

Research Article

Sporting events and territorial development in Morocco: the case of Benslimane province.

Eventos deportivos y desarrollo territorial en Marruecos: el caso de la provincia de Benslimane.

Mohamed Amine Benreghai: National School of Business and Management, University Abdelmalek Essaâdi, Research Team in Management and Information Systems, Tangier, Morocco.

mohamedamine.benreghai@etu.uae.ac.ma

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Abstract:

Introduction: Morocco is one of Africa's major destinations when it comes to hosting major sporting events. The aim of this paper is to study the effects of these events in interaction with local actors. **Methodology:** We decided to use a qualitative approach in order to understand the perceptions of the actors involved in the management of sporting events in Benslimane province (n=20). Data were collected using semi-structured interviews of actors, based on four main axes: economic, social, territorial and sporting. **Results:** Findings indicated that sporting event is an opportunity for positive change in the host territory, which will promote its development. **Discussions:** As a result, sporting events can be an instrument for mobilizing actors and building a "collective actor". We were also able to identify a number of structural and managerial issues that affect the promotion of sporting events at territorial level. **Conclusions:** This suggests that organizing sporting events has notable potential as a stimulating tool for achieving territorial development, as long as the inherent obstacles and negative externalities identified are successfully managed.

Keywords: sport; sporting event; effects; territory; governance; territorial development, case; Benslimane province.

Resumen:

Introducción: Marruecos es uno de los principales destinos de África cuando se trata de acoger grandes acontecimientos deportivos. El objetivo de este trabajo es estudiar los efectos de estos acontecimientos en interacción con los actores locales. **Metodología:** Decidimos utilizar un enfoque cualitativo para comprender las percepciones de los actores implicados en la gestión de acontecimientos deportivos en la provincia de Benslimane (n=20). Los datos se recogieron mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas a los actores, en torno a cuatro ejes principales: económico, social, territorial y deportivo. **Resultados:** Los resultados indicaron que el acontecimiento deportivo es una oportunidad de cambio positivo en el territorio anfitrión, que promoverá su desarrollo. **Discusión:** En consecuencia, los acontecimientos deportivos pueden ser un instrumento para movilizar a los actores y construir un "actor colectivo". También pudimos identificar una serie de cuestiones estructurales y de gestión que afectan a la promoción de los acontecimientos deportivos a nivel territorial. **Conclusiones:** Esto sugiere que la organización de eventos deportivos tiene un notable potencial como herramienta estimulante para lograr el desarrollo territorial, siempre y cuando se gestionen con éxito los obstáculos inherentes y las externalidades negativas identificadas.

Palabras clave: deporte; evento deportivo; efectos; territorio; gobernanza; desarrollo territorial; caso; provincia de Benslimane.

1. Introduction

Knowledge of sport is the key to knowledge of society (Elias & Dunning, 1994). Sport, a mirror of the society in which we live, is, in the diversity and complementarity of its dimensions, a factor in well-being and health, a powerful lever for human development, an activity that generates investment, employment and value creation, and a factor of inclusion, social cohesion and the fight against poverty, exclusion and marginalization (Economic Social and Environmental Council [ESEC], 2019, p. 14). Morocco is one of Africa's major destinations when it comes to hosting major sporting events; it has been chosen to host the 2025 African Cup of Nations, as well as the 2030 edition of the World Cup, jointly with Spain and Portugal. The current context is adapted to the changing nature of territories, which have understood the major benefits of hosting large-scale sporting events, which are exceptional stimulators for all the stakeholders in a local area, offering actors, who are sometimes competitors, the opportunity to work together to create a cross-disciplinary dynamic to achieve a common goal.

However, sporting events also entail negative externalities, Al-Emadi et al. (2021) studied the preparations of the Qatar government for hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup. They found out that Qatari nationals perceived support for the hosting of the event, though they were worried about traffic, pollution, possible price hikes of basic goods and services, and the potential increase in the cost of living. Moreover, there is also a risk that public authorities will go into debt to host major events. The risk of indebtedness is further heightened by the tendency to overestimate the post-event use of infrastructure built for the event. Many cities that have hosted mega-events have ended up with oversized stadiums. These white elephants (Junod, 2007), with their high maintenance costs, put a strain on the budgets of the public authorities that own them. On the other hand, the multitude of actors in a single field can lead to a tangle of competences in the absence of a structure ensuring the coordination and coherence of sporting actions at territorial level, which obviously undermines the principles of territorial governance, and reinforces the application of government to the detriment of territorial governance (El Akari, 2019).

The Benslimane province stands out in the Casablanca-Settat region for its geographical position and its climatic and ecological predispositions, which make it a leading sports

destination. The province's sports infrastructure has been strengthened by the launch of a few structures and facilities designed to revitalize the province's sports and recreational sectors. On October 2023, the Government and the Deposit and Management Fund, (CDG) signed an agreement which allocates approximately 5 billion dirhams to the Big Benslimane stadium construction over the period 2025 – 2028. The stadium is planned with a capacity of 115 000 spectators, making it the largest stadium in the world (Maghreb Arab Presse [MAP], 2023). The aim of our paper is to study the effects of sporting events on the territory of Benslimane province in interaction with the actors, and to know their perceptions and motivations regarding the effects of organizing sporting events on the city. Moreover, to find out how the organization of sporting events can be seen as an opportunity for positive change of the territory, or on the contrary, the inherent obstacles and negative effects constitute a limit to this change. We defined our main question as follows: What are the effects of sporting events on the territory of Benslimane province, and at what level do these effects contribute to boosting territorial development?

To answer this question, we will present a qualitative study conducted among actors with a high potential for responsibility in the territorial, economic, social and sporting fields in Benslimane province. The main objective of our research is to find out how a sporting event can be seen as a catalyst for development in favor of the territory, despite the inherent obstacles and negative externalities that go with it. Our research objectives are as follows:

- Identify the territorial actors directly and indirectly involved in managing and organizing sporting events in Benslimane province.
- Identify how local actors perceive the role of sporting events.
- Analyze the mode of coordination between territorial actors.
- Diagnose the obstacles and risks involved during organizing sporting events.
- Identify actions to promote sporting events in Benslimane province.

This article will first set out a conceptual and theoretical framework for sporting events and their effects. Then, we will present our qualitative study expressing actors' perceptions regarding sporting events effects and their repercussions on territorial development.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Sporting events

There has been an increase in interest in the city-related benefits of sports events in recent years; the literature in the area is still developing (Xiang et al. 2023). An event is an exceptional moment, a gathering of individuals with a common goal, around a theme, an emotion or a celebration (Didry, 2008), A place where men and women gather for a kind of collective celebration, to attend a sporting or cultural spectacle (Ferrand, 1995). An event is also a highly mediatized social fact, whose effect on different audiences is linked to the uncertainty of the outcome of the action of different actors placed in a situation of achievement, performance or competition (Ferrand, 1995). The event can also be considered as a process of rational organizing of resources to be mobilized to achieve objectives (Loret, 1995), or as project management with an objective to be achieved, by actors, in a precise context, within a given timeframe with precise means, requiring the use of an appropriate approach and tools (Maders & Clet, 2002).

The sporting event is a social event in which people gather to watch the performance, cheer it on and publicly appreciate it through applause and shouting (Desbordes & Falgoux, 2003). It is also considered a festive moment, punctual and concentrated in its emotional content (Sobry, 2003). The sporting event can also be seen as a project carried out by actors in a specific context (Maders & Clet, 2002), within a temporal and spatial framework (Schoeny, 2005). In the context of our research, we envisage a broader application of the concept of sporting events: Preliminary organization (which guides the actors' involvement), a certain limit of time and place (which refers to the notion of territory), media coverage or at least a certain communication, a sporting performance (but not necessarily a competitive one) and benefits (material, memorial and symbolic). The sporting event can thus be seen as an activity that "organizes" the meaning shared by the actors involved. Analyzing spatial and temporal contextualization can help us understand the explicit and implicit behaviors of the actors involved in a sporting event (Schoeny, 2005). There are several types of sporting event depending on the type of organizing, including events organized by public service providers, mainly federations (all Moroccan championships in all disciplines), events organized by private contractors, exceptional events organized by a public consortium with the help of private sponsors and events organized by associations (other than federations), these are the majority of amateur events organized in Morocco.

2.2. Sporting event effects

Studying the effects of sporting events means studying how a temporary event can be anchored in time and space to create territory (Bessy & Suchet, 2015). For example, the organization of the summer or winter Olympic Games as a formidable machine for producing images and constructing representations of the territory (Gumuchian, 1993). Theoretically, we can therefore consider different levels of effect, both internally (in the city or region concerned) and externally (outside the city or region).

Table 1.

Level of effect and level of scale of a sporting event

		Level of scale (size of the footprint and influence)		
		local		Worldwide
Level of effect (footprint and influence)	Limited to activity or sport discipline	The Volcanoes Race 2008, Clermont-Ferrand. Sancy Verte 2016 (mountain bike event)	2006 European Mountain Bike Championships, Limosano (Italy)	Petzl Roc Trip 2011, Gêtu Valley (China) Red Bull Rampage 2015, Virginia (Utah, USA)
	Sectorial and touristic	Competitions/events in winter sports centers	The Great Odyssey Savoy-Mont-Blanc 2010, Savoy and High Savoy	World Wind Games 2010, Leucat Pro 2014 (Surf)
	Extended to society as a whole	Toros festival 2008 Feria and bullfights,	The Grand Prize of Saint-Louis 2010 (Languedoc jousting tournament)	Soccer World Cup 1998, Paris. Summer Olympics 2008, Beijing (China)

Source: Bessy and Suchet (2015). A theoretical approach to sports events. *Worlds of Tourism*. <https://journals.openedition.org/tourisme/1023#quotation>

The first level of effect, which is limited to the sporting activity or discipline in question, shows how a sporting event generates attendance on the ground, by helping it to acquire a reputation and notoriety. However, this is limited to the sport in question and to the sports venue in question. The impact may be local or worldwide but remains limited to the participants in the sporting activity concerned. At the second level, the sporting event may enable an area to maintain its position as a benchmark destination for the sector concerned (winter sports, nature sports, etc.), with these practices representing levers for regional planning and tourism development (Monneret, 1998). These events, which are not just aimed at the sporting public, boost the sector in the area concerned, and the spin-offs for tourism are more significant and more diversified than for a specific sporting activity. Finally, at the third level, events contribute to the imagery of the place for society, through an elaboration that goes far beyond the sporting or tourism framework. This influence may be local or global, but it uniformly affects every individual, whether interested in sport or not.

Positive and negative consequences of hosting the event can possibly be identified. Most often, the impacts of major sports events are influenced by the socio-cultural realities of the residents and visitors of the host country and the actual activities taking place during the event (Acha-Anyi, 2023). Khalifa (2020) noted the possible sustainable development goals (SDG) that will be achieved because of the preparation and actual hosting of the FIFA 2022 World Cup in Qatar. The following are the enumerated SDGs: better health and well-being of all; gender equality; sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth; full and productive employment and decent work for all; improved infrastructure; promotion of inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation; and peace and justice for all. This is parallel to the study of Xiang and al. (2023), who affirmed that mega sport events play an important role in the sustainable development of the host cities or countries being contributors to the development perspectives related to political, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions. The consequences of an event can then manifest themselves at multiple levels on the satisfaction and well-being of the population (social effects), on sites and landscapes, pollution (environmental effects) and on the enhancement and local development of the sporting activities concerned by the event (cultural or sporting effects.) (Maurence, 2010).

The study of the effects of hosting small-scale sports events is a pivotal focus area within regional development research (Raso & Cherubini, 2024). Gibson et al. (2003), explain that small-scale sports events encompass sporting competitions or activities characterized by a limited number of participants and spectators, often taking place at the local or regional level. These events, such as community fun runs, local soccer tournaments, or regional youth sports leagues, typically foster an intimate and community-centred atmosphere. According to Gibson et al. (2003), they often attract less media attention and involve lower financial investments compared to large-scale sports events. Nevertheless, despite their smaller scale, small-scale sports events can exert significant social and cultural influences on local communities and offer athletes valuable opportunities for competition and skill development Parra-Camacho et al. (2021). A study by Morfoulaki et al. (2023) have illuminated how small-scale sports events can create sustainable tourism opportunities for communities, particularly in smaller locales where event stakeholders frequently comprise members of the local community itself. Further, their findings reveal that sport tourism plays a significant role in shaping a distinctive identity closely aligned with sustainability objectives of a given region, with a focus on small-scale sport events. Thus, optimum management of the size of sports events must be based on actor's management, to better reflect their interests from a sustainable development perspective (Ferrand and Chappelet., 2015).

3. Methodology

The main objective of our research is to study the socio-economic effects of organizing sporting events on the host territory. For the sake of methodological accuracy and to better understand the research model, it is important to define and operationally justify the choices of evaluation axes retained in this work. To better understand the methodological choices to be made, we felt it necessary to explore the research tools and methods used in impact assessment, through the presentation of eight (8) field studies aimed at measuring the effects of sporting events on their host territories.

Table 2.

Summary table of empirical studies

Studies	Type of study	Methodology
Study 1: The impact of sporting events on the Moroccan territory: the case of the Med VI International Athletics Meeting in Rabat.	Qualitative research	An interview guide was drawn up, which led to a number of interviews. The interview guide is structured around four main areas: economic, political, sporting and media.
Study 2: Assessing the economic impact of equestrian sports events.	Quantitative study	Questionnaire for participants, accompanying persons and visitors to equestrian events, to measure their economic impact.
Study 3: Assessing the territorial impact of a sporting event: application to the case of the "Val de Lorraine Classic".	Qualitative study	In-depth interviews with local stakeholders and members responsible for organising the event.
Study 4: Sporting events and sustainable development - the example of Beach Day.	Qualitative study	A case study. The Beach Day event is divided into 5 sports and sustainable development awareness platforms, from the beach entrance to underwater.
Study 5: Strategic analysis of sports events and the region: Nancy and the 2012 European Handball Championships.	Qualitative study	Analysis of the specific features of the area (location, climate, know-how, etc.), sports (sporting activities, sports facilities, etc.), culture and the arts through interviews with the players.
Study 6: Study of the economic impact of EURO 2016.	Quantitative study	Field study using surveys and official statistics.
Study 7: The economic impact of organising the TOP 14 semi-finals in Marseille.	Quantitative study	Field study using surveys and official statistics. Electronic survey.
Study 8: Socio-economic impact of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.	Comparative study	Tools for estimating potential benefits: scenario analysis, surveys and use of econometric models.

Source: Author's elaboration (2024).

This review of research methods used to study the impact of sporting events on their host territories seemed necessary to choose the most appropriate methodological tool for our research. As is clear from the table, half of the studies carried out (4/8) opted for a qualitative study (studies no. 1, 3, 4 and 5), three chose to opt for a quantitative study, and finally for the remaining study they opted for a comparative study. Three quarters of the studies that opted for a qualitative study chose to interview actors in the area hosting the sporting event (studies no. 1, 3 and 5). We chose to use a qualitative approach, and therefore to conduct interviews, with the help of an interview guide. We opted for a qualitative approach because we needed to obtain explanations, rather than numerical results, of how the various actors felt about our research topic, and from there, their motivations and expectations behind collaboration in organizing a sporting event.

In the context of our research, the analysis of the interpretations and perceptions of the interviewees representing the actors in the province of Benslimane seems relevant. This implies the use of the semi-directive interview technique, which we feel is appropriate. Indeed, the interpretations of the study consider not only the content, but also the overall meaning of the issue of sporting events, which is the responsibility of all the actors governing in the Benslimane province. We can say that each actor is an element in a global approach and contributes to a global response. The studies that opted for a qualitative approach tackled our research theme in different ways, each focusing on a specific issue. Some studies proposed a systematic analysis of these effects, grouping them according to the three pillars of sustainable development, considering the economic, social and environmental effects of sporting events (study no. 4). Others have simply measured the territorial, cultural and artistic specificities of a sporting event (study no. 5). While others looked at the economic, social, political, sporting and media effects (studies no. 1 and no. 2).

To carry out this study, an interview guide was drawn up, through which we tried to analyze the positive and negative effects felt by the actors concerning the organizing of sporting events in their territory. The interview guide is composed of three main parts, and based on four main axes: territorial, economic, social and sporting. Given the objectives of our research and in line with the objectives of the interviews conducted, we chose a sample of actors with high potential responsibility in the different areas mentioned above in the province. The Benslimane province stands out in the Casablanca-Settat region for its exceptional assets, mainly its geographical position and its climatic and ecological predispositions, making it a sports destination. The sports infrastructure in the province has been strengthened by the launch of a number of structures and facilities designed to breathe new life into the city's sports and recreational sectors.

Table 3.

The actors interviewed from Benslimane province

Actors in Benslimane province	Number of interviews	Interviews not exploitable	Survey basis
Local authority (Wali, prefectural services).	4	2	2
Local council (elected representatives, civil servants)	3	1	2
Ministry of Youth and Sports (provincial direction)	4	1	3
Sports movement (clubs, sports associations)	2	0	2

Economic actors (Sponsors)	3	1	2
National Initiative for Human Development	3	0	3
Ministry of National Education (provincial direction)	1	0	1
Total	20	5	15

Source: Author's elaboration (2024).

We conducted the interviews face-to-face at the actors' workplaces, and each lasted around 30 minutes. The interviews conditions varied considerably from one person to another. Saturation reached by the complementary and repetitive responses of the actors in Benslimane province. The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and transcribed using the thematic structure method. We used the content analysis technique for the transcripts analyze to provide a clear view of the data collected. NVivo 11 qualitative data management software was used to facilitate the coding and data management process. The major difficulties we faced lay in the availability of resource persons to interview, and the inability to obtain written or numerical evidence from them. Another difficulty was that some actors in the area (fortunately a minority) had misperceptions about the aims of the study.

4. Results

The first objective of this survey is to identify the public and private actors involved in organizing sporting events in Benslimane province. The responses from resource persons reveal the existence of seven actors, whose involvement is considered important.

Table 4.

Actors involved in organizing sporting events

Actors	Functions
Local authorities	Authorization and information about foreign guests, security forces.
Territorial collectivity	Financial and organizational support.
Ministry of Youth and Sports (provincial direction)	Technical and logistical support, guidance and supervision.
Sports movement (clubs, sports associations)	Launching sporting events project, organizing sporting events.
Economic actors (Sponsors)	Financing sporting events.
National Initiative for Human Development	Financing of tournaments and sporting events organized in the area, subsidies for sports associations.
Ministry of National Education (provincial direction)	Collaboration when organizing sporting events in a school.

Source: Author's elaboration (2024).

Organizing a sporting event, whether recreational or competitive, is no longer the prerogative of a single actor, notably the decentralized services of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. It therefore requires the constant involvement of a range of actors, whose involvement is deemed indispensable, if not unavoidable, to the success of any sporting event. We note that the people interviewed made no mention of other actors who play a significant role in the field of sporting

events, even indirectly, such as the deconcentrated services of the ministerial departments of health, the local press and political parties. The territorial actors claim that their collaboration depends mainly on the "upstream of the event", insofar as; if the organizing party is an association that is part of the territorial sports movement of Benslimane province, the role of the territorial authorities is limited to authorizing and informing about foreign guests and ensuring security forces, and the financial and organizing support of the territorial authority remains limited. However, if the initiative to organize a sporting event in the province comes from the territorial authorities (a local seasonal tbourida event, for example), or is part of a national, continental or international event (the African Games organized in Morocco), the role of the territorial actors is by far more useful; we're talking about more effective participation.

Regarding the interaction between these different actors, all of them confirmed that there is interaction between them, the difference between them lies on the type of interaction (Presence, Support, Collaboration). They also confirmed that the multiplicity of actors involved in organizing sporting events in Benslimane province is a lever and an advantage. According to the study, 60% of the actors claim that organizing a sporting event can be seen as an instrument for mobilizing actors and building a "collective actor", through the development of a certain number of automatism that are consolidated through the organization of several events. The remaining actors are divided proportionally between those who argue that this is due to the setting of well-defined objectives (20%), and those who say that the construction of this "collective actor" is a logical consequence of the "participative approach" being adopted in the province.

The first part of the interview also looked at the way in which territorial actors coordinate their decision-making processes: "There are several actors, but who has the final say?". All actors except local authorities and the territorial collectivity claim that the organizing party has the power to make the final decision in case of disagreement between the different actors, obviously in accordance with the laws in force and its status. However, the remaining actors (the local authorities and the territorial collectivity), affirm that it is the territorial authorities who have the power to make the final decision; in other words, it's the governor who has the final say, referring to organic law n°113-14 relating to municipalities.

In the second part, we tried to identify - according to the perception of each actor - the various territorial, economic, social and sporting considerations that motivate actors to get involved or not in organizing sporting events.

Table 5.

The role of sporting events in the territory

Territorial actors	Economic actors	Social actors	Sporting actors
- Improving the territory's image	- Boost the economic dynamic	- Well-being of the population	- Create a sporting dynamic
- Contribute to the development of the territory	- Communication through the event	- Sharing common values	- Encouraging physical activity

Source: Author's elaboration (2024).

In the last part of the interview guide, we discussed the possibility of considering sporting events as an opportunity for positive transformation for the area, despite the negative externalities that go with it. We also discussed the actions that can promote this positive change when organizing sporting events. According to the results of the interviews, all the actors involved agreed that sporting events are an opportunity for positive change in the Benslimane province. Organizing a sporting event brings a number of advantages, particularly in terms of territorial, economic, social and sporting development. What's more, sports actors have pointed out that the sporting successes achieved by local clubs and players create a movement for development in the territory and require other actors to follow their lead.

The survey also looked at the relationship between the actors. All the actors confirmed that there was no structure in place to ensure coordination between them during the organizing of a sporting event in Benslimane province. 60% of actors confirm that in most cases, coordination is achieved simply by organizing consultation meetings well in advance of the event to discuss its organizing. Nevertheless, the presence of all the actors and the effective participation of all those concerned remain utopian according to the individual experiences of the actors interviewed. Not to mention the participation of territorial actors, which is always relative and depends on the events upstream. 25% believe that coordination between the various actors is ensured through cooperation agreements in a Win-Win logic. In third place comes the "slogan" of the participative approach, with only 15%. According to the director of the Benslimane indoor sports center, "The success of the event depends on the collaboration and willingness of the actors".

What interests us most, in asking this question, is to go beyond the stage of analyzing the perceptions and behaviors of the actors, to focus on the coordination instruments put in place within the territory of Benslimane province to bring the process of organizing a sporting event to a successful conclusion. It should be remembered that the new organic law on territorial authorities - with reference to territorial actors - calls for a participatory approach as a means of involving all actors in the identification and prioritization of projects concerning the territory. However, the fact that a large number of actors have not taken up this approach, which is required by law, reflects the reality of the prevailing management mode in the Benslimane province territory.

The coordination and interaction of territorial actors was one of the essential components of the survey questionnaire, as a research tool. So, the question that follows raised the actions enabling the mobilization of all territorial actors and the construction of a "collective actor" at the service of organizing a sporting event. The interview therefore focused on the opinions of resource persons, given their experience in organizing sporting events in Benslimane province, in order to identify mechanisms or actions that would enable all territorial actors to be involved. Several actions were proposed, such as developing a participatory approach, clarifying the role of each player, ensuring strong involvement of the authorities, building trust and anchoring a sporting culture (raising awareness of the importance of sport). Regarding the obstacles identified during organizing of sporting events, the actors identified six problems: lack of financial resources, lack of qualified coaching, absence of professionalism, lack of infrastructure, lack of sporting culture and overlapping competencies.

According to the results of the interviews, all the actors affirmed that these obstacles and negative effects are indeed a limiting factor, insofar as; they are closely linked to the success of organizing a sporting event in the Benslimane province. Respondents also felt it important to mention other factors that are closely linked to the success of organizing a sporting event in the Benslimane province, as the absence of these factors can hinder the promotion of sporting events at territorial level. In this respect, three factors need to be taken into consideration,

namely the collaboration of the actors, the media coverage of the event and the profile of the organizer (specialist, beginner).

The final question asked was about actions could be taken to promote sporting events in Benslimane province, and to promote the positive transformation of the area when organizing a sporting event. Several actions were proposed, such as expanding the sports infrastructure network, mobilizing financial resources, developing a sports culture, publicizing events, and other actions such as institutionalization, professionalism and training. A careful reading, from a comparative angle, of the perceptions of the resource persons concerning in particular the obstacles identified and the actions enabling the promotion of sporting events in the territory of Benslimane province brings out groups of proposals. The first group includes factors that are essential for organizing a sporting event, such as the lack of financial resources and infrastructure. Admittedly, these factors remain a strategic and structural aspect of the sports system, but despite the efforts made by the kingdom to inject significant sums of money into the two aforementioned factors, the situation of sport in Morocco has seen a relative improvement in terms of infrastructure, but the lack of financial resources still remains a constraint when organizing a sporting event. With this in mind, the discussions led to a second series of proposals, encompassing other elements such as qualified management (well-trained profiles), developing the sporting culture and institutionalization (setting up neutral coordination and monitoring structures).

We can deduce that some of these proposals relate to the governance and management of sporting organizations, reflecting a more acute awareness on the part of those in charge - mainly sporting actors - involved in organizing sporting events. Promoting sporting events at a territorial level therefore requires a rethinking of the way territorial actors think and act, with efforts focused on training, anchoring sporting culture, adopting a participative approach, improving procedures, setting up structures and encouraging non-amateurism before moving on to professionalism. In the same vein, sports actors emphasized the fact that the sports culture of local actors - mainly territorial actors - in the Benslimane province is a limiting factor in the promotion of sporting events at territorial level. This refers to the lack of information, knowledge and, above all, appropriation of the effects of sporting events among local actors.

5. Discussion

To highlight the results of the interviews, we began by identifying the general perceptions and motivations driving actors to participate in organizing a sporting event, which we tried to translate into terms of potential evaluation indicators for assessing the effects of sporting events organized in the Benslimane province (first reporting tool). In the second reporting tool, based on the indicators identified in the first tool, we tried to compare the positive perceptions expressed by the actors with the negative perceptions, to see whether the perceived positive perceptions covered the actors' initial motivations. This method of observation and analysis enabled us to identify important links and interactions between the various actors and the different components of our analysis model.

1. For the question concerning the perceptions and motivations of actors in the province of Benslimane to take part in and support sporting events, and the effects felt on the territory, it emerged that the various actors, whether territorial, economic, social or sporting, are all aware of the role that sporting events can play in creating a territorial dynamic that benefits the territory itself, then the actors and the population. Everyone benefits from one or more of the dimensions energized by a sporting event. As a result, all actors are ready to embrace sporting events as a way of enhancing their brand image, revitalizing the territory to which they belong, and reconnecting with local

residents in whatever form they see fit territorial, economic, sporting or socio-cultural.

However, the "upstream of the event" is a determining factor in the collaboration of territorial actors in Benslimane province. Similarly, for events organized on the initiative of associations forming part of the territorial sports movement in Benslimane province, they claim to suffer from "networking" and "selectivism" at the level of subsidies granted for organizing sporting events in the province, and some territorial actors were bold enough to confirm this. In the same vein, sports actors insisted on the observation made about the sports culture among local actors - mainly territorial actors - in the territory of Benslimane province as being the limiting factor in the promotion of sporting events at territorial level. This refers to the lack of information, awareness and, above all, appropriation of the effects of sporting events among local actors.

2. The other observation concerns the interaction between the different actors. All the actors confirmed that there is interaction between them, the difference lies on the types of interaction that occur during the organizing of a sporting event. Thus, all the actors confirmed that the multiplicity of actors involved in organizing sporting events in the Benslimane province constitutes a lever and an advantage, since unity is strength, and organizing a sporting event can be thought as an instrument for mobilizing actors and building a "collective actor" at the service of the principles of transversality, participation, partnership and participatory democracy.
3. The third finding is that the various actors involved in the process of organizing a sporting event, while remaining focused on the objectives arising from their different sectoral positions, are also interested in the objectives of other sectors, which they try to keep in mind in order to create a climate of cooperation and trust. The first reporting tool showed, through the repetitive incidence of the axes impacted, that each of the actors interviewed obtained the highest incidence in the sectorial axis they represent, while paying some attention to the other axes, except for the sports actor, who demonstrates a certain degree of balance.
4. In response to the main question, which seeks to identify the perceptions and motivations held by actors in Benslimane province regarding the effects of sporting events on the city's territory, these can be summarized as follows:

On the territorial level: the interviews showed that the territorial authorities (elected representatives and civil servants from the Benslimane local authority) do not operate alone on the territory, but in perpetual contact and interaction with the territorial authorities (Wali of the Benslimane province, prefectural services), which requires coordination that sometimes remains difficult on an organizational and logistical level. At provincial level, the aim is to demonstrate to people that sport is part of the daily work of a territorial agent, insofar as; the roles assigned to sporting events, such as guaranteeing the well-being of the population and improving the image of the territory, are part of the aims of a territorial agent.

On the economic level: With regard to the economic axis, the operation to support events in general shows that the economic sector is aware of the opportunities offered by sporting events in terms of communication and positioning on the territory and the expansion of market share, and perfectly integrates these events to seek proximity with its customers or future customers and explore new markets. Although the economic effects are sometimes difficult to quantify, some indicators are often identified and anticipated by economic actors.

On the social level: the actors interviewed first made the link between sport and citizenship education, social mixing, fraternity and respect. The aim of the sporting event is to develop the practice of sport and, thanks to concrete actions, make it a means of strengthening community life and citizenship education. The popularization of a sporting culture through sporting events, which encourages real physical activity among young people who will one day become adults, and among adults themselves, has a preventive role to play in reducing the risk of disease, and in combating addictions such as smoking, alcoholism, drugs, etc., addictions which, moreover, generate delinquency, violence, offences and even crime. Sport can therefore also be seen as an effective tool for tackling the various problems from which society suffers, especially in terms of social cohesion and integration of the population.

On the sporting level: the actors interviewed confirmed that sporting events contribute to development on all levels: economic, territorial, sporting and social. First and foremost, sporting events represent an opportunity to develop sporting activities in the Benslimane province territory, with the local population benefiting from collective frenzies and fans looking forward to following the competitions of their favorite sports. The local population also benefits from local commercial activities, which improve the incomes of certain shopkeepers. According to the head of the Provincial Department of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, it has been observed that some small occasional commercial activities that manage to generate good revenues during specific events (sporting or otherwise) can be transformed into a sustainable commercial activity. He also stressed the importance of the economic dynamic created, particularly if it's a large-scale sporting event, where the tourism sector, the transport sector, the events sector itself and the trade sector all are undergoing significant expansion.

5. According to the results of the interviews, all the actors confirm that a sporting event constitutes an opportunity for positive transformation in favor of Benslimane province. Insofar as organizing a sporting event brings a number of advantages, particularly in the territorial, economic, social and sporting sectors, which will strengthen the development of the territory of Benslimane province. Regarding the obstacles identified when organizing a sporting event, and which hinder the promotion of sporting events at territorial level, the resource persons identified problems such as insufficient financial resources, infrastructure and qualified staff, as well as a lack of sporting culture, overlapping competencies, lack of professionalism and insecurity. Furthermore, all the actors assert that these obstacles and negative effects are indeed a limiting factor, insofar as they are intimately linked to the success of organizing a sporting event in the Benslimane province. We can therefore deduce that organizing sporting events represents a catalyst for development in favor of the territory, as long as the inherent obstacles and negative externalities identified are effectively managed.

6. Conclusions

This study of the effects of sporting events represents a first step towards the generalization of this type of investigation, given the large number of events organized annually throughout the Kingdom and all around the world. This research made it possible to identify the motivations and perceptions of local actors in Benslimane province for investing in sporting events and to define the effects of organizing these events. It was also an opportunity for coordination between the various actors towards a collective strategy of good governance. Finally, this study confirmed that a sporting event is an opportunity for positive change in Benslimane province, which will promote its development. We can therefore deduce that organizing sporting events stimulates territorial development, as long as the inherent obstacles and negative externalities identified are successfully managed. The promotion of sporting events at local level therefore requires a review of the way local actors think and act. To this end, efforts should be directed towards training, anchoring sporting culture, introducing participatory approach, improving procedures, setting up coordination, monitoring and neutral evaluation structures and encouraging non-amateurism before moving on to professionalism.

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AUTHOR:

Mohamed Amine Benreghai

National School of Business and Management, University Abdelmalek Essaâdi, Research Team in Management and Information Systems, Tangier.

PhD Student in Management Sciences, Research team in Management and Information Systems, at the National School of Business and Management of Tangier - Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Tetouan, Morocco. Administrator in sports management and sporting organization governance at the Sport Sciences Institute - University Hassan First, Settat, Morocco.

mohamedamine.benreghai@etu.uae.ac.ma

Indice H: 1

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-0577-6446>

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.fr/citations?user=6DFggasAAAAJ&hl=fr>

ResearchGate: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Benreghai-Amine>

Academia.edu: <https://hassane1.academia.edu/MohamedAmineBenreghai>