven years set. As it was

vital in answering the research questions and understanding the effect of hosting the Asian Women's Cup 2018 on the football participation.

3.3. Qualitative Data Collection

An open-ended interview was used in this study. Yin (1994) stated that "you can ask key respondents for the facts of a matter as well as for the respondents' opinions about events". Tracy (2014) also claimed that these open-ended interviews are "relatively unstructured interviews that encourage the participant to tell stories rather than just answer questions".

During the qualitative data collection stage, open-ended interviews were applied to discuss the particular experiences of players, administrators, and managers in Football before and after the Women's Asian Cup, for approximately 30 minutes each.

Sixteen interviews were conducted; including 10 interviews with the players of both genders, three with administrators, and three with managers. Table 1 shows the main characteristics of the participants that responded to the interview.

Table 1.*Characteristics of the interview participants*

Participants	Reference	Details
Players	Player_1	1. Female Grassroots Player
	Player_2	2. Male Grassroots Player
	Player_3	3. Female U14 Player
	Player_4	4. Male U14 Player
	Player_5	5. Female U17 Player
	Player_6	6. Male U17 Player
	Player_7	7. Female U20 Player
	Player_8	8. Male U20 Player
	Player_9	9. Female Senior Player
	Player_10	10. Male Senior Player
Managers &Administrators	AM_1	1. JFA Grassroots Administrator
	AM_2	2. JFA women's team Manager
	AM_3	3. Club Administrator
	AM_4	4. Academy Administrator
	AM_5	5. School Manager
	AM_6	6. Sports Events Manager

The interview questions were set according to Starr's (2015) study on Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The target population was divided into two groups as follows:

- Players

Players of both genders were selected randomly based on their registration dates and location equally, where all selected participants live in the capital, Amman (where the final match was played during the event period) and all registered at the same month (June 2018) in a club, academy or a grassroots center.

Players questions primarily focused on their participation in football in addition to their experiences in viewing the Women's Asian Cup 2018 (Appendix 1).

Additionally, players were interviewed to understand if the event changed their activity within the grassroots center/academy/club after the hosting.

- Administrators and managers

Administrators and managers were selected from the Jordanian football association and different clubs, academies.

Interview questions helped to develop an understanding of what strategies can be implemented in order to leverage the future events to be hosted in the country (Appendix 2).

3.4. Data Analysis

The statistics data provided during the interview from one of the research participants was able to show if registration statistics increased or decreased in corresponding years, possibly due to a significant event.

Qualitative data was coded and categorized into themes in order to draw conclusions upon it using the responses coming from the research participants. Every interview was recorded and verbatim transcribed. Thematic analysis was applied to connect the most important points from the feelings and views of the interviewees.

According to Tracy (2014), “coding refers to labeling and systematizing the data”, Tracy also explained codes as “words or short phrases that capture a ‘summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for language-based or visual data’”.

3.5. Trustworthiness

Approval to conduct this thesis was attained from the Dream Together Master program of Seoul National University, approval from the Jordan Football Association was taken, and consent to conduct the interviews were signed by the participants.

The researcher passed the transcription to each participant involved in this study so they confirmed that the information was correct and in line with the interview's content. In case of any misunderstanding, interviews were also reviewed by the researcher's tutor and peers, while protecting the participants' anonymity.

Chapter 4. Findings

4.1. Overview

This chapter will demonstrate the descriptive analysis of the qualitative findings obtained from participant interviews and the themes that emerged accordingly. The study aimed to answer three research questions: (1) What changes were made in Football participation levels after hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 in Jordan? (2) How did the hosting of the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 affect the level of participation among registered football players? (3) What strategies can be used to maximize the benefits of hosting mega sport events?

4.2. Emerging Themes

A thematic analysis was carried out on the gathered data. The responses of the participant and the notes of the researcher were grouped and sorted in accordance with the interview questions. The arrangement and order of the data made it possible to identify themes that emerged from the responses. These themes helped to describe, transfer and understand the changes that appeared after hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 and the role that hosting the event had on football players and the society.

Two major themes with their sub-themes focused on the changes that were made in football participation levels after hosting the AFC Women's

Asian Cup 2018. One major theme with its sub-themes discussed if hosting the event affected the level of participation among registered football players. One theme with its sub-themes addressed the strategies that can be used to maximize the benefits of hosting mega sport events in Jordan. A summary of the analysis of the data according to themes and subthemes is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2.

Themes and Sub-themes

Research Questions	Major Themes	Sub-themes
RQ1. What changes were made in Football participation levels after hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 in Jordan?	Football Growth in Jordan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in interest and demand 2. Increase in foreign based players 3. Games growth
	Changes in Jordanian Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cultural mindset change 2. Support from football association 3. Professionalism in the sport 4. Media attraction 5. Awareness of schools sports importance
RQ2. How did the hosting of the AFC Women's Asian Cup Jordan 2018 affect the level of participation among registered football players?	Effect of hosting on the level of participation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct Influence 2. Indirect influence
RQ3. What strategies can be used to maximize the benefits of hosting mega sport events?	Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raising awareness 2. Proper funding 3. Side events and activities 4. Strengthening collaboration among stakeholders

4.3. Football Growth in Jordan

This theme looks at the football growth in Jordan. The data was gathered from the interview questions directed to administrators and managers such as Jordan football association officials (who provided excel sheets with registration statistics for a seven years data set), a club manager and an academy manager. The theme was categorized into three sub-themes as follows: (1) Increase in interest and demand (2) Increase in foreign based players (3) Games growth.

4.3.1. Increase in Interest And Demand

Participants expressed the increase in interest and demand toward the game of football and specially by females in the last few years. The participants emphasized that the numbers of players increased and mostly in 2018, the year the event was hosted in. As stated by one of the participant:

We have witnessed a huge increase in interest and attendance of players especially females during these years. In 2016 we had only 150 female grassroots players today we have 450, we opened 10 more centers (from 5 to 15 grassroots centers). The numbers increased 3 times more. For the boys 240 became 1050 (from 8 center to 35). (AM_1,Interview).

Another participant quoted:

Year by year, the numbers of players are increasing incredibly whether it's in clubs, grassroots centers or academies. The number of leagues increased as that now we have a league for each age category, where in the past we weren't able to do so, like for females, we used to have one league, now we have six. (AM_2,Interview).

AM-2 shared the clubs' registration statistics as shown in Table 3, where it shows that the total numbers of player of both genders increased the most in 2018 season.

Table 3.

Clubs registration statistics

YR	M u11	M u13	M u14	M u15	M u16	M u17	M u18	M u19	M u20	M u21	Senior M	F gr	F u14	F u16	F u18	Senior F
2016			792		1269		1235		929		2059		163		-	203
2017-2018	50	90	764	451	1284	460	1278	363	999	313	2270	62	121	104	-	180
2018-2019	16	132		1512		2238		1791		1255	1389	-	-	225	-	555
2019-2020	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7967	-	-	-	-	612
2021	-	723	-	1145		1326		965	1280	-	-	-	197	-	233	219
2022	-	1351	-	1823		1938		1219		-	-	-	-	224	211	236

Year	Total Number	Total M	Total F
2016	6650	6284	366
2017-2018	8789	8322	467
2018-2019	9113	8333	780
2019-2020	8579	7967	612
2021	6088	5439	649
2022	7002	6331	671

Furthermore, one interviewee had a similar observation, when he stated that there has been a rapid growth in numbers of clubs that have joined the elite league: “Each season the registration data is changing, we have seen that in a very positive way, we have more people registering in the academy, fulfilling our goal of adding player of all ages to the academy.” (AM_4,interview)

However, according to the participants it’s not only the number of players that has only increased, the numbers of registered clubs, academies and grassroots centers have raised also.

The numbers of newly registered academies and clubs have increased a lot within the past few years, we have been receiving many applications requesting to open a new club, and we have to look at each applicant’s eligibility.... The total numbers of clubs increased from 125 to 141 from 2016 to 2019, for the females clubs it increased the double from 2016 till 2022, from 8 to 16 clubs. (AM_2,Interview).

4.3.2. Increase in Foreign Based Players

In this sub-theme participants addressed their beliefs on the important role the Jordanian footballers play when playing for a foreign club. Participants also observed the increase of Jordanian players abroad, which was not the case in the past.

AM-2 stated that the number of football players, both males and females playing outside Jordan has escalated recently a development that is contributing to the rise of the national teams as in these countries the players are exposed to a different environment. AM_2 commented: “11 male players from the national team squad are participating abroad currently in different clubs from different countries, such as Belgium, Malaysia, Azerbaijan... For female players, in 2018 there were 8 players participating abroad.”

According to another participant youth development has also benefitted from the massive changes that are happening in Jordanian football. The interviewee said: “Players now are competing abroad at younger ages than it was in the past where breaking into a foreign team was very challenging... most of the youths used to play locally.” (AM_3,Interview)

While interviewing another participant it was explained that foreign based footballers play an important role in influencing other players to take football seriously and as a career that they can pursue abroad. The participant pointed out:

They play a big part of being an inspiration to others, either motivating them to start playing football, or to train harder to reach their place, where it is the dream of every player... they have a big responsibility as they represent the country itself, and they are a source of pride to all Jordanians. (AM_1,Interview).

4.3.3. Game Growth

During the interviews some participants explained the spread of football in different regions in Jordan and how the strategies to involve people in the game helped to take the game to other places outside the capital city, Amman. The new developments in football created a conducive environment for football to grow at an alarming rate as new clubs were formed in rural and urban areas thereby helping the national team to have a wide selection base.

According to AM_1 the JFA opened football centres across the country aimed at developing grassroots football and these centres had the same standards. AM_1 commented: “Opening the football grassroots centres in different parts of the country addressed the problem of accessibility to modern training methods and standard equipment.”

One interviewee stated how the opportunities to be involved in activities created a bigger pool for athletes, allowing the teams and coaches to have a lot of players at their disposal of varying ages that can be selected to represent the country: “Selection of national team players was widened with a lot of players showcasing their talents in rural and urban areas.”

(AM_2, Interview)

AM_2 also commented that after hosting the mega sport event the JFA put in place deliberate measures to strengthen the youth structures knowing

that it is the backbone of the future national football: “The JFA intensified its initiatives to promote football from a development stage that included restructuring that saw the women wing having a four year strategy plan”.

4.4. Changes in Jordanian Society

This theme explores the changes that emerged within the Jordanian society. The following coded sub-themes were derived from the interviews directed to participants: (1) Cultural mindset change (2) Support from football association (3) Professionalism in the sport (4) Media attraction (5) Awareness of school sports importance.

4.4.1. Cultural Mindset Change

In this sub-theme participants addressed how they witnessed the cultural change in the country after the AFC Women’s Asian Cup, and how it affected the participation of players especially women in football in the country. They highlighted the community’s path of accepting football as a real physical activity not only for men but also women, without any type of criticism.

According to one interviewee the landscape has changed as the after hosting the AFC Women Asian cup in 2018 men and women football is no

longer regarded as a free play and also as an activity done to pass time especially men. There is more support and encouragement from different stakeholders including the association.

This sport that was dominated by men and women never came close to the sport but even among men it was not taken seriously but after hosting the mega sport event in Jordan the situation improved drastically with more seriousness among men and women. (AM_3,Interview).

Secondly, in the past women faced challenges to play football in a conservative society that could ridicule and judge their actions a development that made many women to withdraw. Today, the situation is different as one of the research participant stated:

I have noticed a difference in how the community perceives sports for women. Looking back it was hard for me to go to training everyday and I was always judged especially in the neighborhood that I lived. So I felt discouraged whenever I feel like going to training because of how community treat women athlete. Although, this issue is not completely gone there have been changes. It is becoming more acceptable and somehow normalized... more girls have also joined me recently to training which is motivating. (Player_7,Interview).

But according to AM_2 the change began with the parents and their encouragement to their children to participate and invest time and effort in the practice of football, perception for them evolved when they felt changes

and development in the game in a serious manner. Eventually leading up to a real path of acceptance from society. Men encouraged them to play but also women who didn't have to face the same type of judgment than the one before the Asian Cup. AM_2 stated: "I personally got many calls from parents saying that their kids developed interest in football after watching the women's Asian cup. The parents enquired how they can get their children registered?"

AM_4 pointed out the big role the association and other partners played in raising awareness, by conducting workshops, school visits to rural areas to civic educate them the significance of playing football in an effort to change the mind set and attitude towards the sport. Social media platforms were also used to convey the information to the citizenry.

There were a lot of activities that were happening to ensure that the people are well informed about the event and also look at football differently. Football is not just about playing but there are a lot of lessons that can be learnt and used in everyday life. For instance, fair play calls for consideration of other people when doing something. The mindset change was really critical to bring positive changes in the society. (AM_4, Interview).

4.4.2. Support from football association

This sub-theme explores the evolution within the association into a more vibrant institution where the players, clubs and every member related with the

game received support. The changes have been visible from the leadership including the support from JFA president. The Association has also created strategies aimed at increasing the competitiveness of sports. Innovations are noticeable and differs from the past, this has motivated many people to play and participate in football.

According to AM_3 who is a player, the evolution has been presented through strategies set for both men and women teams. Some of the conditions that have changed include the following: rewards to players that have motivated them. The Association has been supporting clubs in capacity building and also increased monitoring so that all clubs follow procedures and rules that have been laid down. Those that are not complying are asked to comply.

JFA has tried to introduce mechanisms aimed at promoting transparency and accountability in the way clubs are run. The welfare of the players is at the centre of different initiatives introduced so that players can remain committed to the sport and give more for the development of Jordanian football. (AM_3,Interview).

The Association has set standards that a club must meet to benefit from the grants that it gives out especially among elite clubs. This has helped many clubs to become more professional as the standards set are supposed to

be met by all clubs: “JFA gives out grants to clubs that have managed to fulfill the requirements to operate at that high level. The resources have cushioned the operations of the club at the same time trickle to the players” (AM_2,Interview)

4.4.3. Professionalism in the Sport

The image of football itself changed gradually with time, the game became important and developed from a previous mentality in which it was only a hobby.

The sport has become more professional in the way it is being run as a result there has been a change in the player’s approach. The players welfare is well taken care of as a way of motivating them to give their best and compete at the highest level. (AM_4,Interview).

According to the player_9 in a short period of time he has been able to see how the game has changed and how the players have become more involved, not only in their dedication to practice but also how their mindset changed towards becoming professional players.

In the past there was little or no reason to give the best as the sport looked not rewarding with few role models around it was really hard. But after the games it showed that those that can do well can be featured at the highest stage on the continent. (Player_9,Interview).

During the interview it was discovered that Jordan become a pioneer in introducing a professional women football league in the region 2018 and entire Arab world. The development in the women sport promoted sports development and competition as players from outside the country started to come to Jordan to play football as professionals.

At the beginning the few clubs that were available were made up of local players but the changes that were taking place made more foreign players to flock to Jordan. Some of the foreign players came from Ghana, Egypt, Tunisia among others. (AM_2,Interview).

4.4.4. Media Attraction

This sub-theme connects on how the modernization and the use of different media outlets have provided the perfect setting for people to connect and engage with football, the Association and the players. First off beginning with the change in broadcasting systems, in the past people had to attend live matches for them to be able to follow up the results and their favorite players.

Nowadays with the inclusion of technology the Association has provided people with the contents in live streaming so they can repeat the games, highlights and everything related to the game.

It is much easier to watch football as many platforms have been introduced. Even those that do not go to the stadiums have an opportunity to watch the matches in

the comfort of their homes including on their smart phones. The easy access has made the sport more popular. (AM_4,Interview).

It was established during the interview that the attention the games attracted has remained with the sport to date. There was massive publicity across the country before the games where electronic and print media was used so that many people can follow the matches. For example, banners were put up along the streets in many places and mobile vans went across the country to publicize the event: “The media was dominated by football headlines and even in the remoted areas away from the mega sport event venues people were discussing football related issues which was a big change” (AM_6,Interview)

Finally, the biggest changes and interactions have been created through social media and the modernization in the communication process they have provided to people in Jordan. Currently players are also involved with the use of social media, and they use this platform to raise awareness about increasing the participation of people in football. One of the participants explained:

The media is now considered a very powerful tool when an event is taking place. A successful sport event is the one that has good publicity. Today, the media is a strong partner in football events and sport

in general as individual players, clubs and the Association are heavily utilizing it. (AM_6,Interview).

Also through social media players and figures communicate and interact with people, and the Association also manages to use this platform to post and engage people with the participation in tournaments, to watch announcements, follow players and content in social media. AM_1 stated: “Information is conveyed through the media, entertainment and knowledge is imparted to the people. Latest updates and developments in the game are easily passed on to the people through the social media, it is so efficient.”

4.4.5. Awareness of School Sports Importance

In this sub-theme the main focus is the evolution in school sports and how it became important to promote a culture of football from a young age. In the past schools didn't have a proper physical education class but after the tournaments it became a real subject that was monitored by officials to make sure kids were actually learning processes to participate and learn football.

A suitable Physical Education curriculum was put into use with elements of football to emphasize the significance of the sport. There has been more seriousness in the way school sport is being handled as formal classes that are well structured have been introduced with a monitoring system put in place

mostly in private schools. (AM_5,Interview)

In schools it also became important to promote the environment of the game by creating teams, school leagues, clubs and competitions both for girls and boys, the practices and focus in these cover a larger part of the population thinking about the development of football in the country. In school there are a lot of learners that come from different backgrounds.

The introduction of school leagues and tournaments is another development worthy noting. There has been stiff competition during inter schools competition which is a good ground to prepare future players. On the other hand within the schools there has also been a lot of competitions that help to select players that are drafted into the school's teams. (AM_1,Interview).

4.5. Effect of Hosting on the Level of Participation

The conducted interviews indicated that there have been other things that happened after hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018. Two sub-themes that came out clearly were: (1) Direct Influence (2) Indirect Influence. The sub-themes were presented in term of influence; where all has the capability to impact football participation levels, whether it is due to hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 or not.

4.5.1. Direct Influence

In this sub-theme, research participants explained the general effects of hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018. The findings show that the event played a significant role in most of the participant in the research. Their involvement in the event stimulated their participation in football. Many of the research participants were inspired by the event and started their football journey due to it. The majority of them were females.

According to the participants' responses, there are several attractions during the event that drove them take up football as a sport. According to player_9 who used to play when she was young, seeing the national team playing in a mega sport event on their own grounds, regardless of their performance during the competition, made her want to play and experience this as a player, and wish to represent the national team like them one day.

I thought of how proud these players must be about themselves to be able to reach here I wanted to be in their shoes, I want to represent my country, and wear our flag on my shirt. I made a decision to train and register in a club right after the competition. (Player_9,Interview).

Similarly, player_5 believed it is watching her role model play in this big event was what made her feel motivated to try this sport and enroll in one of the grassroots centers.

Stephanie Al Naber is my role model, she is Jordanian football legend, I have been following her on social media for a long time, but seeing her play in person during the Women's Cup was so inspiring, to a point where I wanted to follow her footsteps and get as far as she went in the game... I used to play with my brothers every once in a while. (Player_5,Interview).

According to player_8 who is a male, the national pride that was stimulated and the sense of nationalism he felt while being present in the stadium, hearing the national anthem and seeing his national team made him love the game and the desire to play grew. Participant commented:

My favorite memory was hearing our national anthem on our land, I felt proud, like every Jordanian. I feel goosebumps whenever I remember it. It was when I knew I want to hear and feel the same thing but as a player. (Player_8,Interview).

According to player_7 her experience as being a flag barrier during the 2018 AFC Women's Asian Cup made her wish to experience all the emotions she felt again but from a different side, a player's side this time, increased the love for sports in her, encouraged her to return to train football again, and made her look for a team to play with. She stated:

I volunteered as a flag barrier, because I wanted to see this huge event that everyone had been talking about and waiting for it passionately to start... Walking from the tunnel towards the field, being so close to the players made my heart race, being in the middle

of the field. Looking at the spectators, the players, hearing the drums, hearing every national anthem was magical. All these emotions that I felt made me want to experience this again but this time as a player, which made me change my mind and return to football and trainings again, because I believe those players felt my emotions but 100 times more. (Player_7,Interview).

According to player_3 who was young when the AFC Women's Asian Cup took place, her father was inspired by that event watching the players representing Jordan, and was the reason behind her engagement in football.

Participant Stated:

I did not watch the event I was 9 years old when it was held. But my dad did, I know that our national team did not go far in terms of results, but I cannot express how proud my dad was to see these players representing our country in such an event. That motivated him to say that he wants to see me represent the country just like them someday. This is the reason that made him register me in an academy to start training football. (Player_3,Interview).

In the same way, player_2 who is a male grassroots player said that he was very young back then but went with his parents to watch one of the matches. He stated:

After watching one of the matches with my parents, I asked them, how can I reach here one day? Next thing I remember was finding myself playing in one of the nearest grassroots centers to my house.

(Player_2,Interview).

4.5.2. Indirect Influence

On the contrary, the rest of the participants were not inspired by the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018, where other influences not related to the event itself played a role in their engagement in football. These participants were few and the majority of them were male.

According to player_6 it is his love for the game that led him to start practicing football and eventually registered in an academy. He stated: "Football is my passion, I tried several sports when I was young, but I chose football, because of the love I have for this game, I found myself in it."

Player_4 addressed how watching his role model play had impacted on his participation in football. He stated: "I developed my love for the game by seeing Messi play, I'm always amazed by his outstanding performance, I got inspired by him to start. I play the same position as him now."

(Player_4,Interview)

According to player_1 the family influence played a huge role in her sports engagement, she comes from a sports loving family, where they were the ones who supported her in selecting the sport. She stated:

What really drove me is the love and passion my dad has for football, he encouraged me to play it..., he is

a former football player and also a coach, my brother is a football player and my grandpa is an former international football referee. (Player_1,Interview).

According to player_10 football is the most famous sport code in Jordan everyone grew with the love of football. Participant stated: “It’s a cultural sport in the country, kids in streets and neighborhoods would be playing football instinctively, and that’s how it was for me, I opened my eyes to find myself playing football.” (Player_10,Interview)

4.6. Strategies to Maximize Benefits When Hosting a Mega Sport Event

During the interviews, participants discussed the strategies that can be used to maximize the benefits of hosting mega sport event that have been categorized into four sub-themes: (1) Raising awareness (2) Proper funding (3) Side events and activities (4) Strengthening collaboration among stakeholders.

4.6.1. Raising Awareness

During the interviews AM_2 stated that deliberate policies should be put in place to inform the citizens what is coming up for their involvement. AM_2 emphasized that only those that know what is happening in good time

take active roles during sport mega events. “Knowledge is power. There is need to do massive awareness campaigns before mega events for people to have enough information. Road shows, massive advertisements along the streets and use of the media can make a huge difference.” (AM_2,Interview)

Also the AM_6 highlighted the importance of seeing and being involved in the different promotions related to the championships. Recognizing the different activities that can be done to include the public in a direct or indirect way as a form of “creating a lot of noise” which can make it possible to host an event that will be attractive to people. As a result, multiple strategies and advertisements in different media outlets, campaigns and announcements in radio, television and outlets can be created to engage people.

The success of a mega sport event depends on a number of people that take part in the event. It is important therefore to make a lot of noise about the event many months before it takes places taking advantage of any platform that is available. (AM_6,Interview).

The football players should come near the fans by organizing different activities that will promote interaction with the public. Footballers should be able to visit many places around the country and do a variety of activities like play and train along with the kids, distribute souvenirs and share their

personal stories about the sport to promote the event and the game. The participant stated:

By taking players that are well known and will be featured in the tournament to the kids it helps to bring the sport to the people as some are able to meet and interact with those that they knew from a distance hence turning dreams into reality. (AM_1,Interview).

4.6.2. Proper Funding

Participant observed that good funding is instrumental in hosting a mega sport event. Sports infrastructure is capital intensive both when constructing or maintaining them. There is also need for supporting services such as hospitality and transport and finding proper budgeting not only from the government, but different providers as highlighted by AM_6: “Hosting a big sport event is expensive, hence there is a need to do resource mobilization prior to the games to successfully host them. This should not be left to the government alone but the private sector that includes companies.”

AM_4 stated how important it is to have a well-established training venues, making sure that the conditions are appropriate for the competitions and also the participants. This is not only related to people who engage in the game professionally nor clubs, it can be for schools and the locals in any neighborhood, as they will be able to use the pitch to grow themselves, while assuring real conditions and maintenance from the venues is the legacy for

football. “There is need to mobilize enough resources prior to hosting of a mega sport event. The funds will be for constructing or upgrading available sport infrastructure, pay the people that will be working during the event.”
(AM_4,Interview)

4.6.3. Side Events and Activities

During the interview AM_5 pointed out the importance of having a lot of activities that will help to bring the sport event close to their homes. Some mentioned the use football legends that can be taken to different parts of the country so that people can interact with them. The participant said:

Several activities should be lined up months before the commencement of the games. The activities can include organizing training matches that will showcase what will happen during the main event. Even remote areas very far from where the event will take place should be involved. (AM_5,Interview).

According to AM_6 spectators’ involvement is considered a really big factor in promoting the event and the game as whole, by engaging them in activities such as contests -slogan and logo creations -, activities that make them feel like part of the game and not only an outside spectator, where they can be able to develop and show their abilities and on the other hand the event itself can benefit from their talents making them a valuable part of the

promotions: “Spectators should be engaged to ensure that they are following the event. This can be through organizing competition that will test their knowledge of the game and the information that they have.” (AM_6,Interview)

4.6.4. Strengthening Collaboration Among Stakeholders

In the course of the interview with AM_3 it was said that different stakeholders should work together to achieve desirable results before, during and after the mega sport event. Football has different stakeholders such as the football Association, clubs, schools among others: “Mega sport events are so complex as they involve a lot of people and activities it is therefore important to bring all stakeholders together to successfully implement the laid down plans.” (AM_3,Interview)

The role that the institutions play in the development of football cannot be understated according to AM_2 each institution, club and the Association itself need to have a proper planning process in which they create and organize real strategies to involve more people in the game. This also creating a development chain, starting with schools and club with the development of younger players getting to major institutions where they also reinforce their abilities and have the chance to grow, as the final step the

Association has to maintain and create strategies and a model in which more players feel attracted to participate and play for the national team. The participant commented: “Individual institutions need to do their homework well prior to the event so that they can effectively contribute. The legacy has to be set straight at the beginning in order to get the desired results.” (AM_2,Interview)

Also for AM_6 the support has to come from the high authorities as well to be able to create a feasible project for young players. The ministries, both education and youth should work together and create a real cooperation to create activities and different promotions to involve more people into the game and have a good strategic plan to reach people all around Jordan, specially players from a young age to have a solid project for football teams in all of their categories. The participant explained: “There should be collaboration among different stakeholders from the top to the bottom in order to host such a big sport event successfully. There are a lot of issues that require diverse expertise and technical knowhow to executive them” (AM_6,Interview)

Through the promotion and support of championships there are many opportunities that can make the game more attractive to players according to AM_5 the chance to develop in education at the same time as a player is

something that can be interesting and engaging to young players. The participant said:

First with the revenue coming from hosting event a lot of players could receive benefits such as scholarships that will allow them to study and also participate in championships at the same time. Second offering real possibilities to be a part of the national team and receiving economic incentives after participation in championships could also become a point of interest for people to get involved into the game. (AM_5,Interview).

Chapter 5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Discussion

This chapter will address a critical discussion on the findings stated in chapter four. It will discuss the results that were found in light of the literature review and demonstrate the answers to three research questions of the study that are (1) Changes made in Jordanian Football after 2018 (2) The effect of hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 on the levels of participation (3) Strategies to maximize the benefits of hosting a Mega Sport Event.

Mega sports events according to Roche (2017) always have the potential to amaze people and provide them with a glance of more general processes and trends that play a big part in the world. Hosting of a mega sport event calls for collaboration among different stakeholders and also involves a lot of resources. Prior to the event there is need to do proper planning, Taks et al. (2022) stated that planning is the most critical thing to host a successful mega sport event.

Mega sports event portrays an image of remarkable harmony and collaboration on a global scale and it may reflect how international politics are conducted. It also serves as a chance to promote significant ideas like equality, freedom, and democracy around the globe (Segrave, 1988).

5.1.1. Football Growth in Jordan

The study focused to the changes made in football participation levels after hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 in Jordan. According to the finding of the study there were a number of changes that were observed by the participants after this mega sport event. A lot of participants explained that football grew in a number of areas in Jordan. Firstly, the growth saw a steady growth in number of people that showed interest to take part in football and in many areas there was demand from parents and guardians who wanted their wards to take part in football related activities. According to a study by Williams (2006) "sport like football is for everyone in the society regardless of gender and if sport was the enemy of femininity, then the symbolic significance of playing in uniforms which risked compromising women's and girls' status as ladies could only make football challenging to public reaction". The support that football received in Jordan was overwhelming considering that it was a male dominated terrain.

The findings at the Jordanian Football Association indicate that there was a huge increase in the total number of registered female and male players in season the event was hosted in, then slightly decreased the following season. This agrees with Gibson (2013), Starr (2015) and Hart (2012) studies done on Olympic and other mega events, where the number of sport

participants witnessed a growth in the host country after the event, in comparison to it a year before to the hosting, however, this was a subsequent decline in the numbers of participants, the years following the Games.

During the interviews many participants noted that there have been a lot of Jordanian men and women football players that have clinched professional deals abroad. The mega sport championship exposed Jordanian players to the outside world and the talented are reaping the fruits. Playing professional football is in line with Migliaccio and Berg (2007) study that explained that "...some women had wanted to play football since they were little girls, but had never had the chance, while others grew up playing with their brothers and neighbors in the street. Several women had never given football a second thought until hearing about the opportunity to try out for a professional women's team". As the discussion of football prolonged the interest to play outside the country also grew to get the needed exposure.

In addition, the study established that football spread from urban areas to even remotest areas. A lot of activities were conducted around the country to inform the people that the country was hosting the process many places were visited. During these visits some people developed interest in the sport and they started to establish football clubs or academies. It was now easy for many football lovers to take part in the sport as they could find what they

were looking for in distant places. The increase in number of clubs and academies is consistent to Gratton et al. (2005) and Alegi, (2007) studies that explained the impact of mega sports events on nationwide institutional development, where they have found a link between mega events and (sports) institutional development at the local level. Accordingly, this development helped to increase number of players in the country something that also made national selection much easier.

5.1.2. Changes in Jordanian Society

Findings of the study showed that perception of many Jordanians towards those playing football changed. Initially, men playing football were taken not to be serious as it was regarded as activity done to pass time. For women it was even worse that they were regarded to be home makers. After the games the society became accommodating and supportive to those involved in football. As Pfister (2010) study agreed that "...gender of sport in the past was clearly and conspicuously masculine. From the very beginning women in sport were the 'other sex'; they were outsiders, new- or latecomers who, if they were allowed to at all, could take part in 'suitable' forms of exercise and sport". From the participants' view point the barrier that was hindering participation in sports especially football in Jordan was removed after the women championship. However, and by taking Qatar as an example,

Griffin (2019) said that "...the years that followed the declaration of Qatar's hosting the World Cup have seen a number of significant changes occur in the area of women's sports in the state. Historically limited by what describe as 'religious and patriarchal constraint' that Qatar was to be the host of the 2022 World Cup immediately resulted in an increased visibility in football across all levels, including the state of, or more accurately put, the paucity of the women's game in the emirate".

The JFA massive support to the clubs and players in general was also a turning point in Jordanian football according to the findings. The JFA strengthened its monitoring systems to ensure that all stakeholders follow laid down procedures. The approach that the JFA took brought sanity in the way the game was being run as it was meant to promote men and women simultaneously. Jordan football association has set a four years strategy plan after the AFC Women's Asian cup in 2018 to restructure women's football when they felt the need to develop the game, they set some criteria that all clubs should comply with, to ensure the strategy is going as planned (JFA,2018).

During the interviews the participants said the game evolved from amateur to professional. Jordan introduced a women professional league as a way of lifting the women game. The move encouraged many people to

reconsider their stand on the game. Players became more focused and dedicated towards the sport in so doing competition became stiff in the file and ranks of the Jordanian football. This is inline with Alfermann and Stambulova (2007) study, that "...one of the key stages in the development of elite young footballers is the within-career transition from youth level to senior professional football, the study described the transition as a multifaceted, complex and dynamic developmental phase. In this regard, within-career transitions often involve 'a set of specific demands related to practice, competition, communication, and lifestyle that athletes have to cope with in order to continue successfully in sport'".

The study established that the media played a pivotal role in spreading the information regarding the mega sport event. Modern ways of spreading information such as use of the social media made a huge difference. The JFA used live streaming reaching out to those that do not go to match venues. The initiative helped to promote football across the country. The print and electronic media was fully utilized to increase participation in football. According to Pfister (2010) and De Bosscher et al. (2013) any assessment of the current sports industry or its growth is incomplete without considering the influence of mass media. The media plays a crucial role in promoting sports to the public and bringing events to the forefront of society. Without media

exposure to the masses, the interest in mega events and related sports may not be fostered. Therefore, by utilizing the media before, during and after the game was important to increase the level of participation.

According to the study the mega sport event brought changes in the education system as elements of football were included in a formal way. Initially Physical Education was uncoordinated and not much attention was directed towards it. The country realized that the foundation of sports is having a good background hence efforts were made to improve sports in schools. There were tournaments and leagues that were introduced to engage more the students and increase competition within and among schools. Djaballah et al. (2015) study emphasized that "...mega sport events function is to represent the interests of the local community. As a consequence, not only should they be concerned with these impacts, but they also are in a position to influence them". The current study agrees with this study considering that there were changes in the community where the school belongs.

5.1.3. The Effect of Hosting the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 on the Football Participation Levels

Findings of the study display that the majority of the research participants got influenced by the event and took football as sport right after

the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 event. This agrees with both Sotiriadou et al (2008) and Weed (2009) studies, that the increasing physical activity through hosting events where elite sport events have the power to inspire spectators and individuals to become more active sport participants and take up exercise at the mass participation level.

In this study findings it is showing that the majority that were inspired by the hosting of the AFC Womens Asian Cup 2018 were women. A study by Truno (1995) on the effects of the Olympic Games in Barcelona, where it looked at participation patterns by gender and discovered that women's participation increased the greatest, from 35% in 1989 to 45% in 1995. Therefore, it is considered in that study, women are more affected than men by hosting mega sports events. Having that said and taking into consideration that it was a women's event hosted in Jordan, therefore it is consistent with Truno's finding.

Based on the findings it is clear that males who got influenced were kids when the event took part, and this goes in line with Feddersen et al. (2009) and Frawley & Cush (2011) age related studies where they found that important sporting events are more likely to motivate younger people to start

exercising. Therefore, regardless of the kids gender, the mega sport event influences them to register in a football club.

During the interviews many participants revealed the motive and what drove them during the event period to start playing football. Several attractions played an important role in this, which vary from a participant to another. For some, it was the feeling of belonging and the sense of nationalism they had while attending the event. This agrees with Grix and Carmichael's (2012) study that national pride is generated due to hosting a mega sport event such as the Olympics and this increased nationalistic feeling might influence individuals to be more engaged in sports and energetic. This can be beneficial to the sport bodies like national sport associations to build a sense of community involvement in the occasion to promote celebration of mega sport event to leverage the Games and motivate individuals of the population to take up exercise and be active, once they focus and take advantage of the increased sense of national pride that is developed.

For other participants it was seeing their role model play in that big event that was the force behind their motivation to take football seriously. Some participants explained that coming close to their idols and seeing them live playing inspired them more. This is agreed by Bandura (1977) social learning theory suggests that individuals are more likely to attempt to

replicate the success of someone they observe successfully participating in a particular activity. This can involve emulating actions, daily life decisions, and following recommendations from the successful people. Within the sports perspective, the social learning theory is particularly relevant to elite athletes' successes and the resulting emulation of mass sports. Some athletes are driven by this emulation, with the aim of sharing the same stage with their athletic idols. This desire to be like one someday, can also flow on to developing their skill, simply by seeing their role models play.

The findings also show that for some participants seeing their national team play on their own grounds was one of the reasons in their engagement in football. The findings of Mansfield et al. (2010), Weed (2009), and Frawley et al. (2009) studies support the idea that the success of the athletes, whether achieved on their own grounds or outside, acts as a motivational force for those who are already engaged in the sport to be more.

Some participants showed that their experience as a volunteer and being close to the players and meeting them made them feel more inspired and made them want to try the sport as a result. This confirms with Starr (2015) finding that the more reachable the players are, the better they can inspire people with confidence and motivation towards success. Where here

it is clear that by seeing the players in person and closely had a positive effect on the research participants' participation.

The study established that some participants that stopped playing revived their involvement in football after watching some games during the event. Mansfield et al. (2010) explained that one of the possible impacts of the hosting, is that it motivates former participants to return to sport. However, the current study is inconsistent with Coalter (2004) and Weed (2009) studies, hosting a mega sport event does not influence people who did not practice any form of sports before the event to start or try the sport, which the findings of the current study show hosting the event had a positive effect on the new starters.

A number of participants said that they were young when the completion took place, it was their parents or family members who got influenced by the event and directed their kids/relatives to start playing football. The study highlights the huge influence that parents and guardians have on their children. According to Côte (1999) family and friends are one of the best role models in encouraging sports participation. Similarly, it was observed that higher levels of parental influence were linked with more participation and engagement in different sports activities for kids (Brustad,1993). This is in line with the current study where the family plays

and effective role in encouraging their children/relatives to participate in sport and direct them to a certain sport, this resulting in an overall increased participation.

Scholars argue that the relation between the hosting a mega sport event and participation levels might be strong or weak, but based on the finding of this study it is clear that the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 had an impact on the football participation levels, which means that the relation between hosting the event and the sport participation was strong.

However, some of the research participants who are the minority were not influenced by the event although some showed interest in watching the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018 matches and others did not. Researchers Mansfield et al. (2010) and Ramachandani et al. (2015) discovered that sedentary individuals, are not affected and that more effort is needed to help these individuals change their lifestyle habits. In this case the event was not enough to influence them to start playing football, but according to the findings of the current study that they started their football journey due to other indirect influences away from the event, such as: the love of the game, having an international role model, family influence, football as a cultural sport.

5.1.4. Strategies to Maximize the Benefits of Hosting a Mega Sport Event

The participants were accorded an opportunity to explain the how future similar mega sport events can be improved. Most of the participants mentioned that raising awareness before the games is important as it prepares the citizens to take an active role in supporting the hosting of the event. Use of different media platforms and wide spread campaigns should be done on a large scale to prepare the people. Football legends can also be used to in different initiatives aimed at bringing the game or event near the people. This is consistent to De Bosscher et al. (2013) study that the sport with the highest media attention and exposure may be more probable to be practices and played by the population. In addition, Hall (1992) and Laws (1993) stated that "...mega sport events have long been used as strategic marketing tools to promote tourist destinations". It is believed that the global television coverage of an important sporting event is an effective way to market a tourism destination. It is not only the host nation that benefits from the media coverage since the event attracts a lot of foreigners as well they too need adequate information.

All the participants mentioned that proper planning is critical before staging a mega sport event. Planning includes mobilizing enough funds that can be used to maintain and construct facilities that will be used matching the

magnitude of the event, recruit adequate human resource among others. These resources should not only come from the government but the private sector as well. According to Burillo et al. (2011) "...in sports planning, being aware of the current needs of the people is as important as researching and forecasting the orientation of future new activities. By doing so, it will be possible to build facilities of a multidisciplinary nature, which may bring about an increase in participation in physical activities".

The participants pointed out that lining up a number of activities on the sidelines of a mega sport event can bring the event close to their homes. There should be a feeling that an event is happening in their country by engaging the population in any kind of activity related to the game, where they would feel part of the event. The activities should be spread beyond hosting cities as part of spectators'/population involvement which is considered as an event's legacy that would live longer than the event itself. Scheu and Preuss (2017) identified the beliefs and behavior as an aspect of the legacies. That when this legacy is achieved the population beliefs and behaviors would change, maybe toward more physical exercise.

Lastly, the respondents explained that there is need to bring together different stakeholders involved in football to bring out desired results. These include players, clubs, the federation, hospitality sector among others. All

these partners should bring the expertise in their area of specialization to involve more people in the game. Sport organizations and bodies of all levels are responsible to effectively market both their products and the sport in general, specifically during mega sport events and to leverage from it for future mega events. This goes in line with Leopkey and Parent (2012) findings that some countries take a passive approach to legacy planning and take it for granted, while many clubs might think their programmes "sell themselves". However, clubs should be taking the initiative and try to attract new comers in order to increase the total number players by having their own strategies that would benefit the whole country in a larger picture, as those strategies could raise the probability of a continuous event legacy.

5.2. Conclusion

Mega Sport events are complex and too involving to the hosting country but at the end of it all there are a lot of changes that takes place in the host city and beyond. A well planned and successfully executed event goes a long way among the citizenry. Jordan become in the limelight of the world especially in Asia after hosting the AFC women's Asian cup 2018. The mega sport event had an impact on individuals, communities and the country as whole in terms of football participation. The attitude towards football

changed as more people were interested in the sport with seriousness. Women were given a platform after the games after witnessing what their engagement can do in the lives of many. The government, the football Association and other stakeholders equally joined hands to put in place deliberate policies aimed at changing the landscape of football in Jordan.

Although mega sport events are associated with huge expenditures especially in coming up with good infrastructure and other services such as hospitality and efficient transport system there are other effects that go down to the people of the nation for a long time according to this study findings.

5.3. Future Implications

The results of this study could be used to further improve and increase the numbers of football participants when hosting a mega sport event in Jordan. Hosting the mega sport event in Jordan had an effect on the level of football participation among the population. Findings show that kids get affected of the event regardless of the athletes' gender playing in the event. Therefore, and in order to increase the interest which was stimulated by the hosting, its vital that schools should be more involved to increase the numbers of participants, as they cover the largest sector of the population. This can be done including football skills within the Physical Education (PE) classes in

all public schools. There should be Memorandum of understanding among schools, JFA, and the events organizing committees to invite schools to the events matches to plant the love of the game in them at a young age.

As the findings of the study show in order to reach out as many people as possible to inform them about the event that will be hosted which results in increasing the numbers of players eventually, one of the efficient ways in doing so, is through media; printed or electronic. Event organizers and concerned bodies should take into consideration that wide spread media and the creation of a lot of noise about the event even in the rural areas can help in increasing the interest in the game.

It is important that private businesses integrate and show all types of support in the sports sector, to reduce the heavy load that the government holds, especially when hosting.

As the findings show, that the developed sense of nationalism during the hosting period drive people to try the sport, then it is beneficial that the sport bodies like national, provincial and community sport organizations build a sense of patriotism and encourage communal engagement in the event

to promote celebration of the mega sport event to leverage the Games and motivate individuals of the population to take up exercise and be active.

All said and done mega sport events contribute and leave behind a long legacy that goes for generations hence they need to be managed well.

5.4. Limitations and Further Research Opportunities

The study sample was limited to participants that were registered with the JFA and based in Amman as communication was difficult to reach out to others in distant players. Moreover, this study depended on limited number of participants since it only considered one player from each age category from each gender, hence the findings of this study cannot be generalized on the overall population, therefore, future researches should consider increasing the number of participants to work on the generalizability of the finding.

The study has been done within a limited time making the researcher work under pressure within a specified time. The six hours difference with the participants also made it difficult to schedule interviews and in the process some participants withdrew.

The results of this study serve as the baseline information of related research in the future. Therefore, since the study focused more on the involvement of women in football, future studies should seize the opportunity

to do further studies to establish the level of women participation in leadership positions in football or sport in general in Jordan. Also, since not much has been written on Jordanian sport there is need to explore the legacy of the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2018.

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Appendix 1

Players Interview Questions

1. Why did you start playing football?
2. Can you tell me a bit more about your (family, friend, and experience)?
3. How often do you come to the grassroots centers/academies/club to play football? Are you competing, in what discipline? At what level?
4. Did you consider joining any other sporting code besides Football? Are you/have you been a member of another sporting code?
5. Do you watch Football (or attend international competitions in person)?
6. Did you watch the Women's Asian Cup 2018? Why did you watch it?
 - What are your best memories of the Women's Asian Cup 2018?
 - Tell me about any thoughts, feelings, and/or emotions you had while watching the Women's Asian Cup 2018? Did you "act" on any of these thoughts feelings or emotions? Did they motivate you to behave in any particular way?
 - Did you feel inspired by the Women's Asian Cup 2018, regardless of the Jordanian national team's performance? Do you feel like, even if Jordan didn't lose in the competition, you would have wanted to be more active?
 - Did hosting the Women's Asian Cup 2018 have an impact on your Football participation? Just hosting, regardless of the Jordanian player's performance.
7. Do you have a role model(s), role model(s) in sport? Why do you consider this (these) individual(s) to be your role mode(s)? Do you have a Football role model? Do you have a Female Football role model? How did you come to identify this individual(s) as a role model?
 - Is there a relationship between your role model (s) and your participation in Football? Can you tell me more about this relationship?
8. Has the exposure of Jordanian Footballers on the international stage played a role in influencing you to join football?
9. Is this what drove you to take up the sport, or would you have picked it up regardless?

Appendix 2

(JFA/Grassroots centers/Academies/Club) Administrators or Managers

Interview Questions

1. Do you have your grassroots center/academy/club registration data per year since 2016? (If not, then what prevents you from having this data?)
 - Have there been fluctuations in these registration data? If yes, can you explain these fluctuations? (If no, can you explain why there haven't been fluctuations?)
2. The region of Amman has experienced the largest growth in Football members over the last 7 years of any region. Why do you think this is?
3. Can you discuss the effect of Jordanian players in international competitions (e.g., Stephanie Al Naber, Ayah Majali, and Shahnaz Jebreen) on registration and participation rates in your grassroots centers/academies/club?
 - What role do you feel that the players play in promoting Football?
 - Do you feel that Football requires successful international athletes in order to boost participation, or are the success (or non-success) of international athletes and mass-sport participation two separate things? Why?
4. In addition to registration data, have members been more active since 2016?
 - By active, I mean, do your members participate more often? For example, I can join a gym, and that would account for an additional member, but I might never show up. Then after New Year's, I would be more active in the gym. So did you notice that your registration base at the time became even more active after the Women's Asian Cup 2018?
5. What strategies do you think need to be developed to increase participation in your grassroots center/academy/club while hosting a mega sport event? In Football in general?
6. Did your grassroots center/academy/club develop any strategies following the Women's Asian Cup 2018 to generate more players?
7. (If yes, please explain these strategies/If no, please explain why these strategies were not developed?)

8. From your perspective, what are the primary motivations for people to join your grassroots center/academy/club? Do these motivations change over time?

국문초록

메가스포츠이벤트 개최가 참여도에 미치는 효과: 2018 AFC 요르단 여자 아시안컵을 중심으로

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메가 스포츠 이벤트 개최는 개인의 스포츠 참가 수준에 미치는 영향을 미치며 특히, 개최국의 일반 시민들에게 미치는 영향은 상당하다. 본 연구는 2018 AFC 여자 아시안컵 개최와 개인의 스포츠 참여 수준에 대한 영향에 초점을 맞추었다.

본 연구는 16명의 참가자를 대상으로 한 질적 접근 방법을 사용하였으며, 연구 참여자 중 10명은 선수, 3명은 행정가, 3명은 AFC 여자 아시안컵 2018에 직접 또는 간접적으로 영향을 받은 관리자였다.

연구 결과는 메가 스포츠 이벤트 개최 이후 요르단 사람들의 축구에 대한 인식이 변화했다는 것을 보여준다. 축구에 대한 수요가 증가함에 따라 요르단 축구협회(JFA)에서는 남성과 여성을 모두 수용하도록 급진적인 변화가 이루어졌다.

연구 결과는 2018 AFC 여자 아시안컵 개최 시즌에 등록된 축구 선수들의 참여 수준이 증가하였으며, 이후 시즌에는 약간의 감소가 있었음을 보여준다. 연구 결과는 개최의 영향이 주로 남성보다 여성과 아이들의 스포츠 참여에 영향을 미친다는 것을 보여주었다.

주요단어: 메가 스포츠 이벤트, 스포츠 참여, 메가 이벤트 개최, AFC 아시안컵

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