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THE INFLUENCE OF SPORT SECTOR DETERMINANTS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF SULTANATE OF OMAN

YAHYA ZAHRAN MOHAMMED AL HINAI
INSTITUTE OF ISLAM HADHARI, UNIVERSITY KEBANGSAN MALAYSIA

DR/ WAN ZULKIFLI BIN WAN HASSAN
INSTITUTE OF ISLAM HADHARI, UNIVERSITY KEBANGSAN MALAYSIA

DR/ RAZALEIGH BIN MUHAMAT KAWANGIT
COLLEGE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES, UNIVERSITY KEBANGSAN MALAYSIA

Abstract:
Background: The sports sector is increasingly recognised as both a catalyst for social cohesion and a contributor to economic growth. In emerging economies such as Oman, sports play a dual role in enhancing health and unity while also advancing economic diversification under the framework of Oman Vision 2040.
Purpose: This study investigates the influence of sports sector determinants and government policies on economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman.
Methods: A descriptive research design was employed using a structured questionnaire distributed to 370 employees across ministries, sports clubs, and media organisations.
Findings: The results reveal that while indicators relating to the sports sector, human capital, and government policies were assessed at a moderate level, infrastructure and economic growth dimensions scored highly. ANOVA tests further demonstrated significant relationships among the sports sector, infrastructure, government policies, and economic growth.
Contribution: This study extends the literature on sports economics by contextualising sectoral and policy determinants within Oman Vision 2040. It highlights the strategic importance of infrastructure and human capital as levers for aligning sports development with broader national economic objectives.
Keywords: Sports economics, Human capital, Government policy, Infrastructure development, Economic diversification ,Oman Vision 2040
Declaration: I confirm that this manuscript is with no funding and it is at my own expense, no conflict of interest and data availability statements

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Oman, a relatively small Middle Eastern nation, has achieved substantial economic growth over recent decades, primarily through its oil and gas exports. In response to the volatility of hydrocarbon markets, the Omani government introduced *Oman Vision 2040*, a long-term strategy designed to ensure economic sustainability, diversification, and resilience. Sustainable development, as emphasized in Vision 2040, is not only a matter of economic necessity but also of environmental stewardship and societal well-being. This policy direction reflects Oman's broader hybrid approach to globalization, balancing openness to foreign investment with the preservation of cultural and political identity (Awashreh & Al Ghunaimi, 2025). In addition, sustainable practices are increasingly recognised as essential for building a robust and diversified economy (Al-Alawi & Jawarneh, 2023).

The sports sector in Oman has undergone notable expansion in recent years, reflecting both state commitment and broader societal demand. Oman Vision 2040 underscores the sector's role in promoting community participation, strengthening national identity, and improving public health. Investment in sports and its supporting infrastructure is thus positioned as a catalyst for social progress and sustainable development, aligning with global discourses on the socio-economic value of sports (Alam & Rashid, 2022). Despite the government's recognition of sports as a pillar of national development, empirical evidence on how sectoral determinants interact with government policies to produce measurable economic outcomes in Oman remains limited Comparable research in Oman has highlighted the importance of engagement and leadership in translating sectoral policies into measurable organisational and economic performance (Al Ghunaimi & Kassim, 2025). Previous studies in sports economics have tended to focus on mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup or the Olympics, or on developed economies, leaving a gap in understanding the

dynamics within smaller Gulf states (Baade & Matheson, 2016; Gratton & Preuss, 2008; Preuss, 2019). Addressing this gap, the present study examines the interplay between sports sector determinants, government policies, and economic growth within Oman.

This study seeks to identify the influence of sports sector determinants and government policies on economic growth in Oman. A descriptive research design was employed, using a structured questionnaire distributed to targeted participant groups. The specific objectives are to:

- assess the impact of the human factor on the sports sector in Oman;
- analyse the effect of infrastructure on the sports sector;
- examine the influence of the sports sector on government policies and economic growth;
- explore the relationship between government policies and economic growth; and
- investigate the mediating role of government policies in the link between the sports sector and economic growth.

1.2 Research Questions

- What is the influence of infrastructure on the sports sector in Oman?
- What is the influence of human capital on the sports sector in Oman?
- What is the influence of government policies on the sports sector in Oman?
- What is the influence of the sports sector on government policies and economic growth in Oman?
- How can government policies mediate the relationship between the sports sector and economic growth?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

This study was developed around five main hypotheses:

- **H01**: There is a statistically significant effect ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) between the human factor and the sports sector.
- **H02**: There is a statistically significant effect ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) between infrastructure and the sports sector.
- **H03**: There is a statistically significant effect ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) between the sports sector and economic growth.
- **H04**: There is a statistically significant effect ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) between the sports sector and government policies.
- **H05**: There is a statistically significant effect ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) between government policies and economic growth.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its attempt to bridge the gap between sports economics and national development policy in Oman. While research on the economic implications of the sports sector is growing globally, most studies continue to concentrate on advanced economies or major international events. By incorporating the human factor, infrastructure, and policy dynamics into its analysis, this study advances understanding of the sports sector's role in Oman's economic development.

Moreover, Vision 2040 explicitly recognises "advanced Omani sport and global achievements" as a strategic priority, aiming to raise the standard of sports practice and embed its values within society. By linking sports economics to this strategic vision, the present study contributes new insights that can inform policymaking and institutional development in Oman. The findings are expected to serve as a resource for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars seeking to understand how sports can function as a lever for economic diversification and social cohesion in Gulf economies. Such contributions align with broader Omani research that has highlighted the strategic value of integrating organisational engagement, leadership, and well-being policies into national development agendas (Awashreh & Al Ghunaimi, 2024).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Sports Sector

Sports and physical exercise are increasingly recognised as vital to society because they influence human development on social, economic, and physical levels, becoming integral to people's lives and environments (Michael, 2020). Few nations exist without structured sports organisations, as sports are considered one of the most pressing needs and fundamental concerns of modern societies. Developing sports and enhancing public participation in both competitive and recreational activities remain among the top priorities of federations and organisations globally (Rezaei & Ameen, 2019).

In Oman, sports clubs have existed in their modern form since the 1970s, when the national renaissance fostered the establishment of clubs across governorates. By that period, 43 clubs had been established, laying the foundation of the Sultanate's sports system. These clubs became central to the Omani sports movement, yet their role now requires modernisation to ensure alignment with contemporary needs and aspirations. Government policy continues to recognise sports clubs as vital for national growth and development (Al-Busafi & Al-Hashemi, 2015). Research on Oman's public institutions also suggests that strong leadership and engagement practices are necessary to modernise traditional structures, ensuring their resilience in rapidly evolving environments (Al Ghunaimi & Kassim, 2025).

2.2 Human Capital

Human capital is widely recognised as one of the critical elements influencing the development of states and economies. A nation's efficiency and productivity are shaped by the quality of its human resources; thus, investing in human resources remains essential in today's dynamic global context. Such investments — often intangible in nature

— include education, skills training, and professional development. These enhance employee competencies and ultimately generate returns in the form of higher productivity and revenue (Rafid, 2023).

Human capital investments are integrated into institutional planning as a means of raising productivity and expertise in line with organisational goals. Improving the standards of human resources is often achieved through education and training. Similar findings were reported in Oman's higher education sector, where employee engagement was shown to enhance both motivation and productivity, reinforcing the human capital–growth nexus (Al Ghunaimi & AlGhenaimi, 2024). Likewise, evidence from the Omani public sector demonstrates that authentic and transformational leadership practices significantly stimulate employee creativity, with organizational commitment acting as a key mediating mechanism (Sallem et al., 2024). As well as science and technology advance, those criteria will continually rise.

As science and technology advance, demands on human capital will continue to rise. Education plays a critical role in building human quality by enhancing competences, shaping personal character, and preparing individuals to contribute to institutional and national productivity. Competent human resources — encompassing knowledge, skills, talents, and expertise — constitute the essence of human capital, enabling organisations to achieve their objectives. Human capital is therefore not only a resource but also a source of competitive advantage (Djatola, 2021).

2.3 Economic Growth

Oman, with a population of around 4.6 million and a GDP of $76.4 billion in 2017, has long relied on its oil reserves to sustain growth. Since the 1970s, prudent management of hydrocarbon wealth has enabled significant development, but slowing growth in recent years has highlighted the need for diversification. *Oman Vision 2040*, introduced in 2016, provides a roadmap for sustainable growth and economic resilience, emphasising diversification and innovation (Al-Alawi & Jawarneh, 2023).

The strengths of Omani sports clubs include the availability of local talent, income from investment and commercial projects, and grassroots teams supported under their umbrella. As Lath et al. (2021) note, success in competitive sports is tied to the performance of athletes, necessitating careful talent identification and investment in development pathways. Federations and clubs invest significant resources in nurturing talent to achieve elite performance (Baker et al., 2020; Vaeyens et al., 2008). Sponsorship also plays a growing role, requiring sports organisations to demonstrate value to potential partners.

Globally, the 20th century witnessed a shift in economic power from industrialised to emerging nations, creating opportunities for sports leagues, teams, and manufacturers in developing countries (Grix et al., 2019). These nations increasingly host mega sporting events to boost tourism, employment, and investment, though the long-term legacies remain debated (Knott & Tinaz, 2022).

Parallel evidence from Oman highlights how sector-specific policies and engagement strategies contribute to resilience and performance, supporting the broader case for linking sports development to national economic growth (Al Ghunaimi & Kassim, 2024).

2.4 Infrastructure

Sports infrastructure — defined as the physical and organisational structures required to facilitate participation in sports — is a critical enabler of participation and success. Adequate facilities, systems, and services are necessary for nations to compete on the global stage. Recent research underscores that investment in infrastructure stimulates community engagement, boosts grassroots participation, and drives economic growth (Madhu & Keshava Murthy, 2023).

Infrastructure not only enables participation but also fosters the development of talent and a culture of sports. Ankan (2018) asserts that infrastructure is fundamental for achieving international sporting success and promoting youth engagement. Countries with advanced facilities are better able to develop internationally competitive athletes and create a sustainable sporting ecosystem.

2.5 Government Policies

Oman's strategic vision for sports, aligned with *Vision 2040*, aims to enhance national achievements and embed sports as a way of life. The Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth (2024) outlines four core directions: (1) sports and society, (2) economy and development, (3) governance and institutional performance, and (4) sports and a sustainable environment.

There are currently 50 officially recognised clubs in Oman, yet their rapid growth has strained resources. Many clubs face challenges of financial sustainability and limited long-term strategic planning (Ghahfarokhi & Goudarzi, 2024). This underscores the need for sports organisations to embrace self-financing and marketing strategies while also improving governance and performance. Research on Omani institutions further suggests that embedding employee engagement and well-being policies into governance structures enhances institutional performance, a principle applicable to sports organisations under Vision 2040 (Awashreh & Al Ghunaimi, 2024).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design

This study adopted a descriptive–analytical design, employing a structured questionnaire as the main tool for data collection. The approach was selected to provide both a clear description of the phenomenon under investigation and

an analytical framework to test the proposed hypotheses. The research proceeded in two stages: first, by establishing the theoretical foundations of the study, and second, by empirically testing the hypotheses to evaluate the effects of key strategic factors — namely, the development of the sports sector and government policies — on economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman. This design was considered appropriate for capturing the complexity of interactions between sectoral determinants and policy frameworks in a national development context.

3.2 Data Collection

Two types of data were used in this study:

3.2.1 Secondary Data

Secondary data were gathered from books, scholarly journals, official reports, and previous research studies. Digital resources, including academic databases and reputable websites, were also consulted. This stage helped to establish the theoretical framework and to situate the study within the existing body of literature.

3.2.2 Primary Data

For the field component, a questionnaire survey was administered to a sample drawn from the study population. The instrument was designed according to established practices in quantitative research and tailored to capture perceptions regarding the influence of the sports sector and government policies on economic growth. Once collected, the responses were statistically analysed to test the research hypotheses and to identify patterns and relationships among the study variables.

3.3 Study Population

The study population consisted of 1,750 individuals employed in organisations directly or indirectly linked to Oman's economic development and sports sector. This included:

- Ministry of National Economy: 1,048 employees
- Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth: 274 employees
- Vision Oman 2040 Implementation and Follow-up Program and economic diversification programs: 152 employees
- Sports journalists and sports club employees: 274 individuals

In addition, the population encompassed professionals engaged in research, development, and training, reflecting a broad spectrum of stakeholders working to advance the economic, legislative, and sports landscapes of the Sultanate. Collectively, these groups contribute to shared national goals by promoting cooperation, supporting economic diversification, and embedding sport as a driver of social and cultural development.

Table 1 *The distribution of the study population*

No.	Government Unit	Males	Females	Total
1	Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth	761	287	1,048
2	Ministry of National Economy	170	104	274
3	Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit	78	74	152
4	Sports Clubs	276	–	276
Total		**1,285**	**465**	**1,750**

Note. Data adapted from Ministry of Labour (2024), Department of Statistics annual report, Sultanate of Oman.

3.3.1 Study Sample

The study sample included 370 individuals from employees of the Ministry of National Economy, the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth, the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, sports media, and sports clubs in the Sultanate. They were selected using simple random sampling to ensure the study's validity and representativeness of the groups it comprises, representing 21% (Kothari, 2004). The following table shows the distribution of individuals according to their demographic characteristics.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection is a fundamental element of the research process, forming the basis upon which the analysis of the research issue in this study relies. The questionnaire was used as a means of collecting information, due to its widespread use in social and scientific studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). An electronic questionnaire was used to ensure the rapid and highly accurate collection of information. The data collection process took place from July 2024 to January 2025. Participants were given thirty days to complete the questionnaire, with reminders sent to increase the response rate. The researcher prepared the questionnaire as the main tool for collecting information related to the investigation.

3.5 Research Instrument (Questionnaire)

Preparing the questionnaire begins with an initial design that is developed to fit the final form. This includes the survey cover letter and instructions for respondents, as well as the initial data and question items. It is essential to define the

purpose of the questionnaire and follow appropriate guidelines when formulating questions to ensure clarity and avoid complexities or embarrassing questions that may not be relevant to the required study topic. After preparing the questionnaire, it is presented to a group of experts in the relevant field for review and to suggest any necessary modifications. After this stage, the questionnaire is distributed to the original sample on a trial basis to verify its validity and reliability, using the statistical methods approved for this purpose. The questionnaire was prepared according to the five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932) and distributed electronically to all members of the experimental and actual sample to collect the necessary data, which carries the following meanings: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4), Strongly Disagree (5).

3.6 Data Analysis

Data were collected using a questionnaire as the primary research tool. These questionnaires were then coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, version 28). SPSS is widely recognised for providing accurate and reliable analysis in social science research (IBM Corp., 2021). Appropriate statistical tests were applied to arrive at valuable indicators and findings that enhance the study's subject matter.

3.6.1 Study Validation

A five-point Likert scale was adopted to answer the items in the second section, and the responses to each item consisted of five options. The Likert scale remains one of the most widely applied instruments for measuring attitudes and perceptions (Likert, 1932). To determine the level of agreement of the study sample members with the items and axes of the questionnaire, the following classification ranges were used:

Table 2 *Classification of responses on the Likert scale*

Classification	Degree	Proposed Mean
Strongly disagree	1	1 – 1.80
Disagree	2	1.81 – 2.60
Neutral	3	2.61 – 3.40
Agree	4	3.41 – 4.20
Strongly agree	5	4.21 – 5.00

Note. Adapted from Likert (1932).

3.6.3 Validity of the Research Tool

Achieving test validity in this method depends on the appearance of the test items. If these items are related to the behaviour, trait, or domain being measured, this is considered evidence of the items' validity. This evaluation aims to identify necessary modifications, determine the extent to which the questions and items measure the research variables, assess their clarity, accuracy, and coherence, and measure the effectiveness of the questionnaire in answering the research questions. Expert review is a common method for establishing face and content validity (Taherdoost, 2016). In this study, the questionnaire was presented to a group of six arbitrators specialising in management science, economics, sports, and media, representing institutions such as Sultan Qaboos University, the Ministry of National Economy, the Ministry of Education, the Royal Court Affairs, the Capital Market Authority (Muscat Securities Market), and the Oman Olympic Committee. Based on their feedback, the researcher made the necessary deletions and modifications before finalising the questionnaire.

3.6.7 Reliability of the Study Tool (Questionnaire)

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient method. The values for the main axes ranged from 0.78 to 0.89, which exceed the acceptable minimum threshold of 0.70, thereby confirming the internal consistency of the scales used (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

3.7 Statistical Data

o answer the study's questions and hypotheses, appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied through SPSS. Statistical treatments were carried out to verify the validity of each study question and to provide robust evidence for testing the research hypotheses (Field, 2018).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Data:

Data in Table (4-1) illustrates the demographic data for the Participants according to (gender, Educational qualification, age group, number of years of experience, job title, and labor sector). The majority of the participants were male at 80.3%, while the female participation rate was 19.7%. While, the largest percentage of participation was in favor of Bachelor's degree holders the lowest percentage was the post-general education diploma (8.9%). As per age groups, the largest percentage of participation was the age group (31-40 years) with a participation rate of (45.7%), while lowest was the age group (51 years and over) with (9.2%). Concerning the years of experience, the majority of

participation had experience (more than 15 years) with a participation rate of 51.4%. Meanwhile, the category with experience (less than 5 years) was (10.8%). Referring to the job title variable, the largest percentage of participation was in favor of employees with a participation rate of (48.9%), and bottom was general managers (4.3%). On other hand, the distribution of the study sample according to the labor sector variable, the largest percentage of participation was in favor of other sectors with while the minimum was the legislative sector with (6.5%).

Table (3.1): demographic data

Variable	Levels	Repetitions	Percentage
Gender	Males	297	80.30%
	Females	73	19.70%
	the total	370	100%
Academic qualification	General Education Diploma	42	11.40%
	Post-Graduate Diploma	33	8.90%
	Bachelor's	150	40.50%
	Postgraduate studies	145	39.20%
	the total	370	100%
Age group	18-30 years	43	11.60%
	31-40 years	169	45.70%
	41-50 years	124	33.50%
	51 years and older	34	9.20%
	the total	370	100%
Number of years of experience	Less than 5 years	40	10.80%
	5 to 10 years	48	13%
	From 11 to 15 years	92	24.90%
	More than 15 years	190	51.40%
	the total	370	100%
Job title	Employee	181	48.90%
	Department directors and those in similar positions	86	23.20%
	General managers and those in their position	16	4.30%
	Others	87	23.50%
	the total	370	100%
Business sector	Sports sector	43	11.60%
	economic sector	85	23%
	Legislative sector	24	6.50%
	Other sectors	218	58.90%
	the total	370	100%

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of the Study Axes:

To determine the level of the study sample's attitudes and estimations regarding the five study axes, the arithmetic means and standard deviations were extracted. To clarify the results, the researcher adopted the following judgment criterion.

Table (3.2): Criterion for judging the results

Range	Level
From 1 - 1.79	very low
From 1.80 - 2.59	Low
From 2.60 - 3.39	Middle
From 3.40 - 4.19	High

The following data detail the results of the sports sector level, government policies, and economic growth, broken down by section for each axis.

4.2.1 First Axis: Sports Sector

Table (3.3) shows the overall mean and overall standard deviation for the items in the first axis: the sports sector. The overall mean was (2.99) with an overall standard deviation of (0.75), indicating a moderate level. Item (4), which states "Developing infrastructure such as sports facilities in the Sultanate of Oman plays a role in increasing the chances of successful investment in the sports sector," had the highest mean. In first place with the highest average score of (3.93), while item (7) which reads "Athletes in the Sultanate of Oman receive sufficient financial and moral support from government and private sports institutions and decision-makers" In last place with an average of (2.28).

Table (3.3): Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the Sports Sector Axis, Ranked Descendingly by Means.

Rank	The number	Paragraphs	mean	standard deviation	Level
1	4	Developing infrastructure, such as sports facilities, in the Sultanate of Oman plays a role in increasing the chances of success for investment in the sports sector.	3.93	1.18	high
2	5	Oman Vision 2040 plays a key role in developing the sports sector.	3.32	1.01	middle
3	2	Investing in the sports sector provides great employment opportunities.	3.3	1.23	middle
4	8	The presence of clear laws and regulations for the sports sector in the Sultanate of Oman contributes significantly to attracting local and foreign sports investment.	2.96	1.23	middle

4.2.2. Second Axis: The Human Factor

Table (3.4) shows the overall mean and overall standard deviation for the items in the second axis: Human Capital. The overall mean was (3.44) with an overall standard deviation of (0.61), indicating a high level. Item (4), which states "Knowledge and education are among the most important factors in human capital development," had the highest mean. In first place with the highest average score of (4.39), meanwhile paragraph (8) which reads "The sports sector in the Sultanate has contributed to creating job opportunities over the past five years" In last place with an average of (2.51).

Table (3.4): Means and Standard Deviations for Human Factor Axis Items, Ranked Descendingly by Arithmetic Means.

Rank	The number	Paragraphs	arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Level
1	4	Knowledge and education are one of the most important factors in human capital development.	4.39	0.8	very high
2	6	The availability of infrastructure such as ICT facilities contributes to the development of human capital.	4.08	0.9	high
3	7	The government's innovation of new practices and modern methods enhances human capital development.	4.08	0.94	high
4	3	The presence of the human factor in institutions reflects the accumulated experience, knowledge and productivity.	3.62	1.01	high
5	2	The Sultanate of Oman has adequate human capital development that allows the government to include the sports sector within its economic diversification agenda.	3.1	1.11	middle
6	1	Developing human capital tops the government's list of priorities in light of the strategy to focus on the sports sector.	3.04	1.07	middle
7	5	Employees associated with the sports sector receive full support and tools that enable them to increase their human capital thinking.	2.76	0.9	middle
8	8	The sports sector in the Sultanate has contributed to creating job opportunities over the past five years.	2.51	1.05	low

4.2.3. Third Axis: Infrastructure

Table (3.5) shows the overall mean and overall standard deviation for items from the third axis: Infrastructure. The overall mean was (3.46) with an overall standard deviation of (0.63), indicating a high level. Item (4), which reads "Investment in infrastructure contributes to economic growth in the country," had the highest mean (4.40), while paragraph (7) which reads "The government has allocated sufficient funding for the development of sports facilities" In last place with an average of (2.72).

Table (3.5): Means and Standard Deviations for Infrastructure Axis Items, Ranked Dissentingly by Means.

Rank	Number	Paragraphs	mean	standard deviation	Level
1	4	Investment in infrastructure contributes to economic growth in the country.	4.4	0.77	very high
2	8	Infrastructure projects are among the most important projects that enhance the pace of economic growth.	4.11	0.9	High
3	2	Infrastructure is a fertile ground for economic investment.	4.08	0.98	High
4	5	The infrastructure being built in the Sultanate of Oman is based on a well-prepared development plan.	3.36	0.99	Middle
5	3	The government is working to formulate appropriate policies to develop infrastructure.	3.35	0.99	Middle
6	1	The government is working to develop the sports sector by building modern infrastructure.	2.97	1.11	Middle
7	6	Public-private partnerships have contributed to accelerating the development of sports infrastructure.	2.75	1.03	Middle
8	7	The government has allocated sufficient funding to develop sports facilities.	2.72	1.05	Middle
General level			3.46	0.63	High

4.2.4. Fourth Axis: Economic Growth

Table (3.6): Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the Economic Growth Axis, Ranked Descendingly by Arithmetic Means.

Rank	number	Paragraphs	mean	standard deviation	Level
1	6	Human training and qualification has a positive role in sustaining economic growth.	4.41	0.74	very high
2	4	Infrastructure plays a positive role in increasing economic growth in Oman.	3.98	0.91	high
3	8	There are efforts being made by the government to diversify the economy away from the oil sector.	3.78	0.92	high
4	2	The economic diversification agenda has an impact on the economic growth of the Sultanate of Oman.	3.72	0.85	high
5	7	The goals of Oman Vision 2040 are in line with the aspirations of the Omani economy.	3.64	0.92	high
6	1	There has been remarkable economic growth in the vital sectors of the Sultanate of Oman during the recent period.	3.63	0.92	high
7	5	The sports sector in the Sultanate of Oman has the potential to boost economic growth.	3.3	1.1	middle
8	3	The investment environment in the Sultanate of Oman is encouraging for local and foreign investors.	3.09	1.12	middle
General level			3.69	0.64	high

Table (3.6) shows the overall mean and overall standard deviation for the items in the fourth axis: Economic Growth. The overall mean was (3.69) with an overall standard deviation of (0.64), indicating a high level. Item (6), which states "Training and qualifying individuals plays a positive role in the sustainability of economic growth," ranked first with the highest mean of (4.41). While item (3) which reads "The investment environment in the Sultanate of Oman is encouraging for local and foreign investors." In last place with an average of (3.09).

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4.2.5. Fifth Axis: Government Policies

Table (3.7): Means and Standard Deviations for the Items of the Government Policies Axis, Ranked Descendingly by Arithmetic Means

Rank	number	Paragraphs	mean	standard deviation	Level
1	4	The existence of legislation and laws related to the sports sector is essential to increase sports investment opportunities.	4.08	0.85	high
2	2	Government policies aim to ensure sustainable development, social justice and economic strengthening.	3.58	0.95	high
3	7	The Sultanate of Oman has a clear plan to develop human capital capable of developing the laws and legislation that support its five-year plans.	3.29	1	middle
4	1	Legislation and laws in the Sultanate of Oman are flexible enough to keep pace with economic changes.	3.19	0.96	middle
5	5	Government policies have a clear path to enacting legislation that supports the sports sector.	3.04	0.94	middle
6	8	The government of the Sultanate of Oman has provided the necessary sports facilities and installations to support and develop sports in the country.	2.86	1.15	middle
7	3	The government plays a tangible role in enabling investment in the sports sector.	2.81	0.93	middle
8	6	Thanks to the government's efforts to support the sports sector, it is noted that investment in this sector is high.	2.41	1.06	low
General level			3.15	0.65	middle

Table (3.7) shows the overall mean and overall standard deviation for the items in the fifth axis: Government Policies. The overall mean was (3.15) with an overall standard deviation of (0.65), indicating a moderate level. Item (4), which states "The existence of legislation and laws related to the sports sector is necessary to increase sports investment opportunities," had the highest mean (4.08), while paragraph (6) which reads "Thanks to the government's efforts in supporting the sports sector, it is observed that investment in this sector is high" In last place with an average of (2.41).

4.3 Relationship between study Axes:

4.3.1. Results related to the first question: "Does the human factor affect the sports sector in the Sultanate of Oman?"

Table (3.8): The Impact of the Human Factor on the Sports SectorAnalysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	sum of squares	degrees of freedom	mean squares	value of F	Statistical significance
Decline	98,047	1	98,047	319,044	0
Remaining	113,092	368	0.307		
Total	211,139	369			

The results of the previous table show that there is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the human factor and the sports sector"

4.3.2. Results related to the second question: "Does infrastructure affect the sports sector in the Sultanate of Oman?"

Table (3.9): The Impact of Infrastructure on the Sports Sector Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	sum of squares	degrees of freedom	mean squares	value of F	Statistical significance
Decline	90,099	1	90,099	273,931	0
Remaining	121.04	368	0.329		
Total	211,139	369			

Table (3.9) illustrates a moderate positive direct relationship between infrastructure and the sports sector. Hence, there is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between infrastructure and the sports sector"

4.3.3. Results related to the third question: "Does the sports sector affect economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman?"

Table (3.10): The Impact of the Sports Sector on Economic Growth Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	sum of squares	degrees of freedom	mean squares	value of F	Statistical significance
Decline	37,384	1	37,384	119,512	0
Remaining	115,111	368	0.313		
Total	152,494	369			

The results of the previous table show that there is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the sports sector and economic growth.

4.3.4. Results related to the fourth question: "Does the sports sector influence government policies in the Sultanate of Oman?"

Table (3.11): The Impact of the Sports Sector on Government Policies Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	sum of squares	degrees of freedom	mean squares	value of F	Statistical significance	
Decline	72,649	1	72,649	305,328	0	
Remaining	87,561	368	0.238			
Total	160.21	369				

The results of the previous table show that there is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the sports sector and government policies."

4.3.5 Results related to the fifth question: "Do government policies affect economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman?"

Table (3.12): The Impact of Government Policies on Economic GrowthAnalysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	sum of squares	degrees of freedom	mean squares	value of F	Statistical significance	
Decline	70,663	1	70,663	317,777	0	
Remaining	81,831	368	0.222			
Total	152,494	369				

The results of the previous table show that there is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between government policies and economic growth.

5. DISCUSSION

This study was aimed at investigating the impact of the sports sector and government policies on economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman. Through using a questionnaire as a tool to collect data from the target group and understand their characteristics. The five main axis of the study was the sports sector, the human capital, the economic growth and the infrastructure, and government policies. As well as study the relationships between study axes.

5.1 Study Axes

5.1.1 Sport sector

Our findings for the first axis's items (the sports sector) indicate a modest level with an overall mean of 2.99 and a standard deviation of 0.75. "Developing infrastructure such as sports facilities in the Sultanate of Oman plays a role in increasing the chances of successful investment in the sports sector," according to Item (4), which had the highest mean (3.93). These findings were consistent with a study by Nikolaou et al. (2023) that looked into the social-economic implications of managing major sporting events employing the 2022 FIFA World Cup to be a case study in Qatar. The outcomes of a research by Nikolaou et al. (2023) demonstrated that the sports infrastructures utilized during important sporting events have a favorable social-economic impact. It was shown that the social-economic advancement of the host nation is positively impacted by the attendance at important sporting events.

Furthermore, social-economic welfare is positively impacted by the degree of organization of important sporting events. Major sporting events like the 2022 FIFA World Cup have a positive economic impact on the host country. Effects that boost the economy, raise demand for travel, or have several tourism-related effects are the most obvious during the planning stage (Nikolaou et al., 2023). Hoverer Effective infrastructure development along with the elimination of unnecessary spending would result in a national economic expansion, according to a theory of infrastructure development studied by Khalifa (2020). In contrary item (7) which read "Athletes in the Sultanate of Oman receive sufficient financial and moral support from government and private sports institutions and decision-makers" where In last place with an average of (2.28), It suggests that participants had a weak belief that government

and commercial sports organizations and decision-makers in the Sultanate of Oman provide athletes with adequate financial and moral support. This result was consistent with the findings of Ghahfarokhi & Goudarzi (2024), who reported The Sultanate of Oman's sports clubs have several serious shortcomings, including inadequate government support for operating expenses, a lack of training and qualifications for club administration personnel, a lack of strategic planning, and limited incentives and awards awarded in various events. These findings also align with Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1967), which posits that investments in skills and training generate long-term economic returns. In the context of Oman, underdeveloped support for athletes indicates a gap in leveraging sports as a productive form of human capital investment. Moreover, compared with countries such as Qatar, which successfully linked sports infrastructure with international branding through the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Oman still faces challenges in positioning sports as an economic driver beyond cultural participation. Giving competitors the right incentives to excel is crucial for every sporting competition (Csató, 2022).

5.1.2 Human Capital

The results we obtained on the second axis's (Human Capital) elements demonstrate with a standard deviation of 0.61 and an overall mean of 3.44, this indicates a high level. "Knowledge and education are among the most important factors in human capital development," as stated in item (4), got the highest mean. Has the highest average score of 4.39, in first place. Human capital in line with the points made by Becker (1967) in his theory. According to Becker, education can impart knowledge and skills that can boost workers' (human resources') productivity, which can benefit by raising their income. This is why education and human capital are interrelated. It is anticipated that higher-quality workers would result from greater education. According to the human capital idea, businesses or organizations will pay workers more if they are productive and good. However, people who have advanced in their education—that is, which have learned more than they did in their prior education—do not always have greater levels of productivity. This may be because the recently completed degree will merely serve as a notification to the employer that the employee has a higher degree of education than they previously had (Rafid, 2023). In conjunction with the notion of human capital, Spence's (1978) signaling theory is a theory that has a direct connection to education. According to this view, there are two kinds of workers: good workers and less good workers. Productivity is higher among good workers and lower among bad workers. Even when one employee is more productive than the others, the corporation will still pay equivalent or equal compensation provided the employee has an equal educational background. As a result, employees with greater productivity decide to further their education in order to be able to communicate with the firm and receive pay commensurate with their educational attainment (Rafid, 2023).

5.1.3 Infrastructure

Our findings for the third axis (Infrastructure) items demonstrate a high level, with an overall mean of 3.46 and an overall standard deviation of 0.63. However, the item with the highest mean, item (4), which states, "Investment in infrastructure contributes to economic growth in the country," These results, which came in first place with the highest average score of 4.40, are consistent with the findings of a study conducted in Poland by Müller-Frączek in 2021. The study found a positive correlation between the growth of sports and the growth of sports infrastructure, though it was weaker than anticipated and was generally of moderate force. This might imply that authorities should employ strategies other than infrastructure spending to promote sport. It's noteworthy to note that Müller-Frączek (2021) discovered the strongest correlation between the growth of sport and sports infrastructure. Furthermore, although the association between the growth of sports and the development of sports infrastructure was less than anticipated and typically of moderate strength, the research reported in the Knott & Tinaz, (2022) paper also demonstrated a favorable correlation. This might imply that authorities should employ strategies other than infrastructure spending to promote sport. It's interesting to note that the growth of sport as well as sports infrastructure have the highest correlation.

5.1.4 Economic growth

The results of our research for the fourth axis (Economic growth) items indicate a high level, with an overall mean of 3.69 and an overall standard deviation of 0.64. With the highest mean of (4.41), item (6), which states that "Training and qualifying individuals plays a positive role in the sustainability of economic growth," came in first place. These results align with those of Rafid (2023), who demonstrated that education is a time and money investment in human capital, which is regarded as one of the most significant types of human capital investment for both people and businesses. In addition to information, abilities, and experience, the individual will gain from increased work performance and productivity over an undetermined period of time.The idea of education as an investment has grown quickly, and every nation is beginning to hold the view that the expansion of the education sector is a crucial precondition for the expansion of other development sectors. The idea of investing in human capital that can help Education is a time and money investment in human capital that is considered to be one of the most significant types of human capital investment for both individuals and companies. In addition to information, abilities, and experience, the individual will gain from increased work performance and productivity over an undetermined period of time (Khairi, 2014).

5.1.5 Government policies

The overall mean and overall standard deviation for the items on the fifth axis (government policies) are displayed in the present study's results. A moderate level was indicated by the overall mean of 3.15 and the overall standard deviation of 0.65. "The existence of legislation and laws related to the sports sector is necessary to increase sports

investment opportunities," as stated in item (4), had the highest mean. The government's efforts in this sector are mostly focused on developing sports infrastructure, which ranks first with the highest average score of (4.08). One of the biggest risks to emerging sports organizations, according to Hambrick et al. (2018), is a lack of funding and reliance on other groups. In the similar vein, the study by Jamshidi et al. (2012) demonstrated that one of the shortcomings of the Iranian cycling federation is its lack of funding and reliance on the State Budget. In order to discuss investment opportunities for sports clubs and find more resources for them, the Ministry of Sports, Culture, and Youth recently organized a laboratory for investment in the sports field. Participants included businessmen and traders as well as everyone involved in the sports sector. Because of the necessary level of excellence, sports have a beginning and end structure, quick consumption, discipline, and collaboration with other scientific subjects. According to McGillivray et al. (2018), one of the weaknesses in the physical growth of sports in cities is the disregard for urban planning and policy.

Our findings concurred with a research by Al Balushi et al. (2023) that proposed that management of sports organizations should continue to use human resource management strategies as part of their plan to use human resources to attain exceptional performance each year. Recruiters need to be aware of the position and where to look for applicants. Because of the fluctuating pool of applicants, there will be times when it is challenging to find qualified human resources. Sports organizations' human resource professionals should keep an eye on the labor market to determine where to find competent applicants and what tactics to use to draw applications in a cutthroat market. Copies of the human resource management practices should be sent to all existing workers in order to promote and implement them.

5.2 Relationships between study axes

The results of the current study indicate a moderately favorable direct association between infrastructure and the sports industry, with a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha < 0.05$). This highlights the Infrastructure-Led Growth Theory, which argues that physical investment enhances economic productivity. For Oman, sports infrastructure development contributes not only to health and leisure but also to tourism, job creation, and economic diversification. A similar pattern was reported in Poland (Müller-Frączek, 2021), where infrastructure was directly correlated with sports participation and related economic activity. These findings were in line with a research by Madhu and Keshava (2023) that sought to determine the connection between the degree of intercollegiate competition participation and sports infrastructure facilities. Their investigation was restricted to the top ten athletic departments at any university that has been in operation for 20 years or longer. Madhu and Keshava (2023) found a strong ($p<0.01$) correlation between the amount of engagement and the infrastructural facility. Additionally, research demonstrated a positive correlation ($r = +0.881$) between the degree of engagement and infrastructural amenities. This indicates that universities with better infrastructure encourage their students to compete at a high level. Since physical activity is becoming a more essential part of life, social policy should focus on encouraging the growth of sport. The primary emphasis of Polish government initiatives in this field is the development of sporting facilities. The question of how far the material foundation promotes the growth of sport is therefore raised (Müller-Frączek, 2021). Enhancing sports participation requires adequate sport infrastructure, which can ultimately have a long-term effect on a nation's athletic ecology. People may participate in sports and have active lives with the help of sports infrastructure.

The results of this study demonstrate that the sports industry and economic growth have a statistically significant relationship ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), the sports industry and government policies have a statistically significant effect ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the human factor and the sports sector, and that government policies and economic growth have a statistically significant effect at the level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). More and more scholars and developers of the sports business are interested in the research of sports economic growth (Ali et al., 2023). At the micro level, Oman-based studies demonstrated that engagement-driven productivity improvements provide a pathway through which organizational practices scale up to contribute to broader economic growth (Al Ghunaimi & Kassim, 2025). It is no longer limited to the nation or a certain area of the sports industry. Carefully controlling the interdependencies between different aspects in sports economics can help create long-term success stories in the sports industry. Very complicated data in sports economic management has emerged as a result of the globalization of the sports industry (Raza et al., 2020; Gan & Voda, 2023). Numerous factors will impact the sports industry as it expands (Joofet al., 2022). The sports industry has grown differently in different nations and sports.

6. CONCLUSION

This study was aimed at investigating the impact of the sports sector and government policies on economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman. Through using a questionnaire as a tool to collect data from the target group and understand their characteristics. The five main axis of the study was the sports sector, the human capital, the economic growth and the infrastructure, and government policies. As well as study the relationships between study axes. The current Study found that there were moderate levels of sports sector axis, Human Capital, and government policies with mean equal to 2.99±0.75, 3.44±0.61, and 3.15±0.65 respectively. While Infrastructure axis and Economic growth axis showed a high level with means of 3.46±0.63, and 3.69±0.64 respectively, on other hand the current study revealed a direct association with a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha < 0.05$) between sports industry and

economic growth, infrastructure and the sports industry, sports industry and economic growth, and sports industry and government policies. There are an increasing number of studies that examine how government policies and the sports industry affect economic growth. Therefore, by incorporating the effects of infrastructure and the human factor on the Sultanate of Oman's sports industry, the influence of the sports industry on government policies and economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman, and the influence of government policies on economic growth in the Sultanate of Oman, this study builds on earlier research. The strategy's goal of the future vision Oman 2040, "advanced Omani sport and global achievements," aims to improve the quality of sports practice and disseminate its values throughout society so that it becomes ingrained in Omani citizens' lives. This is another reason why the current paper is important. Therefore, the knowledge from this research may be used as a source to further explore this topic in the future. This study provides empirical evidence on how sports determinants and government policies interact to support economic growth, directly linking findings to Oman Vision 2040 goals. In parallel, Oman-based organizational studies suggest that embedding engagement and well-being policies in implementing agencies can amplify these macro-level gains by stabilizing performance and retention (Awashreh & Al Ghunaimi, 2024; Al Ghunaimi & AlGhenaimi, 2024). It adds to the literature on sports economics in emerging markets by incorporating human capital, infrastructure, and policy dimensions together. The study relied on cross-sectional survey data, which may not capture long-term effects or causality. In addition, the findings are limited to Oman and may not fully generalize to other Gulf states. Further studies should adopt longitudinal designs, comparative analyses with other GCC countries, or mixed-method approaches to capture deeper insights into the socio-economic role of sports. Researchers could also examine how digital transformation in sports and e-sports contributes to national economic objectives.

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