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“OLYMPIC STUDIES, OLYMPIC EDUCATION,  
ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF OLYMPIC EVENTS”

*Challenges of Spectators Attendance  
In Sports Events in Oman*

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## ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study is to develop a clear picture of the challenges to spectator attendance in Oman based on 2009 to 2012 data from the Ministry of Sports Affairs and data from the questionnaires from 411 respondents that the researcher interviewed. Data from the Ministry of Sport Affairs were broken down per year, and per sports complex (Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, and the Khasab Sports Complex) in order to establish that assumptions that there is a misdistribution of spectators in different sports categories, that sports complexes, especially stadiums, are underutilized, and that even in football, the average attendance per game is still not close to the actual capacity of stadiums. For the questionnaires, six (6) categories were presented: demographic, facilities, time and climate, sports culture, quality of teams, and media/marketing. The overall results show that the reason why spectator attendance is few is because Omani sports culture itself is weak as evidenced by the lack of women among spectators, poor facilities, inability of facilities to counter side effects of climate, weak quality of teams/games, and lack of sports marketing/sponsorship.



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## Chapter One

### 1.1 Introduction

Spectator attendance is a critical factor in any sports event. For one, without a strong crowd cheering their respective players or teams, it makes the sports dull and less exciting (Stone et al, 2012, 17-18). In sports, fans come from different walks of life: from intellectuals to non-intellectuals; educated and uneducated, employed and unemployed, upper class and lower class individuals and groups. Also, without a number of spectators, a particular sport cannot gain the attention of mainstream personnel who can contribute to its development and maximize its socio-economic potential. For instance, when a sport is popular, such as the NBA, the FIFA World Cup, and most of all, the Olympics, the host country is able to improve the rules and regulations of featured sports to make it more entertaining or thrilling for the fans. Furthermore, businesses tied to the sports (e.g. sponsors, promoters, merchants) are able to generate revenue from a huge number of spectators present which, in turn, provides profit for those who organized the event. In fact, this is the main motivation for the government and private companies that invest money in sports. For example, M. Li and fellow authors (2007), in their book *International Sports Management*, notes that the 2008 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) event garnered US\$957 million in 2008. Interestingly, 94 percent of this came from FIFA sanctioned events like the World Cup, which included:

- 1.1.1 US\$ 556 million from sales of television rights
- 1.1.2 US\$ 253 million from marketing rights
- 1.1.3 US\$32 million from brand licensing and FIFA Quality Concept
- 1.1.4 US\$ 22 million from investments and other interests (Li et al, 2007, 262-263)

The same emphasis is given by J. Duarte (2009), in his book *Public Relations in Sporting and Leisure Events as Promoters of Social Change*, wherein he stressed that spectator attendance induces broadcasting companies to cover every game and provide updated news to fans because of the huge profits it can gain from subsequent advertisements they will be showing on air. Further, he adds that government find sports a very useful tool in increasing revenue from their country's tourism (Duarte, 2009, 77). A more recent reference that shows the impact of large scale sports events is given by J. Horne and G. Whannel (2012), in their book *Understanding the Olympics*. Based on

the authors' findings, the Olympics Games have four main source of revenue, which are ticket sales, sale of television rights, sponsorship, and licensing/merchandising. Interestingly, the bulk of revenue comes from television networks (Horne & Whannel, 2012, 48). Table 1 below gives the detailed breakdown of revenue from each of the mentioned sources from 2005-2008:

**Table 1**  
Revenue of the International Olympics Committee from 2005-2008

Sources	Revenue in US\$ millions	Percentage
<b>Broadcast</b>	2,570	47.16
<b>TOP Sponsorship Program</b>	866	15.89
<b>Domestic Sponsorship</b>	1,555	28.53
<b>Ticketing</b>	274	5.03
<b>Licensing</b>	185	3.39
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,450</b>	

*Note:* Horne, J. & Whannel, G. (2012). *Understanding the Olympics*. NY: Routledge, 2012, p.48

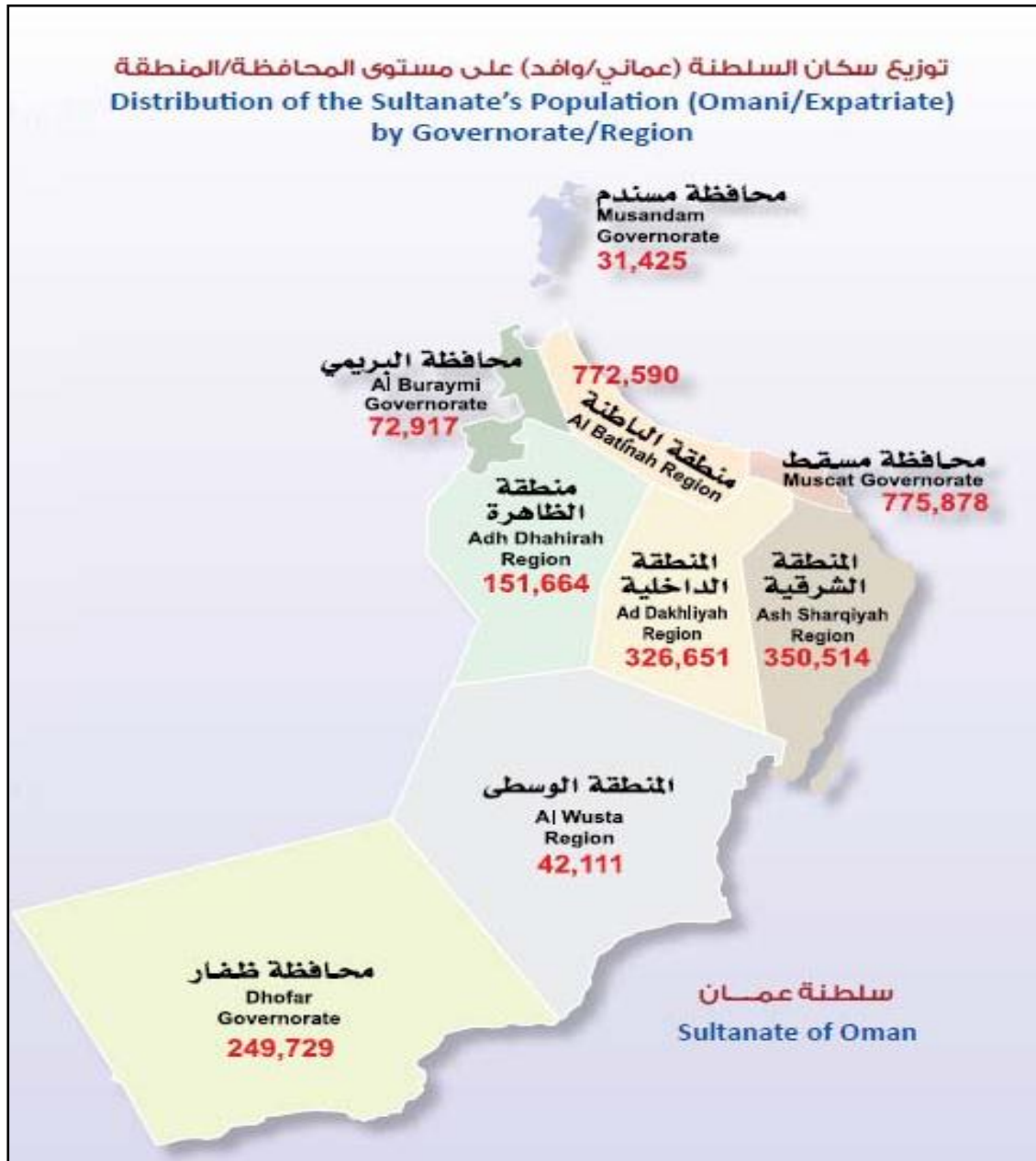
As seen above, in the years 2005 – 2008, for example, the total revenue from the Olympics was over US\$ 5 billion, of which 47% came from television rights, 45% from sponsorship (TOP and Domestic), and only 5% from ticketing. As expected, Horne and Whannel (2012), state that the largest share was from American and European networks, which are able to compensate for the huge expenses of organizing such an event. Still, the IOC, the main regulating body, retains 10% of revenue for its operating costs, such as the lavish travel and accommodation privileges for IOC officials and members (Horne & G. Whannel, 2012, 48).

Hence, sports activities, if supported by the general population, can create a vast array of benefits to the host country and, of course, to the sports teams and organizers of the event. Now, for this paper, the focus of the study is Oman, one of the countries that lie on the Tropic of Cancer in the extreme southeast corner of the Arabian Peninsula. It covers an area between latitude 16.40 and 26.20 degrees north and longitude 51.50 and 59.40 degrees east. Sultanate of Oman is the second largest country after Saudi Arabia in the Arabian Peninsula, with an area officially estimated at 309,500 KM<sup>2</sup> and a

population of around 3,090,150, including expatriates (Ministry of Information, 2002; CIA Factbook, 2012). Now, Figure 1 below shows the distribution of Omani population by governorate or region:

**Figure 1**

Distribution of the Sultanate of Oman population by governorate/ region. (Recently the regions changed to governorate and became 11 governorates)



Source: The Census Administration (2010). General Census of Population, Housing, & Establishments. The Sultanate of Oman. Retrieved from [www.omancensus.net](http://www.omancensus.net)

Oman is divided into 9 governorates, namely Musandam, Al Buraymi, Al Batinah, Muscat, Adh Dhahirah, Ad Dakhliyah, Ash Sharqiyah, Al Wusta, and Dhofar.

The largest population is the Muscat Governorate which has 775, 878, followed by the Al Batinah region which has 772,590. The next most populated governorates are the Ash Sharqiyah and the Ad Dahklyyah, which has 350,514 and 326,651 respectively. Adh Dhahirah, on the other hand, has a population of 151,664 to be followed by the Dhofar governorate which has 249,729. The least populated governorates are Al Burimi with 72,917, and the Al Wusta region which has 42,111. Population-wise, Oman can gather a huge crowd from its Omani and Expatriate citizens, from which there are avid fanatics of different sports such as football, basketball, volleyball, hockey, handball, tennis, and swimming (Nauright, 2012, 307). However, organizers of large sale sports events has to take in consideration the buying power of local fans, the facilities that will host the games, as well as the accommodation for tourists and visitors from other parts of the world.

## **1.2 Significance of the Research**

This study is relevant for the Sultanate of Oman in four ways. First, by assessing the different challenges in spectators' attendance in Oman, the government, in participation with private companies, can improve their local and international tourism. No doubt, sports attract tourists from different places, from within and outside the country. S. Hudson (2003), citing material about sports and adventure tourism, commented that medium to large scale sports events in a country can pull thousands of spectators and force significant development of tourism-related facilities and services. For instance, 10 kilometer runs or Sports Festivals are "...an attractive market for resorts, given their built-in orientation toward recreation and sports, and for individual hotels that can develop sports event packages" (Hudson, 2003, 53). Moreover, improvement of sports in a region can accrue in a community through increased leisure opportunities, improved facilities, and an increased sense of pride among citizens in being a host to great sports events. Hudson (2003) adds that media coverage and positive word-of-mouth recommendations from sports events tourists, "...can also improve the destination's reputation and help to create a positive image as a place to visit or in which to host more events" (Hudson, 2003, 53). Aside from its positive impact on local tourism, knowing the challenges in spectator attendance can help the government understand the link between interest in sports and public health, and find ways to improve the latter by developing the former. Apparently, interest in sports is

intricately tied to a country's culture. In Oman, sports culture prior to the 70s was weak since sports was very limited and confined to school yards scattered in affluent sultanate regions. However, as J. Nauright (2012), noted, sports culture in Oman began to improve in 1972 when the Sultan of Oman increased attention in preparing the youth of the country for a better future. He, then, invested resources in activities that provide leisure time and guidance and care through sports as well as cultural and social programs.

The effect was felt a decade later, 1982, when the Oman National Olympic Committee was created and the country first participated in the Olympics with 16 athletes. Since then, Omanis have increased their interest in sports participation and numerous sports clubs and associations have sprouted across the country. Moreover, active government funding is facilitated through the creation of national teams and providing supportive environments for sports, such as stadiums (Nauright, 2010, 307). Hence, with this growing culture for sports, active participation in events can promote interest for health and wellness. For instance, K.A. E. Volkwien (1998) comments that when sports become part of the educational system students are made aware of the importance of physical fitness. In effect, these programs for health and wellness education shape the country's body culture in general (Volkwein, 1998, 225). A good example is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sports Summer, wherein over 61,000 youngsters went to 400 sports centers around the country to participate in 42 different games and sports activities (Ministry of Information, 2010). Now, this is not to say that every individual who loves sports will have a chance to participate in large scale sports events. However, with a population highly aware of sports and its benefits, it is not difficult for organizers of sports to draw crowds of spectators to view a sports activity or competition (Piiponen, 2011, 28).

Aside from improving local tourism and the country's sports culture, understanding the challenges that affect spectators' attendance in Oman can also impact national pride in Omanis. As mentioned above, the success of sports activities are dependent on their spectators. Thus, a game with few cheerers tells that the activity is either small-scale or a boring one (Markovits & Rensmann, 2010, 210-11). However, by encouraging support for sports activities and their local and international athletes, Omanis will learn to take pride in what they can do. Table 2 below shows the many achievements that Omanis have in sports so far, which gives the country something to be proud of:

**Table 2**  
Successful Omani Athletes in Large Scale Sports Activities

<b>Event</b>	<b>Athlete/ Team</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Sports participated</b>
<b>Asian Athletics Championship in India and China (1987/1990)</b>	Mohammed Al-Malki	First place	400-meter race
<b>World Junior Championship in Ecuador (1995)</b>	National Football Team	Fourth Place	Football
<b>Gulf Cup in Qatar (2004)</b>	National Football Team	Second Place	Football
<b>Gulf Cup in UAE (2007)</b>	National Football Team	Second Place	Football
<b>Gulf Cup in Muscat, Oman (2009)</b>	National Football Team	First Place	Football
<b>Gulf Cup</b>	Ali Al-Habsi	Best Goalkeeper Award (Four times in a row)	Soccer
<b>Beijing Olympics (2008)</b>	Buthaina Yaqoubi	First Female Omani Athlete	Track and Field
<b>Porsche Carrera Cup GB Championship</b>	Ahmad Al Harthy	Fourth place	Racing

Note: Adapted from J. Nauright (2012). *Sports around the World*. CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 308

As indicated in Table 2 above, several Omani athletes have already been recognized in major events around the world, taking home awards that will make their country renowned. Aside from the feats mentioned above, the Oman Ministry of Information gives a detailed rundown of other sports achievements:

- 1.2.1 In 2009, the Oman national football team received the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (the Vice-President of the

United Arab Emirates and the Ruler of Dubai.) Creative Sports Award for the best and most successful Arab sports team.

- 1.2.2 In 2010, the 16 and under football team reached the final of the Asian Nations Cup for 2010. The Omani team has won the championship two times already, in the 1996 cup hosted by Thailand and in the 2000 cup in Vietnam.
- 1.2.3 In 2010, Adventurer Khalid Bin Sulaiman Al. Siyabi was the first Omani to climb Mount Everest
- 1.2.4 Team A of the Omani national beach volleyball team won the 8<sup>th</sup> Arab Men's Championship in Lebanon, while team B came in third place. The same team B won the 12<sup>th</sup> Gulf Championship in Saudi Arabia, while Team A came in third.
- 1.2.5 The Oman national diving team won second place in the Amsterdam International Open Championship in the Netherlands.
- 1.2.6 The national weight-lifting team was awarded with eighteen medals in the 9th Gulf Co-operation Council States' Men's Weight-lifting Championship in the UAE. Subsequently, the disabled weight-lifting team won two silver medals in the West Asian States' Weight-lifting Championship for the Disabled in Khor Fakkan. The body-building team also won several medals in Gulf, Arab and Asian competitions
- 1.2.7 The national athletics team won seven gold, twelve silver and four bronze medals at the Asian Athletics Championship hosted in India. (Ministry of Information, 2010)

In the process, as Omanis are aware that their national athletes are making waves in international competitions, sports will not be treated lightly since it is an avenue for Omani athletes to prove themselves and reach international sports events. This implies that national pride in Omani athletes can result in huge number of spectators who are eager to know if their favorite athletes or teams are winning or not.

A final reason why this paper is significant is because of the revenue that can be generated from sports activities and be utilized to improve the country's economic landscape. As mentioned in the introduction, sports activities, especially large scale ones like the Olympics, can provide revenue for organizers and, of course, for the government (Humphreys & Howard, 2008, 106). As of recent, Oman has successfully



hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Beach Games and is hosting the Tour of Oman, which is now part of the regular international circuit of cycling tours (Nauright, 2012, 308). Admittedly, since the focus of this paper is not on revenue per se, it is assumed that hosting a game would require huge money to setup and promote. On the other hand, like the major games mentioned earlier, a successful sports activity can create profit for the organizers and provide socio-economic development for Omanis in general.

This is evident, for instance, in the modernization of Oman since His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said ascended to the throne in 1970. One priority was to increase community participation in sports and physical fitness, thus leading to various sports clubs across the country. Despite the Sultanate has made significant strides in giving a greater role for women to exercise their role in society, but it is noticeable that there are still some aspects that still limit its role to the fullest, sports became an avenue for them to participate, improve their skills, and eventually, improve their individual economic status. Sports, therefore, provided new job opportunities for men and women (Benn et al, 2011, 134). A more appropriate example, however, is the strategy of Omran, a company set up by the Sultanate of Oman to handle projects related to infrastructure and development. For instance, according to the Oxford Business Group (2009) report on Oman, Omran's large scale projects not only includes improving existing sports centers, but also covers development of the areas around it to be a spectator-sports and entertainment area surrounded by three-, four- and five-star hotels, serviced hotel apartments, restaurants and cafes, an expensive shopping mall, and a business park (Oxford Business Group, 2009, 211). Hence, because sports is a venue that increases the number of spectator/ tourists in Oman, it pulls in further development in the areas around stadiums – progress that simultaneously welcomes local and foreign investors and provides more jobs for Omanis. In a more recent report, the Oxford Business Group (2011) specifies that the main legacy of Games held in Oman is the much improved sports infrastructure and site development because of revenue from sports and the increased budget allotted by the Ministry of Sports Affairs for improving athletic facilities (Oxford Business Group, 2011, 206). With this continuous progress, it shows that successful sports activities hosted in Oman for the past years have driven the country towards development. The key, of course, is revenue from sports and the increased job opportunities for Omanis.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main focus of this study is the challenges of spectator attendance in sports events in Oman. As will be elaborated below, despite the heightened improvement of sports infrastructure in Oman, and with all the stadiums present in the Sultanate of Oman, it is worth asking why sports events hosted in the country have not utilized these facilities to their full potential. Hence, this study aims to find out the following:

- 1.3.1 Establish the problem of spectator attendance in Oman
- 1.3.2 Identify possible reasons why Omanis are not able to support locally hosted games.
- 1.3.3 Identify solutions to the challenges to spectator attendance

### **1.4 Thesis**

Based on data from 2009 to 2012 from the nine (9) main sports complexes in Oman, namely the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, and the Khasab Sports Complex, this paper will identify the challenge to spectator attendance by examining the apparent imbalanced distribution of spectators for all category of sports, the inactivity of sports complexes, and the under-utility of all nine (9) sports complexes in Oman. These findings will be reinforced through the questionnaires given to 411 respondents which, in overall, show that the culture of sports in Oman is very weak, as opposed to what the Ministry of Sports Affairs tries to promote, and stresses the need to improve factors such as facilities, timing and climate, sports culture, sports team quality, and media and marketing.

### **1.5 Statement of the Problem**

At this point, it is important to establish that Omani spectators in sport events hosted in Oman has not yet maximized the potential of its main sports facilities across the country. According to the Ministry of Sports Affairs (2010), the percentage of Omani fans in sports events are very few and most are concentrated on football, which implies that other sports like basketball, tennis, and volleyball have very little following

(MoSA, 2010, 43). This is not surprising since football is the most popular sport in Oman, and in the Arabian Peninsula. C. Holes (2010), in his book *Colloquial Arabic of the Gulf*, explain that from its small beginnings in 1950, Gulf teams have participated in international football competitions such as the Kuwait team participating in the 1982 World Cup in Spain, which was followed by teams from Qatar, Iraq, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, and Yemen. Holes further mentions that the popularity of the sport has raised a great deal of money that the opening ceremony of the Gulf Cup in 2007 alone already cost 33 million UAE dirhams that foreign managers were even hired to assist in promoting and managing the entire Cup (Holes, 2010, 230). In this case, it is possible that some games during sporting events will have very few fans as compared to the football matches, making the profit garnered from spectators unable to cover the operational costs of the facilities. Nonetheless, since basketball, volleyball, and other popular sports worldwide (e.g. hockey, handball) are part of sporting events held in Oman, the lack of audience during these games confirms the existing challenge to spectator attendance among Omanis. Not only that, another consideration is the number of football spectators that fill stadiums. Even if it has the highest number of spectators but its average attendance only fill as small part of the stadium's seating capacity, then it still is a problem for the sports industry.

### **1.6 Research Questions**

Several questions will serve as guide for this paper:

- a. What is Oman's Sports culture?
- b. What existing Structures in Oman can help improve Oman's sports industry?
- c. What is the distribution of spectators for each category of games held in Oman?
- d. How frequent are sports complexes used every year?
- e. How much sports complexes in Oman utilized?
- f. Are sports events in Oman marketed enough through the media and with perks that will attract buyers (e.g. early bird discounts and other promos)?
- g. Are the sports presented worth watching? Are the teams being watched worth the buyer ticket?
- h. Do Omanis really have a high sports culture, or is leisure and play confined only to those in the upper levels of the socio-economic ladder?
- i. Is the timing of sports activities right, or are these events held during seasons when it is hard to watch a game in open stadiums?

- j. Are the facilities present in each of the nine (9) sports complexes mentioned above user-friendly and able to meet the expectations of spectators?

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

This study establishes that spectator attendance in sport events in Oman are challenged by the imbalanced distribution of spectators across all categories of sports, the lack of sporting activities in each sports complex, and the lack of spectators in each match as opposed to its overall capacity of hold people, and that there are caused by factors related to media and marketing., team quality, sports culture, time/climate when the games are held, and the facilities of each sports complex. This study, however, is limited in the following:

1. The outcome of this study depends on the participants' honesty and cooperation in answering the questions.
2. The researcher was unable to visit and adequately examine all facilities of the nine (9) sports complexes and which hold sports like basketball, volleyball, handball, and hockey.
3. Data from 2012 is still unavailable from the Ministry of Sports Affairs, thus making it unable to see if there is significant increase in spectator attendance for all categories of sports, and in the usage of the sports complexes' stadiums.
4. Time allotted for respondents to answer is limited since it was done during a sports event.
5. No study on spectator attendance in Oman has been made as of date, which makes it difficult for the researcher to gather additional data and compare personal findings with that of other researchers.

### **1.8 Omani Sports Culture**

In promoting a sports activity, it is very important to come up with perks and freebies to encourage buyers. In Oman, most sports organizations try their best to market their games to the public. However, such promotions are unsuccessful if the sports culture itself has a problem. Now, in Oman, there is a considerable foundation for a healthy sports culture to build upon. The first is the Ministry of Sports Affairs which is the government's main arm in making the country and excellent place to hold local and international sports. This department was based on the Royal Decree No. 120/2004 and is responsible for establishing a sports system that ensures optimum utilization of

technical, material and human resources available in the field of competitive sport and sport for all. Hence, the Ministry seeks to deliver a clear message to the public to support sports, which includes the provision of services and quality sports facilities for sports practitioners through activating areas of organization and communication, and by marketing and supporting athletes. The Ministry also creates partnership with relevant institutions and the most important terms of reference:

- Propose and implementation of public policies for the sport in the country and means of promotion and preparation of plans and programs necessary to implement them.
- Interest in sports competitions and work to take care of talents.
- Support private organizations working in the field of sports, control and supervision and in accordance with the laws and regulations in force.
- Approving participation of private organization working in the field of sports in sports meetings and conferences.
- Organizing meetings and games and competitions in the various aspects of the sport at the local and external.
- Support and consolidate regional and international relations in the fields of sport.
- Represent the Sultanate in conferences, seminars and meetings of local, regional and international relevant.
- Preparation of the draft laws, regulations and sport manuals and to presentation to the Council of Ministers for approval.
- Any other functions established under the laws and royal decrees
- Exercise the ministry of competence through its various organs according to its organizational structure.

Aside from the sports structure established through the Ministry of Sports Affairs, another foundation that can improve the sports culture of Oman is the sports federations and clubs across the country. Technically speaking, the roles of these groups are as follows:

- Expanding the base of sports practice in sports overseen by the various categories of the society of the male and female children and adults.
- Organize periodic competitions and local leagues for which oversees sports.

- Prepare the players and teams to represent the Sultanate in the international fore to achieve the accomplishments and raise the name of the Sultanate.
- The base configuration of the trainers who are able to prepare teams and teams and hone their skills down to international levels.
- Base numbers of referees who are able to manage local competitions and participate in competitions at the international level. Taking into account the continuity of preparation and rehabilitation process.
- Documenting achievements through participation in local and international competitions.
- Participation in conferences and workshops that work on the development of sports, whether inside or outside the Sultanate.

A third important foundation for Oman’s sports culture is its existing infrastructure. As seen in Table 3 below, there are nine (9) main sports complexes in Oman, namely the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa’ada Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, and the Khasab Sports Complex, all of which have medium to large stadiums and facilities that can host a number of sporting events.

**Table 3**  
List of Nine (9) Sports Complexes in Oman

<b>Name/Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
<b>Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex / Boshar/ Muscat</b>	Multi-purpose complex that houses a giant football field, tennis fields, swimming pools and gymnasiums	Stadium - 28,000 all-seater
<b>Sohar Sports Complex / Sohar</b>	Multi-purpose complex that houses a giant football field, tennis fields, swimming pools and gymnasiums	Stadium - 19,000 all-seated
<b>Salalah Sports Complex / Salalah</b>	Multi-purpose stadium used for football games and other cultural activities	Stadium - 10,000 all-seated
<b>Sur Spots Complex / Sur</b>	Multi-purpose complex that houses a giant football field and gymnasiums	Stadium - 15,000 all-seated
<b>Ibri Sports Complex / Ibri</b>	Multi-purpose stadium that is used for football matches	Stadium - 15,000 all-seated

<b>Seeb Sports Stadium / Seeb/ Muscat</b>	Multi-purpose stadium that is used for football matches	Stadium - 12,000 all-seated
<b>Nizwa Sports Complex / Nizwa</b>	Multi-purpose complex that houses a giant football field, swimming pool and gymnasiums	Stadium - 10,000 (under renovation)
<b>Al Sa'ada Sports Complex / Salalah</b>	Multi-purpose complex that houses a giant football field, swimming pool and gymnasiums	Stadium - 9,000 (under renovation)
<b>Khasab Sports Complex / Khasab</b>	Multi-purpose complex that houses a giant football field, swimming pool and gymnasiums	No stadium

Note: Adapted from Stadiums in Oman (n.d.). *World Stadiums*. Retrieved from [http://www.worldstadiums.com/middle\\_east/countries/oman.shtml](http://www.worldstadiums.com/middle_east/countries/oman.shtml); Oxford Business Group (2012). *The Report: Oman 2012*. NY: OBG Publishing, p.208

Of the nine stadiums presented above, the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex is the stadium used for main sporting events and even musical shows because of its huge seating capacity. In 2004, the stadium was packed with 30,000 young sports fanatics who cheered the Omani football team against the visiting Iraqis (Valeri, 2009, 1). Also, in 2010, the stadium was packed with 27,000 spectators from a mixed Omani and foreign football fans as the Oman Football team competed against Kuwait's national team to open the year's Gulf Cup (Al Hariri, 2010).

Aside from the aforementioned stadiums, the Sultanate of Oman currently has a project to develop the Al Rustaq Sports Complex, located at the Governorate of South Al Batinah, which is expected to house a large football stadium that could house 17,000 spectators. Improvements will also include two tennis courts, two Olympic-size pools, a multipurpose gymnasium, and facilities equipped with live-broadcasting requirements (Al Harthi, 2013). Apparently, the government is working closely with private investors and companies to put up new sports complexes and improve the facilities of existing ones (Oxford Business Group, 2010, 180-181). However, the goals of the Ministry of Sports Affairs, the presence of Sports Federations and Clubs, as well as the nine (9) major sports complex in the country, are not enough to establish a healthy culture of sports for Omanis. As will be elaborated below, sports events hosted in the country are facing challenges in attendance since there is an imbalanced distribution of spectators per category of game, a trend of inactivity of sports complexes, and an apparent under utility of each sport complex used per game. For instance, as shown in Table 4 below, the total number of spectators based on sports events hosted in all nine sports complexes mentioned in Table 3 above in the years 2009, 2010, and 2011 are not stable (Note: For

the tables below, data will be gathered from the Oman Ministry of Sports Affairs in order to show the percentage change in overall attendance per year as well as the percentage of monthly attendance as opposed to each stadium's capacity:

**Table 4**  
Percentage Change in Spectators' Attendance in 2009 and 2010

<b>Sports Complex</b>	<b>Attendance 2009</b>	<b>Attendance 2010</b>	<b>Change in %</b>
<b>Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex</b>	89156	140400	57.48%
<b>Seeb Sports Stadium</b>	54140	61420	13.45%
<b>Sohar Sports Complex</b>	49895	63810	27.89%
<b>Nizwa Sports Complex</b>	4373	980	-77.59%
<b>Sur Sports Complex</b>	55600	22075	-60.30%
<b>Salalah Sports Complex</b>	15700	8143	-48.13%
<b>Al Sa'ada Sports Complex</b>	30000	89700	199%
<b>Ibri Sports Complex</b>	12615	120	-99.05%
<b>Khasab Sports Complex</b>	813	92500	11277.61%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>312292</b>	<b>479148</b>	<b>53.43%</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of sports Complexes in Oman*. p.4

From the above data, it is fairly difficult to detect a trend since changes in overall yearly attendance have significant differences per year. For instance, the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex posts a 57.48% increase in attendance, while the Seeb Sports Stadium reflects a 13.45% increase. The same increase is seen in the Sohar Sports Complex, which shows a 27.89% increase in spectators. On the other hand, the Nizwa Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, and Salalah Sports Complex decreased 77.59%, 60.30% and 48.13% respectively. The Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, on the other hand,



posted a 199% increase, while Ibri Sports Complex had a decrease of 99.05%. A very huge increase, nonetheless, is seen in the Khasab Sports Complex, which posits an 11277.61% percent increase in attendance. In overall, the total number of spectators that attended all nine sports complexes in 2009 increased 53.43% in 2010. Interestingly, the same fluctuations are seen in data from 2010 and 2011 attendance in sports complexes as seen in table 5 below.

**Table 5**  
Percentage Change in Spectators' Attendance in 2010 and 2011

<b>Sports Complex</b>	<b>Attendance 2010</b>	<b>Attendance 2011</b>	<b>Change in %</b>
<b>Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex</b>	140400	133698	-4.77%
<b>Seeb Sports Complex</b>	61420	121400	97.66%
<b>Sohar Sports Complex</b>	63810	1800	-97.18%
<b>Nizwa Sports Complex</b>	980	47550	4752.04%
<b>Sur Sports complex</b>	22075	20685	-6.30%
<b>Salalah Sports Complex</b>	8143	64220	688.65%
<b>Al Sa'ada Sports Complex</b>	89700	725	-99.19%
<b>Ibri Sports Complex</b>	120	6700	5483.33%
<b>Khasab Sports Complex</b>	92500	3830	-95.86%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>479148</b>	<b>400608</b>	<b>-16.39%</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of sports Complexes in Oman*. p.4

As seen in Table 5 above, the overall attendances among the nine complexes are inconsistent each year and fluctuating from high to low. For example, the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex had a drop of 4.77% in overall attendance while Seeb Sports Complex had a 97.66% increase. The Sohar Sports Complex, on the other hand, had a 97.18 percent drop. A huge leap in attendance however was seen in Nizwa Sports Complex, posting a 4752.04% increase. As for the Sur Sports Complex, there was a 6.3% drop in spectators while the Salalah Sports Complex had a huge 688.65% rise in attendance. The Al Sa'ada Sports Complex dropped in number of spectators (-99.19%), while the Ibri Sports Complex witnessed another huge increase (5483.33%). Finally, the Khasab Sports Complex had a 95.86 % decrease in spectators. However, if the 2009 to 2010 data gave a 53.43% percent increase in attendance, the 2010 to 2011 data posits a

16.39% decrease in spectator attendance. Interestingly, the same trend is seen in data below.

**Table 6**

Percentage Change in Spectators' Attendance in 2011 and 2012 (January to June Comparison only)

<b>Sports Complex</b>	<b>Attendance 2011</b>	<b>Attendance 2012</b>	<b>Change in %</b>
Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex	45638	191718	320.08%
Seeb Sports Complex	66750	45550	-31.76%
Sohar Sports Complex	2900	2600	-10.34%
Nizwa Sports Complex	6965	12590	80.76%
Sur Sports complex	19800	55519	180.4%
Salalah Sports Complex	3830	1610	-57.96%
Al Sa'ada Sports Complex	0	84615	NA
Ibri Sports Complex	0	650	NA
Khasab Sports Complex	405	0	-100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>146288</b>	<b>394852</b>	<b>169.91%</b>

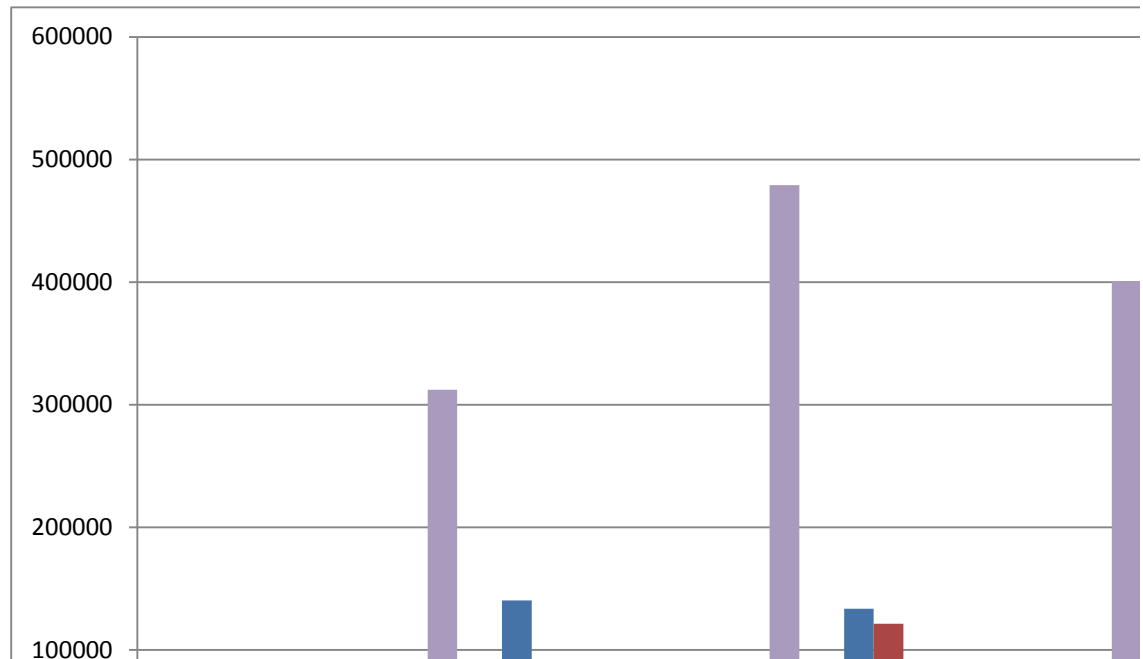
Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011/2012). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of sports Complexes in Oman*. p.23, 20

The data above, shows a comparison of the first six months of 2011 and 2012 since available data for 2012 is only from January to June. Nonetheless, it shows the same inconsistency and fluctuations just like in 2009-2011 and the 2010-2011 data analyzed earlier. In the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, there was a 320.08% increase in spectator attendance. However, for Seeb Sports Complex, the attendance dwindled 31.76% percent. As for the Sohar Sports Complex, the number of spectators had only a 10.34% decrease while Nizwa Sports Complex got an 80.76% increase in overall attendance. The Sur Sports Complex had the second highest increase in spectators, tallying 180.4%.

The Salalah Sports Complex, on the other hand, dropped 57.96%. Change is percentage does not apply for Al Sa'ada Sports Complex and Ibri Sports Complex, since it is apparent that in 2011, there were no games held in all nine (9) stadiums for the first six (6) months, although for 2012 Al Sa'ada tallied an 84,615 attendance and the Ibri Sports complex had 650 spectators. Finally, the Khasab Sports Complex dropped 100% since there were no games held in the complex for the first six months of 2012. In overall, the fluctuations in spectator attendance from 2009 to 2011 and 2011 to 2012 (for the first six months of the year) are seen in Figures 2 and 3 below:

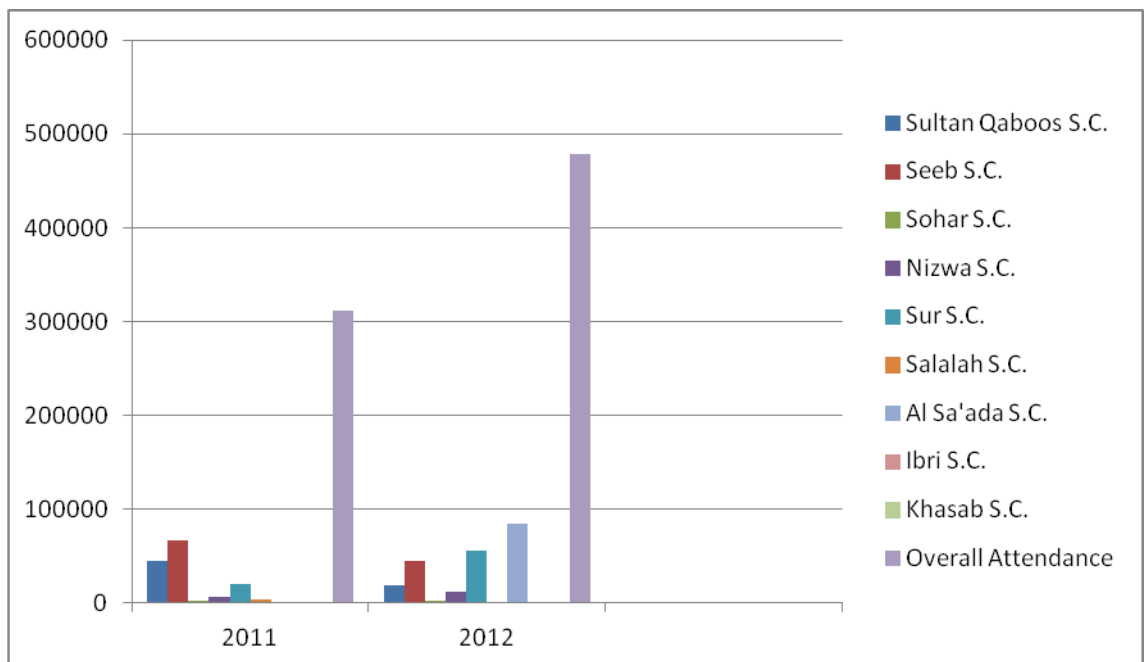
**Figure 2**

Fluctuations in attendance for 2009, 2010, and 2011; 2011 and 2012



**Figure 3**

Fluctuations in attendance for 2011 and 2012



Apparently, Tables 4, 5 and 6 above show that spectator attendances in all nine sports complexes are not consistent from 2009 to 2012. Some have very high increases, while others have significant drops in attendance, which is also apparent in Figures 2 and 3. Hence, does this imply that Omanis are not consistent in supporting sporting

events hosted in the country? On the other hand, are the drops in attendance and sudden increases merely due to the presence or absence of a sporting event hosted in a particular sporting complex? From this point, there are three (3) main assumptions that can be made. First, other than football, it seems that other sports are not popular to Omanis in general, as indicated above by the Ministry of Sports Affairs (2010, 43). A second assumption is that there is a lack of sports activities to promote different games throughout an entire year, which is possible if sporting events have no revenue. A third assumption is that, despite the popularity of a game, the number of spectators, even for football, only reflect a partial utility of each of the nine (9) main stadiums in Oman, which indicate that other factors are influencing the turnout of spectator attendance. Thus, in order to check if these assumptions are correct, then it necessary to evaluate spectator attendance for each game, the usage of each of the nine (9) stadiums whole year round, and compare the average number of spectators for each event with each stadium's full capacity.

### 1.8.1 Analysis of Overall Spectator Attendance for each kind of Sports Held in Oman for 2011 and 2012

For this section, analysis of the distribution of spectators for 2011 and 2012 (January to June only) will be made to see which sport has the largest number of spectators.

**Table 7**

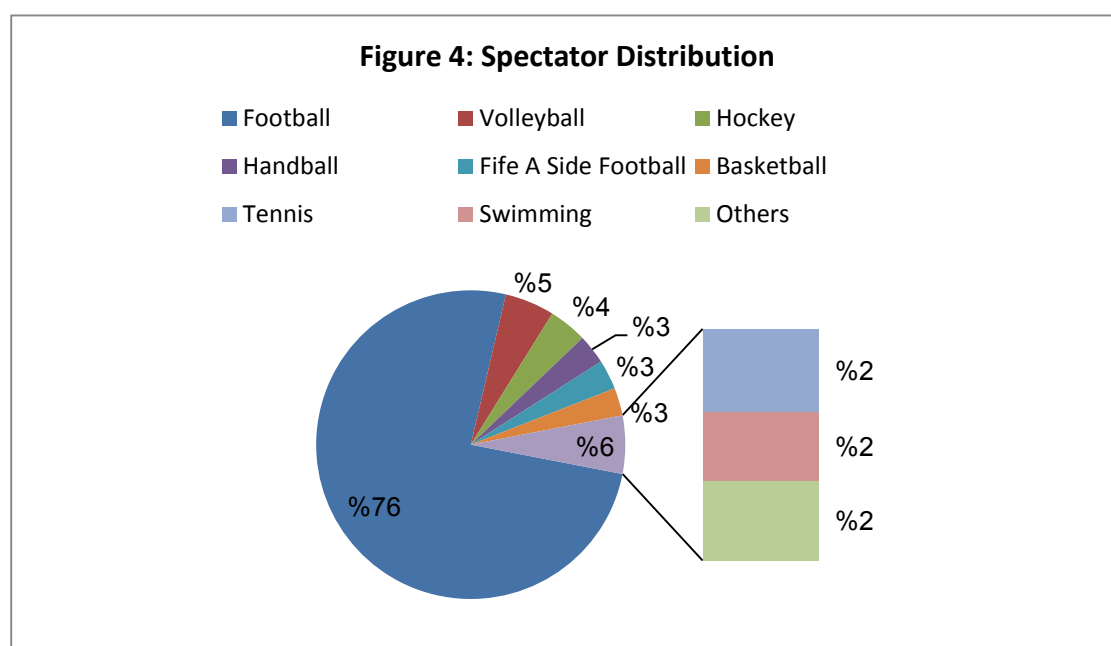
Distribution of spectators in sports complexes by sports in 2011

Sports	Distribution of Spectators	
	Numerical	Percentage
Football	302,790	75.6
Volleyball	20,850	5.2
Hockey	16,181	4.0
Handball	12,568	3.1
Fife A side Football	12,500	3.1
Basketball	11,786	2.9
Tennis	8,720	2.2
Swimming	7,050	1.8
Bodybuilding	2,280	.6

Track & field	2,110	.5
Taekwondo	1,200	.3
Beach Football	700	.2
Beach Volleyball	600	.1
Table Tennis	585	.1
Others	300	.07
6 A side Football	250	.06
Running	120	.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>400,608</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2012). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of sports Complexes in Oman*. p.24, 25

As seen in the data above, football games comprise most of the spectators in Oman, garnering a total of 75.6%. Volleyball follows next with a mere 5.2% while hockey posts a 4% share of spectators. Handball and Fife A Side Football, both gets 3.1% while Basketball, which is supposedly growing in popularity, only has 2.9%. Tennis has 2.2% while Swimming gets 1.8% of the overall number of spectators for 2011. Unfortunately, all other sports mentioned gets percentages lower than one (1) percent. Figure 4 below gives a different presentation of spectator distribution:



The popularity of football games in 2011 gives us an idea that other games in Oman hosted during the year were not patronized. Perhaps, this has something to do with the sport culture in Oman, or the overall sports culture in the Arabian region. Nonetheless, the same high patronage of football and the low spectator following of other sports is seen in the first six months of 2012, as presented below:

**Table 8**

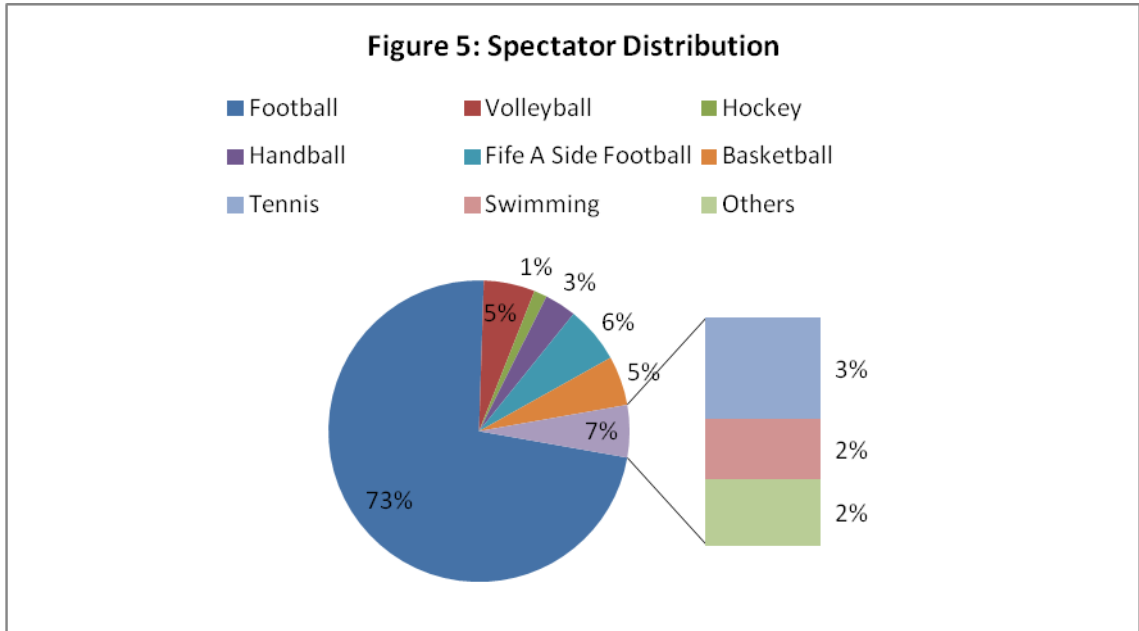
Distribution of spectators in sports complexes by sports in 2012 (January – June)

Sports	Distribution of Spectators	
	Numerical	Percentage
Football	286870	72.7
Volleyball	21784	5.5
Hockey	5610	1.4
Handball	13379	3.4
Fife A side Football	23950	6.1
Basketball	21069	5.3
Tennis	9800	2.5
Swimming	5850	1.5
Bodybuilding	1500	0.4
Track & field	540	0.1
Table Tennis	3500	0.9
Others	1000	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>394852</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2012). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of sports Complexes in Oman*. p.21, 22

From the data above, football still leads the rest of the games with a 72.7% share of spectators. Fife A Side Football follows next with 6.1%, while volleyball lags third with 5.5%. The fourth on the list is basketball, which had a 5.3% share of total spectators. Handball, on the other hand, has 3.4% and Tennis gets 2.5%. Swimming and Hockey has much fewer share of spectators with 1.5% and 1.4% respectively. The rest of the sports mentioned are below one (1) percent, and combines for roughly two (2) percent of all spectators for the first six months of 2012. Now, this cannot be compared with the data for 2011 since 2012 is only for January to June as provided by the Ministry of Sports Affairs. Nonetheless, it gives a picture of which sport takes most

attention in Oman, and it can strengthen the possibility that other sports do not have many spectators because they are not popular, or as popular as football. Figure 5 below gives a different presentation of spectator distribution:



As it seems, from 2011 and 2012 data, football is undeniably the most popular game in Oman and such events are able to gather most number of spectators as compared with fanatics of other games. However, this cannot account for the overall sport culture of Oman. For instance, in a country with a population of 3 million, only 302,790 out of 400,608 total spectators are those who comprise the 72.7% of football watchers. Assuming that around 2 million are adult men and women and youths who have the opportunity to buy or get a free ticket for a football game, then 302,790 spectators is a very small count. Another possibility, however, is that despite the many potential spectators, Oman's nine (9) stadiums does not have enough sports activities for the whole year. For instance, in the first quarter of the year, it is worth asking, how many competitions are held in a particular sport complex? Now, existing data from the Ministry of Sports Affairs only has the number of attendances per month. This implies that the months that do not have any record of spectators are months where a specific sports complex is idle. Table 9 below, shows the number of spectators per month for 2009, for each of the nine (9) sports complexes in Oman.

## 1.8.2 Analysis of Overall Activity of Each Sports Complex for 2009 to 2012

**Table 9**  
Monthly Sporting Activity in each of the Nine Stadiums in 2009

Sports Stadiums/ Months	Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex	Seeb Stadium	Sohar Complex	Nizwa Complex	Sur Complex	Salalah Complex	Al Sa'ada Complex	Ibri Complex	Khasab Complex	Total
Jan - Mar	NO DATA									
April	22013	-	7530	-	-	2300	-	3900	-	<b>35743</b>
May	26798	22810	4230	-	3000	5500	-	3000	-	<b>65338</b>
Jun	5510	-	580	-	-	2500	-	-	-	<b>8590</b>
July	5471	-	-	325	-	450	-	-	-	<b>6246</b>
Aug	-	-	90	360	-	1350	13500	-	-	<b>15300</b>
Sep	-	-	1500	1202	22500	1150	-	3500	-	<b>29852</b>
Oct	4675	9350	8590	1726	14500	2150	5750	750	-	<b>47671</b>
Nov	24689	9000	19335	260	5200	150	3500	200	-	<b>62334</b>
Dec	-	12800	8040	500	10400	150	7250	1265	813	41218
<b>Total</b>	<b>89156</b>	<b>54140</b>	<b>49895</b>	<b>4373</b>	<b>55600</b>	<b>15700</b>	<b>30000</b>	<b>12615</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>312292</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of sports Complexes in Oman*. p.4

From the above data, there is no record of sport activities held during the first quarter of the year. Nonetheless, it is apparent that in certain months in 2009, except for October and November, several sports complexes had no sports activities held:

April – Four (4) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Sohar Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex and the Ibri Sports Complex);  
the other five (5) were idle



May – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, and the Ibri Sports Complex); the other three (3) were idle

June – Three (3) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Sohar Sports Complex, and Salalah Sports Complex); the other six (6) were idle

July – Three (3) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Nizwa Sports Complex, and Salalah Sports Complex); the other six (6) were idle.

August – Four (4) sports complexes held games (Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex and Al Sa'ada Sports Complex); the other five (5) were idle.

September – Five (5) sports complexes held games (Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, and the Ibri Sports Complex); the other four (4) were idle.

October – Only Khasab Sports Complex did not hold games

November – Only Khasab Sports Complex did not hold games

December – Only Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex did not hold games

Interestingly, the Khasab Sports Complex only held sports activities in December of 2009, even though in the months of October and November all the other eight (8) stadiums were busy. Also, of all nine stadiums, only the Salalah Sports Complex had activities throughout the entire year. Now, building on this data, we can check if in 2010, the same challenges to spectator attendance are present due to the lack of sports activities for each sports complex throughout the entire year by getting the average spectator attendance per month. Table 10 below shows the attendance rates every game, and the average attendance in for each match in 2010 for all nine (9) stadiums in Oman.

**Table 10**  
Monthly Sporting Activity in each of the Nine (9) Stadiums in 2010

Sports Stadiums/ Months	Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex	Seeb Complex	Sohar Complex	Nizwa Complex	Sur Complex	Salalah Complex	Al Sa'ada Complex	Ibri Complex	Khasab Complex	Total
Jan	9125	23600	6220	-	575	2371	9400	120	8000	<b>59411</b>

Feb	14160	7500	5800	510	-	1535	3200	-	11000	<b>43705</b>
Mar	70740	13920	7850	-	350	2082	28700	-	7000	<b>130642</b>
April	-	-	23300	470	1150	845	8200	-	15000	<b>48965</b>
May	9400	8900	500	-	8000	-	10500	-	6000	<b>43300</b>
Jun	3315	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>3315</b>
July	3240	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>28000</b>
Aug	3920	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28000	<b>31920</b>
Sep	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oct	-	7500	1640	-	-	840	8700	-	17500	<b>36180</b>
Nov	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dec	26500	-	18500	-	12000	470	21000	-	-	78470
<b>Total</b>	<b>140400</b>	<b>61420</b>	<b>63810</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>22075</b>	<b>8143</b>	<b>89700</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>92500</b>	<b>479148</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of sports Complexes in Oman*. p.23

From the above data, it is apparent that certain months of the year had sports activities held, while some months had no activity in all nine (9) sports complexes:

January – Eight (8) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa’ada Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, and Khasab Sports Complex); one (1) sports complex was idle

February – Seven (7) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa’ada Sports Complex, and Khasab Sports Complex); two (2) were idle

March – Seven (7) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports

Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, and Khasab Sports Complex); two (2) were idle.

April – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, and Khasab Sports Complex); three (3) were idle.

May – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, and Khasab Sports Complex); three (3) were idle

June – only one (1) sports complex held games (Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex); the other eight (8) were idle

July – only one (1) sports complex held games (Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex); the other eight (8) were idle

August – Two (2) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex and Khasab Sports Complex); the other seven (7) were idle

September – no games in all nine sports complexes

October – Five (5) sports complexes held games (Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex and Khasab Sports Complex); the other four (4) were idle

November – no games in all nine sports complexes

December – Five (5) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Sohar Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex and Al Sa'ada Sports Complex); the other four (4) were idle

The lack of games, however, from June to August is noteworthy, including the absence of games in September and November. Possibly, this can account for renovation going on in the stadium or that there were other important yet non-sport related activities booked in each stadium. Nonetheless, for the whole months of September and November to have no sports activity (e.g. basketball, handball, volleyball, or swimming) going in their complex is a serious contradiction to the emphasis made earlier that the Sultanate has improved the Omanis' culture of sports. Now, it is interesting to note that the same absence of sports activity for a number of months is seen in 2011.

**Table 11**

Monthly Attendance in each of the Nine (9) Stadiums in 2011

Sports Stadiums/ Months	Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex	Seeb Stadium	Ibri Complex	Sur Complex	Nizwa Complex	Al Sa'ada Complex	Khasab Complex	Sohar Complex	Salalah Complex	Total
Jan	4660	-	-	-	965	-	-	-	1170	6795
Feb	10017	4150	-	3500	1590	-	130	-	640	20027
Mar	7795	26750	-	5500	2360	-	275	-	1180	43860
April	9911	14750	-	10800	650	-	-	2900	840	39851
May	8655	9100	-	-	450	-	-	-	-	18205
Jun	4600	12000	-	-	950	-	-	-	-	17550
July	4700	24000	-	-	3410	6300	-	-	-	38410
Aug	2120	-	400	2000	-	2500	320	-	-	7340
Sep	1360	14000	-	5050	890	11000	-	-	-	32300
Oct	7765	3500	800	6500	3120	10000	-	3800	-	35485
Nov	56850	11000	150	11200	3130	6500	-	-	-	88830
Dec	15265	2150	450	3000	3170	27920	-	-	-	51955
<b>Total</b>	<b>133698</b>	<b>121400</b>	<b>1800</b>	<b>47550</b>	<b>290685</b>	<b>64220</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>6700</b>	<b>3830</b>	<b>400608</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2012). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.23

From the table above, the overall number of spectators for 2011 was 400608, with the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex having the largest attendance (133698), while the Khasab Sports Complex only had a total of 725 spectators for the whole year. Monthly, the following shows how many sports complexes were used:

January – Three (3) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Nizwa Sports Complex and the Salalah Sports Complex); the other six (6) were idle.

February – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, and Khasab Sports Complex); the other three (3) were idle.

March – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, and Khasab Sports Complex); the other three (3) were idle.

April – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, and Sohar Sports Complex); the other three (3) were idle.

May – Three (3) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex and Nizwa Sports Complex); the other six (6) were idle.

June – Three (3) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex and Nizwa Sports Complex); the other six (6) were idle.

July – Four (4) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Al Sa’ada Sports Complex and Nizwa Sports Complex); the other five (5) were idle.

August – Five (5) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Al Sa’ada Sports Complex and Khasab Sports Complex); the other four (4) were idle.

September – Five (5) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex and Al Sa’ada Sports Complex); the other four (4) were idle.

October – Seven (7) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Al Sa’ada Sports Complex and Sohar Sports Complex); the other two (2) were idle.

November – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, and Al Sa’ada Sports Complex); the other three (3) were idle.

December – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports

Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, and Al Sa'ada Sports Complex); the other three (3) were idle. Interestingly, the same pattern surfaces, wherein some sports complexes were idle in certain periods throughout the year. What is better, however, from 2010 is that no month was totally idle. Somehow, the pattern continues in the first six months of 2012 as seen in Table 12 below:

**Table 12**  
Monthly Attendance in each of the Nine (9) Stadiums in 2012 (January to June)

Sports Stadiums/ Months	Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex	Seeb Stadium	Ibri Complex	Sur Complex	Nizwa Complex	Alsaada Complex	Khasab Complex	Sohar Complex	Salalah Complex	Total
Jan	34684	13100	350	21858	2130	12385			760	85267
Feb	43330	24650	300		1540	8490			720	79030
Mar	35930	5500		13600	4820	31960		2600	130	94540
April	18940	1900		7061	1950	16370				46221
May	19220	400		13000	830	15410				48860
Jun	39614	--			1320					40934
<b>Total</b>	<b>191718</b>	<b>45550</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>55519</b>	<b>12590</b>	<b>84615</b>		<b>2600</b>	<b>1610</b>	<b>3994852</b>

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2012). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.23

From the above data, which reflects the monthly activity of each sports complex, only Khasab Sports Complex had no sporting activity held. Furthermore, the Sultan Qaboos Sports and Nizwa Sports Complex had sporting activities for the whole six months. Other observations are as follows:

January – Seven (7) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex and Salalah Sports Complex); the other two (2) were idle.

February – Six (6) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports

Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex and Salalah Sports Complex); the other three (3) were idle.

March - Seven (7) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex and Salalah Sports Complex); the other two (2) were idle.

April – Five (5) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex and Al Sa'ada Sports Complex); the other two (4) were idle.

May – Five (5) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos, Seeb Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex and Al Sa'ada Sports Complex); the other two (4) were idle.

June – Two (2) sports complexes held games (Sultan Qaboos and Nizwa Sports Complex); the other seven (7) were idle

In analysis, from 2009 to 2012 there is no a clear pattern among the nine (9) sports complex for their lack in sports activity from 2009 to the first six (6) months of 2012. However, there are some notable observations as seen in Table 13 below. Except for Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, which has the least number of inactive months, all other stadiums had seasons of inactivity in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters (shown in black rectangles) The stadium with the least number of inactive months is Qaboos (7), to be followed by Seeb and Nizwa (14 each), then by Al Sa'ada (16), Salalah and Sur (17), Sohar (21), Ibri (26), and finally by Khasab (28).

**Table 13**  
Distribution of sports Inactivity for 2009 to 2012

Sports Complex	Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Qaboos Sports Stadium	2009	no data											
	2010												
	2011												
	2012							no data					
Seeb Sports Stadium	2009	no data											
	2010												
	2011												
	2012							no data					
Ibri	2009	no data											





Omanis. For instance, as mentioned above, most spectators flock to watch football games instead of sports like basketball, volleyball or handball. If that is the case, then if the organizers of a sports activity fails to recover and earn profit from the event, it is possible that they will no longer push for the same event the next month or the next year. Hence, it is important to assess the kind of support given to all sporting events for each of the nine (9) complexes in Oman.

### 1.8.3 Analysis of Spectator Distribution Per Match for Each Sports Complex

**Table 14**

Number of Spectators in Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex 2009

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Hockey	Youth league	22	8733	291
	First Dev. League	2	250	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Cub Competition	24	5000	
Total		48	13983	
Handball	First Dev. League	22	7460	279
	Youth league	9	1210	
Total		31	8670	
Basketball	Youth league	10	680	140
	First Dev. League	7	2736	
	Juniors league	11	374	
	Best teams competition	6	980	
Total		34	4770	
Volleyball	First Dev. League	27	9674	349
	Youth league	4	240	
	World Qualification	3	1950	
Total		34	11864	

Football	Oman mobile league	2	3200	1554
	5 A Side Competition	20	5260	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Cub Competition	3	15050	
	Asian Qualification	1	1500	
	Friendly Match for National Team	2	18500	
Total		28	43510	
Different events	Oman 6 <sup>th</sup> competition in Body building	1	2500	1060
	Muscat International School competition	1	400	
	Private School Competition in Swimming	1	500	
	British School Competition in Swimming in Gulf Country Council	1	2000	
	Sports schools day	1	759	
Total		6	6359	
Overall matches/attendance		181	89156	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.8, 9

In the above data, the average attendance for hockey competition in the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex is 291 per match. For handball, the average is slightly lower, which is 279. As for basketball, which is a popular sport in Oman, the average spectator attendance is only 140. Volleyball, which is also a popular sport, the average spectators watching each match was 349. Of the games held in the Sultan Qaboos complex, football garnered the highest average in spectator attendance, tallying 1,554 in attendance. Finally, other sporting events held – body building, international school

competitions, private school swimming competitions, and the British school swimming competition – had an average of 1,060 spectators. Table 15 below presents the average spectator attendance in Seeb Sports Complex in 2009:

**Table 15**  
Number of Spectators in Seeb Sports Stadium 2009

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Juniors League	3	3670	1592
	Youth League	4	4980	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dev. League	6	4760	
	Oman Mobile League	12	27250	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	7	9180	
	Asian Federation Cup	2	4300	
<b>Overall Matches/ Attendance</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>54140</b>	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.6

For Seeb Sports Complex, the only sporting event hosted was football, averaging 1,592 spectators per match. There were a total of six (6) sporting events, namely Juniors League, Youth League, 2<sup>nd</sup> Development League, Oman Mobile League, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Cup Competition, and the Asian Federation Cup. Apparently, the longest sporting event hosted was the Oman Mobile League which had 12 matches and an overall number of 27,250 spectators. Assuming that all 12 matches had an equal number of attendees, there were around 2,271 spectators per match in the Seeb Stadium. However, if averaged for the entire year, each match only had 1,592.

**Table 16**  
Number of Spectators in Sohar Sports Complex 2009

Sport	Events	No. of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Hokey	Youth league	3	600	80
	Juniors league	14	530	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Cup Competition	6	700	
Total		23	1830	
Handball	First Dev. League	23	180	38
	Youth league	3	165	
Total		9	345	
Basketball	Juniors league	3	90	30
Total		3	90	
Volleyball	First Dev. League	7	2700	221
	Youth league	10	1060	
Total		17	3760	
Football	Oman mobile league	6	8100	1219
	First Dev. League	19	10660	
	2nd dev. league	2	800	
	Juniors league	1	50	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	3	24000	
Juniors N' Team Camp Friendly Matches		1	80	
Total		36	43870	
<b>Overall Matches/ Attendance</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>49895</b>	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.11, 12

Unlike, the Seeb Sports Complex, the Sohar Sports Complex in Table 16 above hosted several sports other than football, obviously living up to its identity as a multipurpose sports complex. For the Hockey games, the average spectators present for each of the 23 matches are 80. Handball has a lower turnout in spectators, tallying only upto thirty (30) average spectators for each of the nine (9) matches held. As for basketball, there were three (3) matches held, which indicates an average attendance of 38. Volleyball, on the other hand, has a greater following since in its 17 matches, each averaged 221 spectators. Finally, football had the most numbers of spectators. Of the thirty-six (36) matches, the average number of spectators is 1,219.

**Table 17**  
Number of Spectators in Nizwa Sports Complex 2009

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Basketball	First Dev. League	2	110	55
	Total	2	110	
Volleyball	Youth league	6	295	64
	Army Final Match	1	150	
	Total	7	445	
Football	First Dev. League	1	236	282
	Juniors league	1	122	
	7 A side competition	1	500	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Cup Competition	6	2023	
	Friendly Matches	3	500	
Total	12	3381		
Table Tennis	Juniors league	1	100	112
	General League	1	123	
	Total	2	223	

Different Sports	Track & field	1	30	54
	Traditional Sports League	1	70	
	Beach Kabady competition	1	60	
	University Sports Day	1	54	
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>214</b>	
<b>Overall Matches/ Attendance</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>4373</b>	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.14,15.

The Nizwa Sports Complex also held a number of sporting events in 2009. For basketball, which had two (2) matches, the average attendance is 55. Volleyball, on the other hand, had more matches – seven (7) – but it only averaged 64 spectators per match. Football, by far, still has the largest number of spectators just like the earlier sports complexes discussion. Of the twelve (12) matches held, the average number of spectators was 282. As for Table tennis, the average number of spectators in each of the two (2) matches held is 112. Finally, the other four (4) different activities held averaged 54 spectators each.

**Table 18**

Number of Spectators in Sur Sports Complex 2009

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>No of the matches</b>	<b>No of the spectators</b>	<b>The average of spectators in each match</b>
Football	Oman Mobile League	7	3000	2648
	5 A Side Competition	1	22500	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	4	14500	
	Friendly Matches	9	15600	
<b>Overall Matches/ Attendance</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>55600</b>	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.16

The Sur Sports Complex, as seen in Table 11 above, only held football games for 2009, just like Seeb Sports Complex and Ibri Sports Complex. Four (4) sporting events were held: the Oman Mobile League, the 5 A Side Competitions, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition, and other Friendly Matches. Of the 21 matches held in the stadium, there were a total of 55,600 spectators, which means that there were an average of 2,648 spectators present for each match.

**Table 19**  
Number of Spectators in Salalah Sports Complex 2009

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
	Oman Mobile League	17	11290	476
Football	1 <sup>st</sup> dev. League	5	1380	
	Youth league	6	2280	
	Juniors league	1	100	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	1	450	
	Friendly Matches	2	150	
	U 21 match	1	50	
Total		33	15700	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.17

Similar to Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex only held football competitions in their stadium. There were seven (7) different leagues – Oman Mobile League, 1<sup>st</sup> Development League, Youth League, Juniors League, his Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition, Friendly Matches, and U 21 Matches – and has 33 total competitions. In overall, the number of spectators was 15,700, which meant an average attendance of 476 for each football match.

**Tables 20**

Number of Spectators in Al Sa'ada Sports Complex 2009

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Oman Mobile League	3	9500	4286
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	2	7000	
	Friendly Matches	2	13500	
<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>30000</b>	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.19

The Al Sa'ada Sports Complex only held football games in 2009. Interestingly, it had a high number of spectator turnout. Three (3) different competitions were held in the stadium – the Oman Mobile League, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club, and Friendly Matches – which totaled 30,000 spectators. Now, in the seven (7) matches held, the average attendance per match is 4,286.

**Table 21**

Number of Spectators in Ibri Sports Complex 2009

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Oman Mobile League	3	1315	841
	1 <sup>st</sup> dev. League	8	6600	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> dev. League	1	3000	
	Juniors league	2	200	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	1	1500	
<b>Overall Matches/ Attendance</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>12615</b>	



Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.20

The Ibri Sports Complex only hosted football for 2009. Five (5) sporting events were held: Oman Mobile League, 1<sup>st</sup> Development League, 2<sup>nd</sup> Development League, Juniors League, and His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition. The league with the most matches was the 1<sup>st</sup> Development League which had eight (8) matches and an overall attendance of 6,600 spectators. On the whole, there were 15 matches held in the stadium with a total of 12,615 total spectators. In overall, the sporting events in Ibri Sports Complex had an average of 841 spectators per game.

**Table 22**  
Number of Spectators in Khasab Sports Complex 2009

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Volleyball	Friendly match	6	348	58
Handball	Friendly match	1	125	125
Different events	Schools sports days	4	340	85
Total		11	813	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.21

The Khasab Sports Complex had the lowest turnout of overall spectators, which is 813. Three different events were held in the complex and none were related to football. Nonetheless, for the six (6) volleyball matches, the average attendance is 58. Handball, on the other hand, had 125 spectators for the only match it held. Finally, for the other sports events, the average attendance is 85.

**Table 23**  
Average spectators for team sports in all nine complexes in 2009

Sport	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Football	186	258816	1392
Basketball	39	4970	127

Handball	41	9140	223
Volleyball	64	16417	257

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.22

Table 23 above gives the average number of spectators in all nine complexes for the top four team sports in Oman, namely Football, Basketball, Handball, and Volleyball. From here it is clear that there are very few spectators in each match for basketball (127), handball (223), and volleyball (257), which implies that this number of tickets sold for one game of basketball, for example, is not enough to compensate for the fund allocated to host the entire sporting event. However, data is insufficient to tell if this low attendance has something to do with the facilities itself or not. If, for instance, the basketball gymnasium is already full with 127 spectators, then the gymnasium may have insufficient facilities or chairs. On the other hand, if the basketball gymnasium has an average seating capacity of at least 1,000, then a-127 average spectators is very small.

A deeper analysis of the challenges to spectator attendance can be further seen in football matches, since the average number of attendance for each of the nine (9) sports complexes can be evaluated based on their stadium's seating capacity. Moreover, this can help since, as mentioned above, football is the country's most popular sport. Hence, it is expected that football sporting events in Oman must have a strong audience following. Of course, Table 23 can give an overview of the average number of football spectators, which is at 1,392. However, as presented in Table 24 below it is better to see it per sports complex in order to get the average usage of stadiums for football.

**Table 24**

Average Spectators for Football per Sports Complex vs. Stadium Capacity in 2009

	Stadium Capacity	Ave. per Match	Percentage Used	Highest Ave. Per Match	Percentage Used
Qaboos	28000	1554	3.98%	9250	23.72%
Seeb	12000	1592	13.27%	2271	18.93%
Sohar	19000	1219	6.42%	8000	42.11%
Nizwa	10000	282	2.82%	500	5%
Sur	15000	2684	17.89%	22500	150%

Salalah	10000	476	4.76%	664	6.64%
Al Sa'ada	9000	4286	47.62%	6750	75%
Ibri	15000	841	5.61%	3000	20%
Khasab	12000	0	0%	0	0%

In the above data, all sports complexes have not utilized at least fifty (50) percent of their seating capacity even for Oman's most popular sport that gathers almost 70+ percent of all sports spectators. The Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, which has a 28,000 all seats capacity, only has an average of 1,554 spectators per match. Now, with its size, that equals only 3.98% of the stadium's actual capacity. The highest spectator number tallied in 2009 was 9,250 during the Friendly Matches of the Oman National Football Team. Nonetheless, it was merely a 23.72% usage of the stadium's actual capacity. As for the Seeb Sports Complex, the average number of spectators is slightly higher – 1592. But with its 12,000 seating capacity, it is only a 13.27% usage of the football stadium. Also, the highest spectator number, which is 2,271 during the Oman Mobile League, is only equal to 18.93% usage of the stadium. The Sohar Sports Club has a similar problem. In 2009, the average spectator number for football is 1,219, which equals to a mere 6.42% usage of its stadium's 19,000 seating capacity. It did post an 8,000 highest average during the Sultan Qaboos Club Competition. However, it still was a 42.11% usage of the stadium. The Nizwa Sports Complex has a fewer tally of spectators in 2009. For its, 10,000 seating capacity, the average attendance per match was only 282, which is 2.82% of the stadium. More so, the highest spectator number per match was 500 during the 7 A Side Competition, which is a mere 5% usage of the entire stadium. On the other hand, it seems that Sur Sports Complex had a good spectator turn around since its highest tally was 22,500, during the 5 A Side Competition, for its stadium's 15,000 seating capacity, explicating a 150% usage. It can be assumed that the overflow of 7,500 spectators were either in the bleachers or standing everywhere. Still, its average spectator number during a match was 2,684 – a 17.89% usage of the stadium. As for the Salalah Sports Complex, the average number of spectators was 476, which is a mere 4.76% usage of its stadium's 10,000 seating capacity. The highest tally was 664 during the Oman Mobile League, but it represents only 6.64% of the overall capacity to hold spectators. Now, the Al Sa'ada Sports Complex has the highest average

of all nine (9) sports complexes. In 2009, the average was 4,286, which means that 47.62% of the stadium was utilized. It also had a remarkable highest average during the Friendly Matches, wherein 6,750 spectators were tallied for each match, pointing to a 75% usage of the stadium's capacity. The Ibri Sports Complex, which can hold 15,000 spectators seated, the average number of attendance was 841, which is only 5.61% of the seating capacity. Its highest spectator number was 3,000 during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Development League, but it is only 20% of the stadium's capacity. The Khasab Sports Complex did not hold any football game.

Apparently, there is a very low turnout is spectators for each football match in 2009, which imply a critical challenge in drawing spectators to the stadium, even for the popular games like volleyball, basketball, and handball. Ironically, the country's most popular sport, football, also faces challenges in spectator attendance particularly that none of the nine (9) sports complexes were able to have at least an average of 50% usage of their stadiums during sports activities. Now, it is necessary to check if the same trend exists in 2010.

#### 1.8.4 Attendance Analysis in 2010

As seen in the analysis of spectators in 2009, there is a problem in utilizing each of the nine (9) sports complexes during major sporting events. Now, to ascertain if this trend is actually a challenge for the Omanis, it is necessary to check data from 2010. This section will provide an analysis of spectators every game in 2010 as opposed to the stadium's capacity to hold spectators.

**Table 25**

Number of Spectators in Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Hockey	First Dev. League	15	7600	506	331
	Youth league	11	4010	364	
	Junior League	16	2350	146	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	6	1810	301	
	Friendly Matches	1	450	450	
Total		49	16220		
Handball	1 <sup>st</sup> Dev. League	29	6790	234	756

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dev. League	3	300	100	
	Gulf Country Council Competition for Clubs	12	26200	2183	
	Private School competition	1	740	740	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>34030</b>		
Basketball	1 <sup>st</sup> Dev. League	24	3140	130	147
	Companies league	20	3095	154	
	Private School Competition	1	400	400	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>6635</b>		
Volleyball	First Dev. League	24	7450	310	263
	Ministry of Defiance League	11	1785	162	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9235</b>		
Football	Oman mobile league	7	3490	498	2088
	1st Dev. League	4	1190	297	
	Asian Federation Cup	1	27000	27000	
	Private School festival for Juniors	1	450	450	
	Private School competition	1	450	450	
	5 A side Competition	1	30	30	
	Universities & collages Competition	1	800	800	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>33410</b>		
Different events	Army swimming Competition	1	1500	1500	3405
	British School Competition in Swimming in Gulf Country Council	1	2500	2500	
	Oman Tennis Competition for Juniors	1	1600	1600	
	Oman 7 <sup>th</sup> competition in Body building	1	3000	3000	
	Private School Competition in Swimming	1	650	650	
	Tennis Competition	1	1500	1500	
	Track & field Competition	1	130	130	
	Air force swimming Competition	1	3000	3000	
	Oman Open Tennis Competition	1	2500	2500	
	Track & field Competition for	2	490	490	

	Muscat international School				
	National Day Festival	1	24000	24000	
Total		12	40870		
<b>Overall Matches/ Attendance</b>		202	140400		6990

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.28, 29

In the above data, the total number of matches was 22, with an overall of 140,400 spectators. However, the average attendances were not that plenty. For instance, for hockey competition the average is 331 per match. For handball, the average is quite higher, which is 756. As for basketball, the average spectator attendance for this popular sport is 147. Volleyball, which is also a popular sport, had higher average spectators than basketball, tallying 263 spectators per match. The highest number of spectators is still football, garnering an average of 2,088 in attendance. Finally, other sporting events held had an average of 3405 spectators.

**Table 26**

Number of Spectators in Seeb Sports Stadium 2010

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Oman Mobile League	14	16000	1124	1498
	1 <sup>st</sup> Dev. League	17	10420	613	
	Asian Cup Competition	3	8700	2900	
	Universities & Colleges Competition	2	5800	2900	
	International Friendly Matches	5	20500	4100	
Total		41	61420		

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.25

For Seeb Sports Complex, only football was held in the stadium. A total of five (5) different competitions were held, namely, the Oman Mobile League, the 1<sup>st</sup> Dev. League, the Asian Cup Competition, the Universities and Colleges Competition, and the

International Friendly Matches, which amounted to 41 total matches and a total of 61,420 spectators. Nonetheless, the average attendance is 1,498 spectators.

**Table 27**

Number of Spectators in Sohar Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Hockey	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	2	1340	670	546
	Friendly international Competition	1	300	300	
Total		3	1640		
Volleyball	Gulf Country Council Competition for Clubs	4	1050	262	262
Total		4	1050		
Football	Oman mobile league	25	42620	1704	1704
Total		25	42620		
Different events	National Day Festival	1	18500	18500	18500
Total		1	18500		
Overall Matches/ Attendance		33	63810		

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.31

For Sohar Sports Complex, the average number of spectators for hockey is 546. As for volleyball, the average is less, tallying 262 in attendance during each match. Football, by far, is the sport that gains the highest number of spectators in Sohar Sports Complex, averaging around 1,704. The most number of attendees, however, is the National Day Festival which had 18,500 spectators. This huge number is expected since it is one of the two major holidays of the country (Aldosari, 2007, 53)

**Table 28**

Number of Spectators in Nizwa Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Basketball	First Dev. League	4	596	149	144

	Ministry of Sports Shield	6	847	141	
Total		10	1443		
Volleyball	First Dev. League	6	1080	180	165
	Interior Governorate league	7	1071	153	
Total		13	2151		
Football	First Dev. League	15	3414	227	206
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	6	840	140	
	Juniors Competition for Interior Governorate	1	295	295	
Total		22	4549		
Overall Matches / Attendance		45	8143		

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.33

The Nizwa Sports Complex only had three (3) kinds of sporting activities, namely basketball, volleyball, and football. For basketball's ten (10) matches, the average number of spectators per game is 144. Volleyball competitions have a higher turnout in attendance, posting 165 average spectators for each of the thirteen (13) matches. Again, football has the highest number of spectators tallying an average of 206 attendees for each of the 22 matches.

**Table 29**

Number of Spectators in Sur Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No. of the matches	No. of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Oman Mobile League	16	45600	2850	2730
	First Dev. League	1	300	300	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	3	8700	2900	
Total		20	54600		
Handball	First Dev. League	1	100	100	100



Total		1	100		
Different Events	Municipality Ceremony	1	14000	14000	17500
	National Day Festival	1	21000	21000	
Total		2	35000		
Overall Matches / Attendance		23	89700		

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.35

As seen above, the Sur Sports Complex had an overall 23 matches, with 89,700 spectators. However, two activities are related with national and municipal celebrations, namely the Municipality Ceremony and the National Day Festival, both of which combined of an average of 17,500 spectators for each activity. For purposes of this paper, data from handball and football is more relevant. Football posts an average of 2,730 spectators for each of the 20 matches held in the stadium. Handball, on the other hand, had a low following since the only game held for 2010 posted an attendance of only 100 spectators.

**Table 30**  
Number of Spectators in Salalah Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No of matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Juniors league	1	70	70	60
	Dhofar Governorate Clubs Competition u 21	1	50	50	
Total		2	120	120	

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.37

The Salalah Sports Complex only had football in 2010, hosting the Juniors League and the Dhofar Governorate Clubs Competition for players under 21. Both activities had very low spectator count. For the Juniors League, the total attendance was 70 while the Dhofar Governorate Clubs Competition had 50 spectators only, which means that the average spectators in 2010 were only 60.

**Table 31**  
Number of Spectators in Al Sa'ada Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Oman Mobile League	14	32750	2339	2434
	First Dev. League	4	11500	2875	
	His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition	6	17500	2916	
	Salalah Festival Cup 2010	13	28000	2153	
	Friendly International Match	1	2750	2750	
<b>Total</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>92500</b>		

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.38

Like 2009, the Al Sa'ada Sports Complex only held football games in 2010. Five (5) different events were held, namely the Oman Mobile League, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Club Competition, Salalah Festival Cup 2010, and the Friendly International Match. In overall, the 38 matches held during the year garnered 92,500 spectators, which means that an average of 2,434 individuals was present each game.

**Table 32**  
Number of Spectators in Ibri Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Football	Oman Mobile League	6	9300	1550	1007
	1 <sup>st</sup> dev. League	4	775	193	
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>10075</b>		
Different Events	National Day Festival	1	12000	12000	12000
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>12000</b>		

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p. 39-40

For the Ibri Sports Complex, two events were held: Football and the National Day Festival. For the latter, which is a national event, the total number of spectators is 12,000. However, this cannot be used as a basis for a high spectator turnout because it is not solely a sporting event; it only implies that more spectators are present during events that have to do with Omani national culture. As for football, there were ten (10) matches in 2010, for the Oman Mobile League and the 1<sup>st</sup> Development League, with a total of 10,075 spectators. The average spectator per match, however, is only 1,007.

**Table 33**  
Number of Spectators in Khasab Sports Complex 2010

Sport	Events	No of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators Attendance in each competition	The average of spectators in each match
Handball	1 <sup>st</sup> dev. League	5	980	196	196
Total		5	980		

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.41

Of the nine (9) sports complexes, the Khasab Sports Complex did not have any football event. Handball, on the other hand, was the only game held, with a total of five (5) matches and an overall of 980 spectators. However, the average number for each match only tallies 196.

**Table 34**  
Average spectators for team sports in all nine complexes in 2010

Sport	No. of the matches	No of the spectators	The average of spectators in each match
Football	174	299,294	1720
Basketball	55	8078	146
Handball	51	35,110	688
Volleyball	52	12,436	239

Note: Adapted from Ministry of Sports Affairs (2011). *Statistical numbers of beneficiaries of Sports Complexes in Oman*. p.42

Table 33 above, gives the average number of spectators in all nine complexes for the top four team sports in Oman, namely Football, Basketball, Handball, and Volleyball. It is apparent that there are still very few spectators in each match for basketball (146) and volleyball (239), implying that a single match may not raise enough revenue to pay for the cost of the event itself. Handball, on the other hand, has a good turnout (668). Now, similar to that of 2009, it is possible that the facilities to hold volleyball and basketball are limited, that they can only hold so much inside the gymnasium. Still, the challenge to spectator attendance is clear in football. In Table 30 below, spectator attendance for Oman’s most popular sport, football, will be examined in light of the seating capacity of all nine (9) stadiums.

**Table 35**

Average Spectators for Football per Sports Complex vs. Stadium Capacity in 2010

	<b>Stadium Capacity</b>	<b>Ave. per Match</b>	<b>Percentage Used</b>	<b>Highest Ave. Per Match</b>	<b>Percentage Used</b>
Sultan Qaboos	28000	2088	5.35%	27000	69.23%
Seeb	12000	1498	12.48%	4100	34.17%
Sohar	19000	1704	8.97%	1704	8.97%
Nizwa	10000	206	2.06%	295	2.95%
Sur	15000	2730	18.20%	2900	19.33%
Salalah	10000	60	.60%	70	.70%
Al Sa’ada	9000	2434	27.04%	2916	32.40%
Ibri	15000	1007	6.71%	1550	10.33%
Khasab	12000	0	0%	0	0%

Like in 2009, all sports complexes in 2010 have not utilized at least fifty (50) percent of their seating capacity. The Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, for instance, which has a 28,000 all seater capacity, only has an average of 2,088 spectators per match, which equals only 5.35% of the stadium’s actual capacity. The highest spectator number tallied in 28,000 during Asian Federation Cup which gave the stadium a 69.23% usage. As for the Seeb Sports Complex, the average number of spectators is

slightly higher – 1,498. However, with its 12,000 seating capacity, it is only a 12.48% usage of the football stadium. Also, the highest spectator number, which is 4,100 during the International Friendly Matches, is only equal to 34.17% usage of the stadium. The Sohar Sports Club has a similar problem. In 2010, the average spectator number for football is 1,704, which equals to a mere 8.97% usage of its stadium’s seating capacity during the Oman Mobile League. The Nizwa Sports Complex, on the other hand, has a fewer tally of spectators in 2010. For its, 10,000 seating capacity, the average attendance per match was only 206, which is 2.06% of the stadium. Worse, the highest spectator number per match was 295 during the Juniors Competition for Interior Governorate, which is a mere 2.95% usage of the entire stadium.

As for the Sur Sports Complex has an average spectator number of 2730 every football match, which is an 18.20% usage of the stadium. Its highest tally in 2010 was 2900, but was only 19.33%. For the Salalah Sports Complex, the average number of spectators was only 60, which means that its 10,000 seating capacity was only utilized .60%. The highest tally was only 70 spectators during the Juniors League, resulting in a .70% usage of the overall capacity to hold spectators. Now, similar to that of 2009, the Al Sa’ada Sports Complex has the highest average of all nine (9) sports complexes. In 2010, the average was 2434, which means that 27.04% of the stadium was utilized. Its highest average, however, was only 2916, tallying a 32.40% usage. The Ibri Sports Complex, which can hold 15,000 spectators seated, had an average number of attendance was 1007, which is only 27.04% of the seating capacity. Its highest spectator number was 1550 during the Oman Mobile League, yet it is only 10.33% of the stadium’s capacity. Like in 2009, the Khasab Sports Complex did not hold any football game. Apparently, there is still a very low turnout is spectators for each football match in 2010, which imply a critical trend to the challenge of drawing spectators to the stadium, even for football matches.

Unfortunately, no data is available to get a breakdown of individual sports activities for 2011 and 2012 held in each sports complex. However, assuming that the data given above, say for 2011 (see Table 7), is divided into all nine (9) complexes, then each would have from an average of 33,643 spectators per year. Further, assuming that all twelve (12) months for the year had one (1) sports activity then it means that 2,803 spectators were present for each match. In this case, then all sports complexes will still be underutilized and none will still go above 50%:

**Table 36**

Possible Percentage Usage of Sports Complexes in 2011

<b>Sports Complex</b>	<b>Average Seating Capacity</b>	<b>Ave. Spectators</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>SULTAN QABOOS</b>	28000	2803	7.19%
<b>SEEB</b>	12000	2803	23.36%
<b>SOHAR</b>	19000	2803	14.75%
<b>NIZWA</b>	10000	2803	28.03%
<b>SUR</b>	15000	2803	18.69%
<b>SALALAH</b>	10000	2803	28.03%
<b>AL SA'ADA</b>	9000	2803	31.14%
<b>IBRI</b>	15000	2803	18.69%
<b>KHASAB</b>	12000	2803	23.36%

Note: Table 35 is based on assumption only

Indeed, the number of spectators even for 2011 show that the full capacity of all nine (9) sports complexes are not fully used. Hence, from all data analyzed above, the three main assumptions are confirmed. First, there is a significant lack of support for games other than football. Secondly, there is considerable lack of sports activities for each sports complex, except for Sultan Qaboos, and third, there is an apparent lack of spectator following for each games held, pointing to an under utility of all nine (9) sports complexes. Even Oman's most popular game – football – could not gather a number of spectators that will fully utilize a sports complexes' stadium.

## 1.9 Conclusion

The nature of sports in Oman is very important for the country's socio-economic conditions, especially when it comes to tourism, sports culture, national pride, and revenue. However, from existing data gathered, spectator attendance in each of the nine (9) sports complexes mentioned above are very few. Football is, by far, the most popular game, but it reduces spectators in other sporting events like basketball, volleyball, handball, and hockey. Moreover, it seems that the nine (9) main sports complexes in Oman have months where no activity is being held at all. These idle months imply that the overall cost of putting up an event has not been replaced by revenue from the event's spectators. On the other hand, it is apparent that the number of spectators per match, even for football, has not fully utilized each stadium's maximum potential; none were able to have an average usage of at least 50%. Now, because this study will be the first to study this problem in Oman's sports industry, the researcher hopes that other studies will be conducted not only in Oman, but in other Gulf countries to check if the same trend is present, which could then point to a regional issue – not a local one.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

As mentioned earlier, there is no local or international study on the challenges of spectator attendance in Oman which can serve as a launching pad for this present study. However, several studies have researched the impact of spectator attendance on games. In the work of N.B. Crowther (2007), entitled *Sports in Ancient Times*, he gave a comprehensive look into ancient sports practiced during the Prehistoric, historic Greece, ancient Italy, and Byzantine Empire eras. Accordingly, sports in ancient times was intricately tied to the athlete's spirituality, which for them is a gift from the gods. However, it was also done to improve their culture. The stronger the nation's culture, the more intense they are in games. Not only that, their culture creates spectators who are avid fanatics of games despite discomforts in the public arenas. For instance, he mentions that the spectators in ancient Olympia were attending the sports events by setting in the hills. But they had to endure the stifling heat of summer, the swarmed of flies, the noise, the stench, and the absence of the seats, food and clean water (Crowther, 2007, 48). One important point here is the sports culture that evolved up to the Byzantine wherein in the population, regardless of social status, "were eligible to receive a token to see the games free of charge" (Crowther, 2007, 134), most likely as a strategy of the emperor and his cohorts to maintain their influence over the people. In this case, sports

culture can somehow be inculcated by the ruling members of society, or the government, on the masses so that they would find sports as an integral part of their society and of their individual lives.

The role of spectators in improving sports culture cannot be underestimated. However, the key is also how to secure re-patronage of games. Such is the emphasis of A. Yusof and L.H. See (2008), in their research entitled *Spectator Perceptions of Physical Facility and Team Quality: A Study of a Malaysian Super League Soccer Match*. The authors noted that there is a close relationship between stadium factors, which they call sportscape, and the number of spectators that patronize games. Citing data from the Malaysian Super League, the authors mentioned that team quality and sports escape significantly predicted spectators' satisfaction and significantly predicted spectators' intention to attend future soccer games. Ideally, spectators that enjoy being at stadium more probability attend further matches. Another interesting point is the Sportscape Model wherein factors like stadium access, facility aesthetics, scoreboard quality, seating comfort, layout accessibility, and space allocation to both the perceived pleasure and eventual satisfaction of the crowd of spectators. Accordingly, a high standard for the aforesaid factors would contribute to the spectators' desire to stay and re-patronage of sports events; it is as significant as the presence of star players in a game (Yusof & See, 2008, 134). The authors, therefore, concluded that the "overall Sportscape and overall team quality significantly predicated spectator's satisfaction..." that sports marketers and football associations should "...invest more efforts and resources to increase the probability of the customer experiencing and positive outcome from participating or from watching a game in the stadium" (Yusof & See, 2008, 138-139). From this study, several points were established especially when it comes to factors related to the stadium itself and to the quality of games. However, while it did not emphasize the sports culture of Malaysia, it seems that spectators, regardless of their intent to watch a game live, will still consider stadium facilities and game quality as relevant. Otherwise, with a poor stadium and a boring game, any sports culture will dwindle in enthusiasm.

Another important study that contributes to this research is that of J. Borland and R. MacDonald (2003), *Demand for Sport*, wherein international games were treated as an important economic factor that can be improved continuously to create huge revenue. By reviewing key determinants of attendance at sporting events, the authors stress that because there is a very high demand for sports, sports associations must create ways to



meet this demand by improving sport infrastructure and the quality of games, which includes personal follow-up of sports associations and the matches they hold so that the demands or expectations of spectators for a particular game will be met (Borland & MacDonald, 2003, 480-83). The authors also designed an application of the consumer-theory model, wherein five main categories of a determinants of demand for attendance at sporting events were given, namely: 1) form of consumers preference (e.g. sports habit; age of club); 2) economic preferences (e.g. price-travel costs, income, market size, demographic composition), availabilities of substitutions (e.g. TV or other sporting events), and macroeconomic factors (e.g. rate of unemployment); 3) quality of viewing (viewing of seating and stadium, stadium size timing of contest); 4) characteristics of the sporting contest (e.g. uncertainty of outcome; success of competing teams, quality of contest and significance of contest; and 5) supply capacity (Borland & MacDonald, 2003, 481). Interestingly, this research conforms to Yusof and See since both literature comment on team quality and facilities as important factors. In this sense, both factors stressed would definitely affect the spectator attendance of sporting events in Oman. After all, spectators attend matches to enjoy their time and support their teams but when they cannot enjoy the matches, it is possible that they will either opt to view the match at home to save transportation time and money or find a different source of entertainment.

As indicated in literature above, the quality of sports and its relation to behavior of sports fans is important in establishing the sports culture of any country or region. However, preferences for sports would vary between fans, a factor that will aid sports organizations in making their events more appealing to spectators. This is emphasized in the B. Dietz-Uhler et al (2000) study on sex differences in sport fan behavior. Focusing on fans of college sports, the authors found that males have a higher association with supporting specific sports than females although both would cognitively associate themselves with specific teams. The authors also found that males spend more time watching sports and talking about it than females, making them conclude that males, in general, more likely to become sports fans and spectators in stadiums. The study also showed how males tend to be more supportive of sports for reasons associated with enjoying status in society, while females find enjoyment in cheering as part of meeting their social needs such as spending time with family and friends.

This notion of females meeting their social needs through watching a particular sport with family and friends, however, is countered in the work of J.D. James and L.L. Ridinger (2002), *Female and Male Sport Fans: A Comparison of Sport Consumption Motives*. According to their research, there are closer similarities in what males and females derive from watching sports, than what earlier researchers tell. In this work, the authors studied the interests of sport fans by examining if fan motives for a specific team is the same of whether it differs between males and females. According to this study, motives for spectators of basketball differed in gender, wherein male participants' ratings as fans of sport in general and of specific teams were significantly higher than the ratings of female respondents. Also, the overall ratings on the sport consumption motives were higher for males. Interestingly, male respondents appreciated beauty and gracefulness for basketball for men's and women's games, while female respondents showed higher interest in basketball because of its aesthetic appeal (James & Ridinger, 2002). This work is significant since in the culture of Oman, both men and women have the opportunity to patronize games. In the past decades, men have a higher buying power than women, because of gender discrimination that is prevalent in highly conservative patriarchal states. However, by 2000, the Sultanate of Oman launched a sixth five-year plan for the economy and emphasized the "Omanization" of the labor force, job creation in the private sector, and focus on Oman's interior regions. Hence, as women gain more opportunities in the labor force, they are slowly increasing their buying power and decision-making rights in the family. In general, nonetheless, this is not yet the trend. As stated by K.M. Al-Azri (2013), in his work *Social and Gender Inequality in Oman*, women may be protected by law, but the general culture still prohibits them from accessing important privileges in society. He quotes a statement made by one female interviewee:

Omani women are in a better position than others... but we still have many problems... I have to believe that women should not be discriminated against and should be allowed to make choices... [yet] talking about equality is one thing, but the actual practice illustrates something else" (Al-Azri, 2013, 85)

Thus, if what James and Ridinger's work emphasized is correct, then a factor to look into is the composition of most spectators in games, which are undeniably male. For instance, assuming that around 90% of spectators are young boys and men, then the quality of games must be a primary focus as opposed to aesthetics or stadium facilities. On the other hand, this also points to the possibility that women seldom go to stadium

and sports facilities because the facilities are not pleasing, comfortable, or female friendly (e.g. restroom cleanliness, comfort of seats). Indeed, the role of sports facilities cannot be underestimated. As indicated by research and studies that were reviewed, it is evident that sports complexes, services offered, and the features of facilities are very important aspects that help to attend the masses of games and sporting events. In case of facilities that do not meet aspirations of the masses, spectators develop reluctance to attend these events. Indeed, clean seats, better access to reasonably-priced food and drinks, user-friendly restrooms and ease of entry and exit of the complex are only few of the many important aspects observed by the public when they attend any sporting event.

Differences in spectator preferences is also stressed in a study made by A. Fallahi, H. Asadi, and M. Khabiri (2011), where they managed to compare the importance of the factors that affect the different age group's attendance in Iranian football leagues. The groups studied were mainly three: 21 years old, 22-35 years old, and 35 years old. Of their 486 participants, the authors found that two important factors were present: financial reasons (e.g. ticket price, transportation, and the stadium facilities (e.g. aesthetics, cleanliness, comfort, drinks and food). Interestingly, those belonging to the 21 age group paid more attention to game incentives, as compared to those belonging to ages 22-35 and 35 above, who were motivated more by their team affiliation, with the more senior ones having the higher affiliation tendencies. The authors themselves concluded that the two factors affecting Iran's sports climate is also the same with other countries. Financial factors, for one, are a universal concern since ticket prices and transportation costs to the stadium would encourage or discourage spectators. In the same way, facilities are significant because it add to the experience of watching a game. However, the authors also noted that their data also hinted that financial considerations are the more important factor because it reflects the quality of the facility and the game. Low ticket prices for example would imply low-quality facilities and low-quality teams (Fallahi, Asadi, & Khabiri, 2011, 162-63). Indeed, this study is important since it shows how age group interests are important factors in motivating spectators. Moreover, since Iran is just a gulf away from Oman, it is possible that both countries have similar sports cultures.

Aside from spectator preferences on facilities, C.E. Humphries and A.C.T. Smith (2006) note the role of occupational science in determining reasons for a culture's high interest for sports. By defining occupation or vocation as a daily part of an individual's routine, the study showed that in culture with a strong patronage for

specific sports, individuals find fandom as a part of their occupation. This is due to four elements of a strong sports culture: volition, inherent values, personal causation, and personal interests. For volition, the authors find when fans voluntarily choose to be fans of certain sports or sports teams/players such culture of sports is strong. For values, a strong sports culture makes fandom almost a basic part of life; it is accepted as the norm. As for personal causation, the authors expressed that in a strong sports culture respondents have a perceived competence or vicarious capacity to act upon their own interests. Finally, the issue of interest in a strong sports culture implies an attraction and preference to what is enjoyable based on previous experiences (Humphries & Smith, 2006, 339). Apparently, this study is important in giving precedence to having a satisfying and memorable sports event so that fans will not think twice in patronizing a sports team or a game.

The condition of facilities and the individual preferences of spectators are significant factors to consider in hosting sport events in Oman. Still, the quality of games is another factor to push through since it encourages the public to attend every game and sports event. For example, if a game is in its closing seconds and fans' spirits are very high because the lead of one team is very small, the experience can be very thrilling. Further, the excitement given by both teams for the fans always leaves a mark on their minds that they would love to have another round of an exciting game. Thus, the quality of teams competing or the quality of the game is very important. Fallahi and fellow authors (2011), even commented that team quality is associated with the following factors: team's quality, good team performance, players' loyalty to the team, star players, watching favorite players, your team's traditions, player physique, evaluation of trainer's decision, evaluation of players' performance, result uncertainty and opponent team's quality and tradition (Fallahi et al, 2011, 160). Now, this emphasis is somehow based on an earlier study by Zhang et al (1995) entitled *Factors affecting the decision making of spectators to attend minor league hockey games*, wherein their team quality scale for hockey teams included home team quality, star players, win-loss record, team stance, team history, quality of the opponent and whether opponent team has star players. Accordingly, the home team factor is the main reason that influences game spectators since it produces a sense of ownership among local. However, it was noted that the home team wins and quality of players also influence the reception and support for the home team.

Another important factor in spectator attendance covered by related literature reviewed is climate. In D. J. Shonk's (2006) doctoral dissertation entitled *Perceptions of service quality, satisfaction and the intent to return among tourists attending a sporting event* he factored in the role of climate in the number of game spectators. He noted that climate plays a significant role in spectator attendance in events held in open stadiums. His focus was primarily on soccer, tennis and football which are affected by environmental factors, weather conditions, and stadium facilities that prevent harsh climates and weather from disrupting a game. Sand storms, for instance, in desert areas like Oman, will hinder players from continuing their game as well as spectators from enjoying the sporting event.

It is apparent that sporting organizations do have the means to strengthen the sports culture of a country or region by improving facilities and the quality of games. On the other hand, it is impossible for them to have full control over all factors involved such as climate. Other factors that are beyond the control of sporting organizations are economics. For example, in an earlier research on sporting events, R.A Baade and L.J. Tiechen (1990) state that there are two types of economic factors affect game attendance: controllable and uncontrollable. They note that sport organizations can control the ticket price and the value of sport products but they cannot control the average income of the population, though they also note that some studies suggested that raising ticket prices dose not negatively affect game attendance (Baade & Tiechen, 1990, 28). Although this research was more than two decades ago, the same principle applies today because sporting organizations can only do so much in gathering spectators for an event. If a country has more people with economic problems (e.g. unemployment) entertainment falls off the list as primary of secondary expenditure.

### **Chapter 3: Research Approach/Methodology**

For this chapter, the researcher utilized the descriptive method will be used to evaluate factors pertinent to the context of Oman. The questionnaire designed consists of six (6) categories:

1. Demographics
2. Facilities
3. Time and Climate
4. Sports Culture

5. Team Quality
6. Media and Marketing

In overall, there were total of 41 questions in each questionnaire, which was evaluated by some professors at Sultan Qaboos University, and subsequently revised by the researcher with the help of his supervisor professor based on the evaluations. The first part of the questionnaire includes six demographic questions. The target group of this study was the spectators who attend the sports events in Oman. The collection of the data was done before the games and during the half time interval. After the questionnaire was approved, the researcher started to collect the data by visiting the sports stadiums in Oman and meeting with spectators during actual sports events. He visited sports events in Oman such as; football league, handball league, volleyball league, swimming competitions, and athletic club completions held in the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Sohar sports complex, Nizwa sports complex, Seeb sports stadium, Sur Sports Complex, Alsa'ada sports complex, Khasab Sports Complex, and Ibri Sports Complex. The researcher was unable to visit the Salalah Sports Complex and Khasab sports complex because the issue of time and distance.

In overall, the researcher distributed around 500 questionnaires, although only 411 individuals responded. For each respondent, the researcher gave a brief orientation about the purpose of the study and was given an envelope which includes the questionnaire and pencil. The respondents were asked to tick the box which corresponds most closely to their opinion from (strongly agree to strongly disagree). The respondents did the questionnaire by themselves although the researcher was around for possible inquiries on the questions asked. After collecting data from the respondents, the researcher inserted the findings in the SPSS program, which was subsequently analyzed and interpreted.

## **Chapter 4: Results and its Significance**

### **4.1 Demographic Data**

For the first factor, which is demographics, the aim was to identify if the respondent is an Omani or non-Omani, and male or female. The questionnaire also aimed to categorize the respondent based on age, employment, level of education and approximate income level. Results from the questionnaire are seen in Table 37 below:

**Table 37**  
Demographics

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Omani</b>		<b>Non-Omani</b>	
	369 respondents (90%)		41 respondents (10%)	
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>	
	365 (89%)		42 (10%)	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Less than 24</b>	<b>24 to 34</b>	<b>35 to 44</b>	<b>Above 45</b>
	109 (27%)	148 (36%)	123 (30%)	30 (7%)
<b>Current Occupation</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Retired</b>
	80 (27%)	33 (8%)	288 (70%)	0 (0%)
<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
	12 (3%)	31 (8%)	163 (40%)	188 (45%)
<b>Monthly Income</b>	<b>Less than 500 O.R</b>	<b>500 to 1000 O.R</b>	<b>1000-1500 O.R</b>	<b>Above 1500 O.R</b>
	144 (34%)	153 (37%)	39 (10%)	18 (4%)

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed and 411 (82.2%) were returned usable for this analysis. Questionnaire was completed by 369 (90%) Omanis while 41 (10%) were completed by non-Omani spectators. From this, 365 (89%) respondents were male while 42 (10%) were female spectators. Spectators were from various age groups: 109 (27%) were less than 24 years old (only Spectators 18 and older were sampled), 148 (36%) were aged 24 – 34, 123 (30%) were aged 35 – 44, 30 (7%) were aged 45 and older. As for the current occupation, about 80 (20 %) spectators were students, 33 (8 %) were unemployed, and 288 (70 %) were employed. About 12 (3 %) spectators were illiterate. 31 (8 %) had a primary certificate, 163 (40 %) of participated spectators had a secondary school education, and 188 (45 %) had above secondary school qualifications. As for monthly income, 144 (34%) had listed their monthly household income as less than OR 500, 153 (37%) had income in the range of OR 500-1000, 39 (10%) were in the range of OR 1000-1500, and 18 (4%) listed their household income as more than 1500.

From this data the following observations are evident. First, in Oman sporting events, males are much higher in number among spectators than females, which either shows that in Oman's sporting culture males are more interested in sports than females or that females have other options for their free time. Secondly, this data shows that those who take time and use resources to get to stadiums mostly belong to ages between twenty-four (24) and forty-five (45), which shows the possibility that older Omanis either watch sports at home on their television sets due to lack of facilities or are no longer interested in following specific sports activities. It is interesting to note, however, that those with higher salary, 1000 - 1500 Omani Rial and above are less in number as compared to those with a lower pay grade. Most likely, those who are in a better financial status do not have time to watch sports in stadiums or are simply interested in other forms of entertainment. On the other hand, it most probably shows that affluent individuals and groups in Oman are not comfortable with the kind of facilities that the nine (9) sports complexes mentioned have. Interestingly, this assumption is probable since as A. Hammond (2007) notes, in his book *Popular Culture in the Arab World: Arts, Politics and the Media*, the Arab countries, like Oman, are looking intently on capturing the higher class in society and among tourists by setting up luxury golf courses and five-star sports facilities (Hammond, 2007, 115), none of which are present on Oman as of this moment.

#### **4.2 Facilities Factor**

For the facilities factor, the aim of the researcher is to evaluate how complete the facilities are in terms of seats, toilets, and places of prayer (for Muslim spectators) Accessibility of the sports complex is also rated, based on the travel time and ease of access from residential areas. The overall comfort and ambiance was also rated such as the presence or absence of smoking lounges. In overall, there were seven questions in the facilities factors. Results of this factor are presented in Table 38 below:



**Table 38**  
Facilities

No.	Question	The highest percentage out of 411
1	seats , toilets & place of prayer are available in sport complexes you have visited	70% disagree
2	Sports complexes are close the residential compounds.	57% disagree
3	Easy access to sports complexes during sports events.	58 disagree
4	Food stuff, cafeterias are not available in the sport complexes you have visited.	60% disagreed
5	There is absence of smoking areas in the sport complexes you have visited.	41% disagreed
6	Pre and post matches' activities at the sports complex encourage you to attend sports events.	61% disagreed
7	Traveling between the capital and other regions of the Sultanate hinder the public from attending sports events.	58% agreed

The first question was looking at the readiness of sports facilities in the sultanate to receive the sports fans. It represented the availability of seats, toilets and place of prayer in sports complexes in the sultanate. Out of 411 participants in the study, only 407 (99%) participants answered this question. As to the availability of seat, toilets, and places of prayer in sports facilities in Oman, answers which come from the participants were 102 (25%) strongly disagree, 169 (41%) disagree, 28 (7%) uncertain, 75 (18%) agree with the item and 33 (8%) strongly agree. Through this, the researcher found that more than half of the participants whose number were reached to 271 (70%) disagree on the availability of this facilities in sports complexes in Oman. The second question focused on the accessibility of sports complexes in the sultanate to the residential compounds. There were 403 (98%) valid answers out of 411 respondents who participated in the questionnaire. Results are as follows: 70 (17%) strongly disagree, 165 (50%) disagree, 43 (11%) uncertain, 87 (21%) agree and 38 (9%) strongly agree.

The answers of the participant showed that 235 (57%) participants disagree with the item 'sports complexes are close to the residential compounds.

The third question was looking for the ease of access to the sports complexes during sporting events. Out of 411 participants there were 408 (99%) participants had a valid answers. 83 (20%) answers were strongly disagree, 154 (38%) were disagree, 57 (14%) uncertain, 64 (16%) were agree and 50 (12%) were strongly agree. There were 237 (58%) disagree with the item. Question number four was looking for the availabilities of the food stuff and the cafeterias in the sports complexes in Oman. There were 410 (99.8%) had a valid answers out of 411 participants. The researcher found that 245 (60%) of the participants disagreed that the food stuff and the cafeterias are not available in the sports complexes in Oman. In the question number five the researcher was asking for the availability of smoking areas in sports events in Oman. There were 401 (97.6%) valid answers out of 411. 170 (41%) participant disagreed that there is an absence of smoking area in the sports events which they were visited .while 144 (35%) participants agreed that there is absence and 87 (21%) are uncertain. The sixth question was looking for the encouragement of the pre and post activities in the sports event for the attendance of sports events. There were 407 valid answers out of 411 participants. 252 (61%) participants were disagreeing of that while 122 (27%) participants were agreed with it. Seventh question was looking about the impact of mobility between the capital and regions on the attendance of sporting events in the sultanate. There were 407 (99%) valid answers out of 411.240 (58%) participants shows that the traveling between the capital and the regions were hindered the attendance in sports events in Oman. while 96 (23%) disagreed with the item and 71 participants were uncertain.

From this data, majority of respondents see facilities of sports complexes as incomplete with at least the basic necessities such as seats and toilets, which imply that the sports complexes were uncomfortable for spectators (Amon et al, 2010, 24; Hall et al, 2012, 47). Moreover, data shows that access to food, drinks, are mostly unsatisfactory, due to majority respondent who disagreed. Significant also are the majority of respondents who say that the sports activities that happened are not encouraging enough for them to return another time and watch another round of games. Although, transportation access for majority of respondents is difficult, the issue of game quality is a deciding factor to whether spectators will patronize events or not.

### 4.3 The time and climate factor

For time and climate factors, it is apparent that spectators in open stadiums and gymnasiums could find it discomforting if the climate is hazardous to the health or to the person's comfort level. Also, as seen in data from Table 39 below, questions pertain to the favorability of watching games during a hot season, as well as the timing of the sports event hosted, which could conflict with other important itineraries. Considerations also include sudden changes in the time schedule and the availability of sporting events whole year round.

**Table 39**  
Time/Climate

Factor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
1) Climate during the summer in the sultanate is not conducive to attend the sports events.	26%	39%	10%	17%	8%
2) Timing of the sports events is appropriate.	14%	40%	23%	19%	5%
3) Sudden change of fixture sports events does not encourage attending them.	10%	14%	12%	33%	31%
4) Delay in starting sports events on time.	15%	8%	23%	19%	35%
5) Absence of clear and fixed calendar by the sports federations of the sports events through the year.	7%	6%	20%	35%	31%

With the exception of Dhofar Governorate, which has a light monsoon climate and receives cool winds from the Indian Ocean, the climate of Oman is extremely hot and dry most of the year. Summer begins in mid-April and lasts until October. The highest temperatures are registered in the interior, where readings of more than 50° C in the shade are common (Valeri, 2009, 2). On the Al Batinah plain, summer temperatures seldom exceed 46° C, but, because of the low elevation, the humidity may be as high as 90 percent. The mean summer temperature in Muscat is 33° C, but the *gharbi* (literally, western), a strong wind that blows from the Rub al Khali, can raise temperatures from the towns on the Gulf of Oman by 6° C to 10° C. Winter temperatures are mild and pleasant, ranging between 15° C and 23° C. In spite of that, 65% of the spectators found that the climate in Oman is not an obstacle to attend sports events. More than half of the

spectators (54%) disagreed on timing of sport events and they found it inappropriate and only 24 % of them agreed on the sports events time. Sudden change of sports fixtures events usually do not encourage attending them. However, this was a problem for the majority of the spectators since 64% of them agreed on above obstacle. Delay in starting sports events on time and absence of clear and fixed calendar by sports federations of the sports events through the year were a big problems for spectators to attend the sport events (54% and 66% respectively).

It is interesting that despite the hot climate of Oman, which should be a norm for Omani spectators, majority find that it is discomforting for them if they watch games in the sports complexes mentioned above. Also, the timing of games seems to be wrong. Although not the majority answer, 40% disagreed on the appropriate timing of sports events, the highest among the five (5) choices given, implying that the sports organizations ought to find better schedules for game or improve their facilities so that climate will not be a hindrance to spectator attendance. Apparently, the number of sports events throughout the year show that scheduling is not the primary problem.

#### **4.4 Sports Culture Factor**

For sports culture, the aim for the questions was to get a majority opinion of how integral is sports for Omanis. No doubt, both school and family have a strong contribution to a country's sports culture. For instance, A. Laker (2002), in his book on the *Sociology of Sport and Physical Education*, comment on the sports cultures in Asia, the traditional upbringing of sports in the home make male members of the family avid sports participant and followers, while women, who take a secondary role in the family, though not prohibited to participate, are "neither expected nor encouraged to do so" (Laker, 2002, 106). The same influence is in the educational system, wherein teachers of Physical Education and Social Studies can help inculcate a culture of sports among their students, especially the concept of sports as more than competition but an avenue for character formation, personal discipline and social skills (Lauder & Piltz, 2013, 159-63). As seen in Table 39 below, questions include the concept of sports as rooted in society, and whether religion poses a hindrance to sporting events. Moreover, question includes how the educational system and the family form the minds of young people towards loving and enjoying sports.

**Table 40**  
Sports Culture

Factor	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Attending sports events is rooted in the Omani society.	12%	38%	28%	17%	6%
Religious rites contrary to the Omani society to attend sporting events in the Sultanate.	8%	15%	19%	34%	23%
Education system in the Sultanate encourages students to attend sporting events, local and international.	10%	26%	21%	29%	15%
Omani families encourage their children to attend sporting events in Oman.	12%	25%	30%	26%	8%
Lack of activities reared to the masses by the clubs does not encourage them to attend their clubs matches.	34%	44%	12%	6%	4%
Poor outlook for the future of the athletes with some members of Omani society does not encourage attending sporting events.	27%	33%	19%	15%	7%
Follow up the global leagues prevented spectators from follow up the local leagues.	24%	30%	15%	20%	11%
The existence of families' obligations and alternatives entertainment prevent spectators from attend the sports events.	18%	31%	25%	16%	11%
Bad behaviors by some spectators prevent the others to attend the sports events in Oman.	19%	23%	16%	24%	18%

As seen above, half of the study group agreed that attending sports events is rooted in Omani society. Religious rites contrary to the Omani society to attend sporting events in the Sultanate are considered by few of the participant group in the study (23%). However, the majority of them (57%) did not agreed on upon statement. Only 36% of the study group agreed that the education system in the Sultanate encourages students to attend sporting events, local and international. As indicated above, families are playing a big role in enhancing their children to attending sports events. In Oman, this role still not well established and only 37% of the study group found this role is

present in reality. In term of activities done the clubs, 78% of the study group agreed that the lack of activities reared to the masses by the clubs does not encourage them to attend their clubs matches. In addition, 60 % found that poor outlook for the future of the athletes with some members of Omani society does not encourage attending sporting events. More than half (54%) of the study group agreed that follow up the global leagues prevented spectators from follow up the local leagues. Adding to that, the existence of families' obligations and alternatives entertainment prevent spectators from attend the sports events as agreed by almost half of the study group. In other hand, bad behaviors by some spectators prevent the others to attend the sports events in Oman but only 43% of the study group did not agreed on that. Hence, as seen from the respondents, the overall sports culture of Omanis is weak and is not encouraging them to attend sports events hosted.

#### 4.5. The Quality of the Team Factor

The quality of teams and players on sports activities are another determinant in spectator attendance. As discussed in the literature review, spectators patronize a game or a specific sport when their experience was memorable. Hence, questions in Table 41 below aim to see efforts of the government and sports organizations to improve teams and secure the future of athletes.

**Table 41**  
Team Quality

Factor	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
1) Professional leagues in the sultanate will increase the team quality which encourages spectators to attend more matches.	5%	6%	6%	52%	31%
2) Little number of foreign professional	11%	4%	13%	30%	43%

players in Omani clubs.					
3) There are no good players in the clubs.	14%	32%	18%	25%	11%
4) Poor media coverage and technical analyses for the domestic sports events.	8%	5%	9%	43%	35%
5) The absence of appropriate sports facilities for the clubs does not help to provide optimal preparation for the team.	8%	5%	12%	47%	31%
6) Low salaries earned by the players in the sultanate reflect negatively on the performance of the team.	5%	3%	9%	57%	26%
7) Omani players signed to professional contract outside the sultanate contribute to the lack of attendance of sporting events.	17%	21%	19%	26%	18%

In terms of quality of the team factor which included seven questions as shown in above table, about 83% of the spectators agreed that the presence of professional leagues in the sultanate will increase the team quality which encourages spectators to attend more matches. The majority of the study group(73%) found that little number of foreign professional players in Omani clubs will affect the attendance of sports events while Only 15% of them disagreed on it. 36% of the spectators agreed on statement of

there are no good players in the clubs. However, 47% of the spectators disagreed on above statement and 18 % were uncertain. Poor media coverage and technical analysis for the domestic sports events was an obstacle for attending the sports events in Oman as seen by 78% of the study group. In-spite that the absence of appropriate sports facilities for the clubs does not help to provide optimal preparation for the team, 78% of the study group found that it is an obstacle and will affect the attendance of the spectators. More than 80% of study group agreed on low salaries earned by the players in the sultanate reflects negatively on the performance of the team. About 44% of the spectators agreed on statement that said Omani players signed to professional contract outside the sultanate contribute to the lack of attendance of sporting events and only 38% found that is not a problem for attending sports events.

It seems that more respondents find that no amount of sporting activities in the Sultanate or improvement of team quality will contribute to spectator attendance. This, however, runs counter to the concept of team quality as an encouraging reason to patronize a game (Westerbeek & Smith, 2003, 74). On the other hand, respondents also acknowledge that Omani players with contracts with professional leagues abroad impact the quality of games held locally which imply that team quality is still an important consideration for them to buy tickets and watch a game. This apparent inconsistency could then imply that even Omanis, at least those who responded, have little understanding on the importance of having quality teams in local leagues. Perhaps, they seldom witness a league where almost all teams are worth watching, the mediocrity is already expected in sporting events hosted. This also point that the lack of support for local teams, from the government and from the public, also has a domino effect on local professional players. After all, if there is more monetary potential and career growth abroad, then it is expected that excellent players will opt to play in professional leagues in other countries than in domestic games.

#### **4.6. Media and marketing Factor:**

The final factor assessed was the media and marketing of local games to the public. A good example is the marketing of the game cricket in Pakistan. According to J. Nauright (2006), it was once an unknown sport to Pakistanis, but became gradually popular through media efforts. For instance, rural and urban communities which had lack of information about the game grew accustomed to the game as communication stations broadcasted each game into traditional community and market spaces, along



with a notion that cricket reflects national unity within a global sport context that cannot be replicated at the political level (Nauright, 2006, 214). Indeed, through media and marketing, sports are perceived as something important, integral and worth experiencing, not to mention the attention that the media can provide through different fan literature like results, rankings, troublesome transfers, gossips, myths, and legends (Bottenburg, 2001, 13). Hence, in the questions in below, respondents were asked to give their opinion on the media structure for presenting games and making it more interesting to the public.

**Table 42**  
Media and Marketing

Factor	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Existence of specialized TV channels in sport field will help the spectator's attendance.	40%	28%	6%	13%	14%
The presences of specialized and professional journalist in sports field contribute to increase the attendance of spectators in sports events.	41%	31%	8%	11%	9%
Poor sports media coverage before the start of sports events	47%	28%	8%	8%	9%
Weakness of the marketing and the advertisement for the sports event decreases the attendance of spectators	52%	28%	7%	6%	8%

during the events.					
Poor sponsorship for the good players.	46%	33%	10%	5%	6%

A growing concern shared by researchers and sports marketers is to understand the various motivations that bring individuals to consume sporting events and related goods and services (Duarte, 2009, 71; Al-Thibiti, 2004, 17). No wonder, this study showed that 68% of the study group agreed that existence of specialized TV channels in sport field will help the spectator's attendance. The presences of specialized and professional journalist in sports field contribute to increase the attendance of spectators in sports events as agreed by 72% of the study group. As it is known around the world, media play a vital role in attending the sport spectators for attendance the sport events. However, still in Oman, the media coverage before the start of sports events not reached to the spectators expectations as agreed by 75% of the study group. In addition, 80% of the study group agreed that still there is a weakness in marketing and advertising for the sport events which will leads to decrease the attendance of spectators during the events. Sponsorship has become an increasingly popular form of marketing communication, yet little is known about what might influence consumer's intentions to purchase a sponsor's products. Majority of the study group (79%) in this study agreed that still there is poor sponsorship for the good players.

Table 42 below also shows the number of the spectators who attend the sports events in each game held at the time of the interview. From 411 questionnaires only 253 participants answered the question. Accordingly, football got the most spectators, which was 66% out of the total spectators who attending the sports events in Oman. Volleyball came in the second sport which followed by Omani spectators with (29%). Hockey and squash comes in end of the list which followed by Omani spectators. Finally, hockey got (5%) and squash got (1%) only from the total spectators who participated in the questionnaire. This confirms the data above from the Ministry of Sports Affairs that Football is the most popular sport while volleyball, handball, and basketball, though popular in other countries, have very few fans in Oman.

**Table 43**

Number of Spectators per game among Respondents

Sports	Football	Volleyball	Handball	Basketball	Field Track & Field	Swimming	Hokey	Squash
No of participants	167	73	44	35	28	15	13	2
Percentage	66%	29%	17%	14%	11%	6%	5%	1%

### Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on data from 2009 to 2012 from the nine (9) main sports complexes in Oman, namely the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex, Seeb Sports Complex, Sohar Sports Complex, Nizwa Sports Complex, Sur Sports Complex, Salalah Sports Complex, Al Sa'ada Sports Complex, Ibri Sports Complex, and the Khasab Sports Complex, there is an apparent imbalance in spectators for all category of sports, the inactivity of sports complexes. Most spectators patronize football, leaving almost very little fans for other sports. Moreover, all nine (9) sports complexes in Oman are underutilized when it comes to holding sports activities as well as the lack of spectators during sports events as compared to the stadium's capacity to hold a crowd. Now, as seen in data from the 411 respondents who filled in questionnaires, males are higher in number than female spectators, and those who are aged below 45 frequent spots activities. Also, facilities of sports complexes in Oman are generally poor and are not a factor for re-patronage of a sport. Timing and climate is also significant especially for facilities that are open to the side effects of a hot season, making it difficult to witness a game live. The data also confirms that Oman's sports culture is weak. Males are predominantly the spectators of a game, implying that women are disinterested, not expected to patronize sports since it is a domain of men. Interestingly, among respondents, sports is not the interest of people with higher income; this also point to the possibility that facilities are not comfortable or aesthetically pleasing. As for team quality, there is no strong adherence to the weakness or strength of Omanis athletes or sports teams. However, a significant percentage respondent believes that professional Omani players abroad affect the impact

of local sport on the public. Finally, media and marketing is also weak due to the apparent lack of aggressive advertising of sporting events as well as the weak sponsorship of games.

In overall, it seems that the problem is not in the lack of activities available in each of the nine (9) sports complexes in Oman. Rather, the lack of spectator attendance is due to the weak sports culture of Omanis, which is reflected in the absence of proper facilities to host a game, the weak quality of teams and games, and the poor marketing/sponsorship of games. There is no question that the Sultanate of Oman is trying its best to make sports facilities at par with international standards. However, without the support of the media and the public, these facilities will continually be underutilized, and revenue from sports events will not be enough to cover the cost of hosting the event. As B. Alzadjali (2010), in his thesis *National Brand in Oman*, observed, Oman sports has not yet been promoted alongside government efforts to make Oman an international brand (Alzadjali, 2010, 74), a concept earlier propounded by G.R. Milner and M.A Macdonald (1999), where they referred to sports marketing as a means to establish brand awareness among the public for the purpose of patronage (Milner & Macdonald, 1999, 45). In this case, the Sultanate must also conduct measures to encourage the people to view games so that in the long run, sport will be an integral part of Omani culture. Now, because of this paper's limitations, it is recommended that another study be made on the role of Omani families and school in shaping the culture of the youth towards sports. Also, it is best to evaluate media efforts to shape the mindset regarding a particular sport, and the benefits of supporting local games. Finally, it is also important to consider uncontrollable factors such as the economy in order to see if monetary difficulties of working class Omanis make sports entertainment a hindrance to spectator attendance.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix 1: Questionnaire

#### Challenges of Spectators attendance in sports events in Oman التحديات التي تواجه الحضور الجماهيري للاحداث الرياضية في سلطنة عمان

##### Dear participant:

This Questionnaire made by Salim Almufadhali Student at Master Program in Olympic Studies, Olympic Education, Organizing and Management of Olympic Events in University of Peloponnese in Sparta Greece. It is going to measure the **challenges of spectator's attendance in sports events in Oman**. The researcher would like to inform you that this questionnaire is part from his degree and all information you are going to provide it in this questionnaire will be secure and will not use in any project without your permeation.

The researcher will appreciate your kind cooperate by expressing your opinions in the points of this questionnaire.

##### 1. Personal information:

Circle the answer.

##### 1. Nationality:

- (1) Omani (2) non Omani

##### 2. Gender:

- (1) Male (2) Female

##### 3. Age :

- (1) Less than 24 (2) 24 - 34 (3) 35 - 44 (4) 45 and above

##### 4. Current Occupation:

- (1) Student (2) Unemployed (3) Employed

##### 5. Education:

- (1) Elutriate (2) Primary (3) Secondary (4) Advance

##### 6. Monthly income:

- (1) Less than 500 O.R (2) 500 - 1000 O.R (3) 1000 - 1500 O.R. (4) above 1500 O.R

Please read each of the statements below and tick the box which corresponds most closely to your opinion.

يرجى قراءة الاسئلة ادناه واختر الاجابة التي تعبر عن رأيك:

5. Strongly agree

4. Agree

3. Uncertain

2. Disagree

1. Strongly disagree

5. اوافق بشدة

4. اوافق

3. غير متأكد

2. لا اوافق

1. لا اوافق بشدة

No	Details	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Facilities Factor عامل المرافق	بشدة توافق	توافق	لا أوافق	أوافق	بشدة أوافق
1	Seats, toilets and places of pray are available in the sport complexes you have visited. تتوفر الاحتياجات الأساسية للجماهير في جميع المجمعات الرياضية التي زرتها مثل المقاعد ودورات المياه وأماكن الصلاة.					
2	Sports complexes are close the residential compounds. المجمعات الرياضية قريبة من التجمعات السكنية.					
3	Easy access to sports complexes during sports events. سهولة الدخول الى المجمعات الرياضية خلال الاحداث الرياضية.					
4	Food stuff, cafeterias are not available in the sport complexes you have visited. المقاهي واكشاك بيع العصائر غير متوفرة في المجمعات التي زرتها.					
5	There is absence of smoking areas in the sport complexes you have visited. عدم وجود اماكن خاصة للمدخنين.					
6	Pre and post matches' activities at the sports complex encourage you to attend sports events. اقامة الفعاليات الترفيهية قبل وبعد المباريات يشجع على الحضور الجماهيري.					
7	Traveling between the capital and other regions of the Sultanate hinder the public from attending sports events. التنقل بين العاصمة والمناطق الاخرى بالسلطنة يعيق الجماهير من حضور الفعاليات الرياضية.					
8	I often visit the sports events . . . . . a week, month, year at . . . . . sports complex. عادة اتابع المسابقات الرياضية بمعدل . . . . . اسبوعيا، شهريا ، سنويا في مجمع/المجمع/ نادي: . . . . .					
9	Topically follow the game like . . . . . عادة اتابع المباريات/ المسابقات الرياضية مثل . . . . .					

No	Details	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
	The Time Factor and Climate عامل الوقت والمناخ	بشدة توافق	لا وافق	متأكد غير	وافق	بشدة وافق
1	Climate during the summer in the sultanate is not conducive to attend the sports events. الجو خلال فصل الصيف بالسلطنة لا يشجع على حضور الفعاليات الرياضية.					
2	Timing of the sports events is appropriate. توقيت اقامة الفعاليات الرياضية مناسب جدا.					
3	Sudden change of fixture sports events does not encourage attending them. التغيير المفاجئ لمواعيد الفعاليات الرياضية لا يشجع على حضورها.					
4	Delay in starting sports events on time. تاخر انطلاق الفعاليات الرياضية في موعدها.					
5	Absence of clear and fixed calendar by the sports federations of the sports events through the year. غياب الروزنامة الواضحة والثابتة للفعاليات الرياضية للاتحادات طوال العام.					

No	Details	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Quality of the Team Factor عامل جودة الفريق	بشدة لاوافق	لاوافق	غير مؤكد	وافق	بشدة وافق
1	Professional leagues in the sultanate will increase the team quality witch encourage spectators to attend more matches. وجود دوري محترفين بالسلطنة يزيد من جودة الفريق ويشجع الجماهير على حضور عدد اكبر من الفعاليات الرياضية.					
2	Little number of foreign professional players in Omani clubs. قلة عدد اللاعبين الاجانب المحترفين بأندية السلطنة.					
3	There are no good players in the clubs. عدم وجود لاعبين مجيدين في النادي					
4	Poor media coverage and technical analyses for the domestic sports events. ضعف التغطية الاعلامية والتحليل الفني للفعاليات الرياضية المحلية.					
5	The absence of appropriate sports facilities for the clubs does not help to provide optimal preparation for the team. غياب المرافق الرياضية المناسبة للتدنية لا يساعد على الاعدادا المناسب للفريق.					
6	Low salaries earned by the players in the sultanate reflect negatively on the performance of the team. ضعف الرواتب التي يحصل عليها اللاعبين بالسلطنة يؤثر سلبا على اداء الفريق.					
7	Omani players signed to professional contract outside the sultanate contribute to the lack of attendance of sporting events. احتراف بعض اللاعبين العمانيين خارج السلطنة يساهم في قلة الحضور الجماهيري للفعاليات الرياضية.					

No	Details	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
		بشدة اوافق لا	اوافق لا	غير متأكد	اوافق	بشدة اوافق
	<b>Sports Culture Factor</b> عامل الثقافة الرياضية					
1	Attending sports events is rooted in the Omani society. حضور الأحداث الرياضية متأصل لدى المجتمع العماني.					
2	Religious rites contrary to the Omani society to attend sporting events in the Sultanate. عادات وتقاليد المجتمع العماني تتعارض مع حضور الجماهير للأحداث الرياضية بالسلطنة.					
3	Education system in the Sultanate encourages students to attend sporting events, local and international. نظام التعليم بالسلطنة يشجع التلاميذ على حضور الفعاليات الرياضية المحلية والدولية.					
4	Omani families encourage their children to attend sporting events in Oman. الاسرة العمانية تشجع الابناء على حضور المباريات.					
5	Lack of activities reared to the masses by the clubs does not encourage them to attend their clubs matches. قلة الفعاليات الموجهة للجماهير من قبل الاندية تقلل من دعم الجماهير للنادي.					
6	Poor outlook for the future of the athletes with some members of Omani society does not encourage attending sporting events. النظرة المتدنية لمستقبل الرياضيين لدى المجتمع العماني لا تشجع على حضور الفعاليات الرياضية.					
7	Follow up the global leagues prevented spectators from follow up the local leagues. متابعة الجماهير للدوريات العالمية يمنع الجماهير عن متابعة الدوريات المحلية.					
8	The existence of families' obligations and alternatives entertainment prevent spectators from attend the sports events. وجود بدائل ومغريات اخرى بدلا عن حضور الفعاليات الرياضية.					
9	Bad behaviors by some spectators prevent the others to attend the sports events in Oman. انتشار السلوك السيئ في المدرجات، يمنع البعض من حضور الفعاليات الرياضية.					

No	Details	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Media and Marketing Factor عامل التسويق والإعلام	بشدة لا أوافق	لا أوافق	غير متأكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
1	Existence of specialized TV channels in sport field will help the spectator's attendance. توفر القنوات التلفزيونية المتخصصة في المجال الرياضي يشجع على الحضور الجماهيري.					
2	The presences of specialized and professional journalist in sports field contribute to increase the attendance of spectators in sports events. وجود إعلاميين وصحفيين متخصصين في المجال الرياضي يساهم في زيادة الحضور الجماهيري للفعاليات الرياضية.					
3	Poor sports media coverage before the start of sports events ضعف الإعلام الرياضي قبل انطلاق الفعاليات الرياضية.					
4	Weakness of the marketing and the advertisement for the sports event decrees the attendance of spectators during the events. ضعف التسويق والدعاية للفعاليات الرياضية يقلل من الحضور الجماهيري.					
5	Poor sponsorship for the good players. قلة عروض الرعاية الخاصة باللاعبين المجيدين.					