UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

THE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION IN THE PROCESS OF ORGANIZING A SUSTAINABLE SPORT EVENT IN MALAYSIA: A CASE STUDY OF LE TOUR DE LANGKAWI 2023

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PhD

May 2026

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KALAM AZAD BIN ISA

Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Business Management)

Faculty of Business and Management

May 2026

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the role of stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events, using Le Tour de Langkawi 2023 (LTDL 2023) as a single case study to address gaps in integrating sustainability principles into sports event management in Malaysia. Adopting a qualitative case study design within a constructivist research paradigm, the study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of stakeholder dynamics in a real-world setting. Data were collected through in-depth interviews involving 15 purposively selected informants, including event organizers, local authorities, merchants, and community members across multiple stages of the event. Additionally, observational data were gathered throughout all eight stages of the event, providing further insights into the interactions and collaboration between stakeholders. The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2013) seven-step thematic analysis, supported by Atlas.ti software. Guided by Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012), and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model (Silvers, 2020), the study developed the Integrated Sustainable Sports Event Framework, which operationalizes stakeholder collaboration across all phases of event management. The findings revealed that while stakeholder collaboration was essential for achieving economic, environmental, and social sustainability, challenges such as inconsistent community involvement, limited sustainability awareness, and communication breakdowns were prevalent. This study contributes theoretically by extending existing stakeholder and sustainability models and practically by offering actionable strategies to improve stakeholder engagement and alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Although limited to a single event and a focused stakeholder group, the study offers a strong foundation for future research involving broader comparative analyses, quantitative validation, and the integration of digital technologies to support sustainable sports event management.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I wish to thank God for giving me the opportunity to embark on my PhD and for completing this long and challenging journey successfully. My gratitude and thanks go to my supervisor Assoc Prof Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri and my co-supervisor Assoc Prof Dr. Herwina Rosnan.

My appreciation goes to the Majlis Sukan Negara (MSN) who provided the facilities and assistance during sampling. Special thanks to my colleagues and friends for helping me with this project.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to my father, mother and my lovely family especially my wife for the vision and moral support. This piece of victory is dedicated to all of you. Alhamdulillah.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

Sports events play a significant role in promoting environmental conservation, economic growth, and social integration. However, successfully organizing such events requires effective stakeholder collaboration, involving event organizers, local authorities, community leaders, and business entities. While stakeholder engagement is recognized as a fundamental aspect of event management, it remains a complex and evolving process, shaped by competing interests, power dynamics, and resource availability. Despite its importance, research on stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports event management, particularly in developing nations remains limited. The lack of comprehensive studies on how stakeholder engagement influences the long-term sustainability of sports events has sparked ongoing debate among scholars (Kujala, Sachs, Leinonen, Heikkinen & Laude, 2022).

In Malaysia, the sports event industry has become a key contributor to economic development and global recognition. Major events such as Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL 2023), the Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix, and Ironman Langkawi have established Malaysia as a leading destination in international sports tourism, while generating economic benefits and fostering social engagement. However, ensuring the sustainability of these events presents several challenges, including poor stakeholder coordination, limited community involvement, and a lack of structured sustainability planning. Addressing these challenges requires stronger stakeholder collaboration, ensuring that the long-term benefits of sports events align with Malaysia's broader economic, social, and environmental development goals.

This chapter establishes the foundation of the study by first defining stakeholder collaboration and its role in sustainable sports event management. It then examines the Malaysian sports event industry, outlining its historical development, current challenges, and significance. The discussion further explores the consequences of weak stakeholder engagement, emphasizing its impact on event sustainability. These discussions culminate in the identification of the research problem, highlighting the

need for a structured framework to enhance stakeholder collaboration in Malaysia's sports event industry.

To address this research gap, this study seeks to explore how stakeholder collaboration contributes to sustainable sports event management in Malaysia. Understanding the role of stakeholder engagement is essential, as it determines how effectively different parties such as event organizers, local communities, government agencies, and private sponsors work together to achieve sustainability objectives. Furthermore, it is important to examine the sports event management process that facilitates sustainability, as event planning, resource allocation, and execution strategies significantly impact long-term environmental, economic, and social outcomes. Without a structured approach to event management, sustainability efforts may remain fragmented and ineffective. Lastly, this study aims to investigate how stakeholder collaboration and sports event management processes can be integrated to establish a sustainable sports event framework. Developing a structured framework is necessary to provide clear guidelines, best practices, and governance mechanisms for ensuring that sustainability is embedded in Malaysia's sports event industry.

Additionally, this chapter presents the scope of the study, clarifying that the research will specifically examine collaborative processes within Malaysia's sports event industry. The study's theoretical and practical significance is emphasized, demonstrating how its findings can contribute to academic research while offering practical strategies for event organizers and policymakers. To enhance conceptual clarity, key terms related to stakeholder collaboration and sustainable sports event management are defined.

This chapter lays the foundation for the study, setting the stage for an in-depth exploration of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports event management. The following chapters will further analyze theoretical perspectives, case studies, and practical applications, offering valuable insights into improving stakeholder engagement, governance structures, and sustainability practices in sports events.

1.2 Research Background

1.2.1 Academic Discussion on Stakeholder Collaboration in Sustainable Sports Events

Stakeholder collaboration is the theoretical concept that explains how multiple parties in collaborative partnerships pursue common goals. Freeman's (1984) Stakeholder Theory highlights some essential principles in management namely, facilitation of the exact balance of stakeholder requirements through participation. This is especially important in sports events where different and usually conflicting stakeholders, including event promoters, local authorities, community and businessmen, and other interested parties, must remain balance and have to maximize their interests as they go about the event planning processes given limited resource (Wallace & Michopoulou, 2021). Trust, openness, and clarity of operations are key to successfully implementing collaboration within this paradigm. Stakeholder collaboration is emphasized in Stakeholder Theory and further expanded by the Sport for Development (S4D) Model, proposed by Shulenkorf in 2012. The S4D Model unites multiple stakeholders under the idea that sporting activities contribute to developmental and sustainability objectives. It establishes reciprocal commitments to align sports events with broader social or environmental goals. Similarly, the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) framework presents a conceptual map of stakeholder associations within each phase of event planning, emphasizing collaboration throughout the planning and implementation process (Silvers, 2004).

To deepen understanding of stakeholder collaboration, particularly in community engagement, the Stakeholder Theory, the S4D Model, and the EMBOK framework collectively provide insights into stakeholder cooperation in sports events. Stakeholder Theory offers a strategic approach to managing conflicts of interest among stakeholders, ensuring balanced decision-making (Abdeladim & Yahyaoui, 2024). The S4D Model translates sustainable development principles into actionable strategies, particularly in the planning and execution of sports events (Oshimi & Yamaguchi, 2022). Meanwhile, the EMBOK framework is widely applied in event management research, integrating stakeholder engagement and sustainability into practical event organization models (Van Antwerpen, 2023). Together, these three models form an integrated framework that facilitates interactive stakeholder engagement, optimizing sustainable practices and governance structures in sports event management.

These frameworks have a significant impact on the sustainability outcomes of sports events. The decision-making system within Stakeholder Theory provides a foundation for balancing economic, social, and environmental interests. Partnerships help achieve various objectives, such as enhancing economic returns, conserving historical sites, and mitigating adverse environmental impacts, while aligning stakeholder behaviour with shared objectives (Trail & McCullough, 2019).

The S4D Model further emphasizes coordination as a key factor in facilitating social sustainability. Community involvement in planning and decision-making fosters meaningful representation and inclusiveness, strengthens social relationships, and ensures long-term commitments from the local population (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020). For instance, the shared management of the 1998 Commonwealth Games increased and showcased active community involvement, contributing to infrastructure development and improved social amenities.

Consistent with the EMBOK framework, this study provides guidelines for enhancing sustainable practices in event management, particularly from an environmental perspective. Integrated efforts encourage stakeholders to consider broader sustainability concerns, such as waste minimization, resource utilization, and emissions reduction. The Rio Olympics served as a prime example of a multi-stakeholder model that successfully implemented environmental sustainability through sustainable construction and innovative waste management practices (Schnitzer, Kronberger, & Wenger, 2020).

The analysis of these frameworks underscores that sustainability objectives that can be achieved through integrated efforts, reinforcing the importance of cooperation in attaining sustainable outcomes in sports events. However, applying stakeholder collaboration theories to sports events in Malaysia has presented challenges. A persistent tension exists between self-interest and collective benefit, as event organizers often prioritize short-term revenue generation, while community representatives advocate for long-term social and economic sustainability (Wondirad et al., 2020). These competing interests hinder effective communication and collaboration, obstructing the fulfilment of sustainable development objectives.

In Malaysia, governance structures often lack transparency, particularly in interactions between local authorities and communities. This leads to the decentralization of decision-making and diminished community involvement (Menon, Edward, & George, 2017; Abdullah et al., 2014). The decentralization of decision-

making has increased communication challenges, exacerbating relationship issues that hinder collaboration. It is not uncommon for dominant stakeholders such as government agencies or major funding bodies to overshadow smaller stakeholders, making decisions that prioritize their own interests over broader sustainability goals (Wallace & Michopoulou, 2021). These challenges indicate that existing theories and processes provide insufficient guidance on power dynamics, management strategies, and information flow within Malaysia's sports event development.

This research background highlights the need for collaborative stakeholder management to enhance sustainability in sports events while acknowledging that contextual adaptations are essential. Addressing challenges such as conflicting objectives, institutional structures, and power imbalances require tailored approaches suited to the organization of sports events in Malaysia. A more inclusive governance framework, increased transparency in decision-making, and early stakeholder engagement can help overcome these barriers and improve the sustainability of sports events in Malaysia.

1.2.2 The sports event industry and the gap in sustainable event process

The sports event industry has played an important role in shaping social and economic development on a global scale. Major events such as the Olympics, FIFA World Cup, and Formula 1 Grand Prix serve as prime examples of how sports can support economic growth, build social capital, and enhance environmental management. These events have evolved from being purely athletic competitions to powerful tools for promoting tourism and driving economic development. Additionally, they serve as platforms for advancing social and environmental objectives, strengthening socioeconomic systems, and improving communal well-being (Streimikiene & Bilan, 2015; Ma & Kaplanidou, 2016; Siyabulela, 2016).

Malaysia has successfully embraced and developed the sports event industry as a key component of its tourism and development agenda. A significant milestone in this journey was the 1998 Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games, which marked the integration of sports events with economic and social objectives. The event attracted over 6,670 competitors and officials, while foreign visitors spent an average of RM3,800 on 12.5 nights' accommodation, generating substantial economic benefits

(MIDA, 2020). The success of this event marked a new beginning for the establishment of the sports event industry in Malaysia.

Since then, Malaysia has hosted numerous internationally recognized sporting events, including the Formula 1 Grand Prix, Le Tour de Langkawi, and the MotoGP Racing series. These sport events have significantly contributed to the Malaysian economy and bolstered its reputation as a leading sports tourism destination. In addition to economic gains, hosting these events has provided opportunities for local communities to engage with international spectators. For instance, the Formula 1 Grand Prix alone generated over RM500 million in economic activity, highlighting the industry's potential to deliver high returns on investment.

While economic rewards have been a key motivator for Malaysia continued participation in hosting sports events, sustainability has become an increasingly central focus. The integration of environmental preservation alongside social and economic growth is now a critical aspect of event organization. Many events have adopted sustainability principles, with the MotoGP Malaysia incorporating green features to align with global trends. This shift reflects a broader movement that began with the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics, where environmental concerns were incorporated into event planning (Weiler & Mohan, 2010).

Hosting sustainable sports events, however, presents complex challenges that require meticulous planning and effective coordination among all stakeholders. Strong stakeholder collaboration is necessary to ensure that sports events generate positive social, cultural, economic, and environmental outcomes for local communities. In order to achieve this balance requires empowering local communities to benefit from these events rather than being marginalized, as they often bear the social and financial costs of hosting. Research suggests that effective cooperation among event managers, local authorities, community members, and private sponsors can optimize resource utilization, introduce innovative solutions, and integrate stakeholders' interests. Ultimately, these can align with contemporary sustainability principles (Sharpley & Telfer, 2015).

Despite these efforts, this research has found that sports event management in Malaysia is frequently challenged by conflicting interests, communication breakdowns, and limited stakeholder engagement. Studies by Towner (2018) as well as Wondirad, Tolkach, and King (2020) indicated that local communities are often excluded from the decision-making process, despite their crucial role in providing resources and

infrastructures. This exclusion is particularly problematic, as local communities typically bear the financial burden of hosting these events but remain on the periphery of planning discussions. Such marginalization can lead to dissatisfaction, resistance to sustainability measures, and long-term hostility towards event organizers. Furthermore, power imbalances among stakeholders create additional barriers to effective partnerships, as short-term economic gains are often prioritized over broader social and environmental objectives.

Extensive research for example Mapjabil et al., 2015; Ibrahim et al., 2016 has examined the economic and social impacts of sports events in Malaysia, but there remains a gap in the literature on stakeholder management processes in the context of sustainability. Addressing this gap is essential to ensuring that sports events yield long-term benefits while meeting international sustainability standards. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to existing knowledge by examining the nature and trends of stakeholder collaboration and proposing solutions to enhance the sustainability of sports events in Malaysia.

1.3 Problem Statement

Malaysia's sports event industry has become a significant driver of economic growth, cultural exchange, and global visibility, as evidenced by the country's successful hosting of major international events such as the Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games, Formula 1 Grand Prix, and MotoGP Racing Series (Mapjabil et al., 2015; Ibrahim et al., 2016). These events indeed have enhanced Malaysia's international reputation and economic prospects. However, despite this success, there remains a critical challenge in the integration of sustainability across the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sports event management. Fragmented practices and inconsistent implementation of sustainability principles persist, making it clear that existing frameworks such as Stakeholder Theory, Sport for Development (S4D) Model, and Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK), while foundational, are insufficient for addressing the complexities of sustainability integration in developing countries like Malaysia.

Although Stakeholder Theory has been widely applied in various organizational contexts, its application in sustainable sports event management has not fully accounted for local stakeholder dynamics, power imbalances, and the unique governance

challenges of sports events (Wondirad, Tolkach & King, 2020). This gap in Stakeholder Theory, specifically its limitations in the context of sports event sustainability, needs further exploration. Existing models do not sufficiently address how the complex stakeholder dynamics in Malaysia such as power imbalances, conflicting interests, and local governance challenges which affect the sustainability of sports events. This is especially true in the Malaysian context, where the implementation of sustainability principles is often fragmented. Thus, addressing this theoretical gap is crucial, as it is the key to improving sustainability practices in the Malaysian sports event industry.

The Sport for Development (S4D) Model, although widely acknowledged in community engagement for sporting initiatives, has not fully addressed the challenges of integrating sustainability within the sports event management process. The S4D model's focus on community empowerment and social inclusion does not adequately consider environmental and economic sustainability within large-scale sports events in Malaysia. In particular, the framework falls short of addressing the coordinated governance and multi-stakeholder collaboration needed to implement sustainable practices effectively in the planning, execution, and legacy phases of events. The lack of S4D's adaptability to complex, multi-stakeholder environments like Malaysia's sports event industry is a critical limitation that this study aims to address by adapting the framework to a Malaysian context (Schulenkorf, 2012; Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020).

Similarly, the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) framework, which is used for organizing and managing events, provides a robust set of guidelines for event planning and management. However, EMBOK tends to treat sustainability as a peripheral concern, rather than integrating it systematically across all event phases. This limitation in the EMBOK framework results in fragmented practices for sustainability integration, especially in developing countries where there are unique challenges related to resource allocation, stakeholder collaboration, and long-term planning. EMBOK's inadequate focus on sustainability in relation to stakeholder collaboration is a gap that requires further attention and is central to this study's objectives (Silver & Nelson, 2009; Silver et al., 2006; Getz & Page, 2020).

The lack of a structured approach to stakeholder collaboration results in inefficiencies in resource allocation, waste management, and long-term sustainability planning in Malaysia's sports event industry (Lim, Ramely & Wafi, 2020). Effective sports event management requires active participation from multiple stakeholders,

including government agencies, event organizers, local communities, corporate sponsors, and environmental groups. However, conflicting stakeholder priorities often lead to fragmented approaches. Event organizers, for instance, focus heavily on economic returns, while local communities prioritize social and environmental benefits (Wondirad, Tolkach & King, 2020). Additionally, power imbalances among stakeholders create barriers to inclusivity, particularly for underrepresented groups such as local communities and environmental advocates, diminishing their influence in decision-making processes (Towner, 2018; Cicognani et al., 2020). This lack of integration weakens the industry's ability to achieve sustainable, long-term outcomes that benefit all stakeholders.

Global best practices in sports event management, such as those seen in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, have demonstrated the effectiveness of sustainability-driven event management, where initiatives like carbon neutrality, waste reduction, and public engagement in green practices have been successfully implemented (Schnitzer, Kronberger & Wenger, 2020; IOC, 2022). However, in Malaysia, sports event management practices remain fragmented and unsystematic, often lacking structured approaches to resource utilization, sustainable infrastructure, waste reduction, and environmental protection (Ahmad et al., 2017; Shahril & Mohammad, 2024). Malaysia’s unique challenges, including political hurdles, limited community involvement, and underdeveloped green initiatives, hinder the adoption of global best practices (Shahril & Mohammad, 2024).

The absence of a standardized sustainability framework further complicates stakeholder coordination, leaving Malaysia without a clear blueprint for integrating sustainability into event management processes (Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by developing a Sustainable Sports Event Framework, which will align stakeholder collaboration and sports event management processes. By developing this framework, the study will provide a structured approach to sustainable sports event management in Malaysia, focusing on integrated stakeholder roles and enhanced long-term sustainability outcomes for all stakeholders involved.

This study aims to provide a structured approach to sustainable sports event management by addressing the issues as stated previously. By addressing these critical areas, this study aligns with global sustainability efforts, particularly the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, and SDG 17:

Partnerships for the Goals. Ultimately, this study will contribute to positioning Malaysia's sports event industry as a model for sustainable event planning, execution, and legacy-building, ensuring long-term economic, social, and environmental benefits for all stakeholders involved.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

a) To investigate event stakeholder collaboration that contributes to sustainable sport events in Malaysia.
b) To explore the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event.
c) To develop a sustainable sport event framework based on stakeholder collaboration and sports event management process.

1.5 Research Question

To address this broad exploratory question, the following research questions were formulated:

a) How does stakeholder collaboration contribute to a sustainable sports event in Malaysia?
b) What is the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event?
c) How can stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process contribute to establishing a sustainable sports event framework?

1.6 Scope of Study

The study focuses on Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL 2023), a prominent international sporting event in Malaysia. As a major event in the nation's sports tourism calendar, LTDL 2023 provides a unique opportunity to explore the complexities of sustainable event management. Although the focus is on the 2023 edition, future research could expand to include other editions of LTDL 2023 to understand sustainability dynamics across multiple events in the series.

1.6.1 Geographical Scope

The study focuses on LTDL 2023, a prominent international sporting event in Malaysia. As a major event in the nation's sports tourism calendar, LTDL 2023 provides a unique opportunity to explore the complexities of sustainable event management. Although the focus is on the 2023 edition, future research could expand to include other editions of LTDL 2023 to understand sustainability dynamics across multiple events in the series.

1.6.2 Conceptual Scope

This study is framed within the framework of Stakeholder Theory, the Sports for Development (S4D) Model, and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) model, The study focuses on three key areas:

1. Stakeholder Collaboration: Investigate the roles of official collaborators (e.g., event organizers, local government, community groups) and other parties involved in the event (such as vendors, merchants, and sponsors) in the context of sustainable event management. The study will examine the nature of collaboration, potential conflicts, and contributions towards achieving sustainability goals
2. Event Management Processes: Explore the event planning, resource utilization, waste management, and community involvement within the context of sustainable event management practices.
3. Sustainability Outcomes: Evaluate the economic, social, and environmental benefits achieved through sustainable sports events, particularly focusing on LTDL 2023.

1.6.3 Methodological Scope

This study adopts a qualitative methodology, utilizing semi-structured interviews, and observation data to collect data from a range of stakeholders, including official collaborators and any other parties involved in the organization or support of LTDL 2023. Thematic analysis will be employed to identify key patterns and themes in the data, guided by theoretical frameworks such as Stakeholder Theory and EMBOK.

This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the various factors contributing to the success and sustainability of the event.

1.6.4 Informants Scope

This study focuses on key stakeholders involved in the organization and management of LTDL 2023. Specifically, the participants include event organizers, who are responsible for the overall planning and execution of the event; local authorities, including government bodies and agencies that support and regulate the event; local merchants, who provide goods and services to the event and contribute to its economic impact; and local communities, who are directly affected by the event's social and environmental impacts and are engaged in community-level sustainability efforts. The study aims to explore the collaborative roles of these stakeholders in organizing and implementing sustainable practices, focusing on their involvement in decision-making, resource management, and sustainability initiatives.

1.7 Limitations

The study is subject to several limitations that may affect the generalizability and scope of its findings:

1.7.1 Methodological Limitation

The qualitative nature of this research, primarily relying on semi-structured interviews limits the depth of analysis to the perspectives of a select group of stakeholders. The study does not incorporate a large-scale survey or quantitative data, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of stakeholder collaboration and sustainable event practices. Furthermore, the use of thematic analysis may lead to subjectivity in data interpretation, depending on the researcher's perspective.

1.7.2 Geographical Limitation

The focus of this study on Malaysia limits its direct applicability to countries with different cultural, economic, or political contexts. While Malaysia's sports tourism and sustainability frameworks offer valuable insights, the findings may not be directly

transferable to other regions with dissimilar infrastructures or governance models. However, the results may offer relevant insights for countries in the Southeast Asia region or other developing nations with similar sports event management challenges.

As Busenitz et al. (2014) stated, this study will contribute to the new field of sustainability entrepreneurship. It will broaden the possible research opportunities in this field on entrepreneurial opportunities. According to Koe & Majid (2014) and Rajasekaran (2013), sustainable entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant field in the study of entrepreneurship that seeks to solve problems related to the economy, society, and climate. Nowduri (2012), Shepherd & Patzelt (2011), and Hall et al. (2010) all agree that the definition of sustainable entrepreneurship is still relatively new and that many areas need more research.

1.7.3 Event Limitation

The study specifically examines LTDL 2023, which is a road cycling race and an international sporting event. The sustainability challenges and stakeholder dynamics observed in this event may not fully represent those encountered in other types of sports events, such as team sports or cultural festivals. Therefore, the insights drawn from LTDL 2023 may be less applicable to different event types that involve distinct logistical or environmental requirements.

1.7.4 Informants Limitation

This study is primarily based on interviews with a limited range of stakeholders, mainly focusing on official collaborators namely event organizers, local government officials, etc. This may overlook the perspectives of other crucial participants, such as spectators, local businesses, or non-official partners who also contribute to the sustainability of the event. The narrow participant scope may result in missing insights from these important groups, affecting the completeness of the analysis.

1.8 Significance of Research

This study contributes to both academic and practical advancements in the field of sustainable sports event management, with a specific focus on stakeholder collaboration and event management processes. This research categorizes its

significance into three key areas: theoretical contributions, practical implications, and alignment with national and global priorities.

1.8.1 Theoretical Contribution

This research contributes to address research gaps in the literature concerning stakeholder collaboration and sustainable event management, particularly in developing countries such as Malaysia. Information is provided by theoretical frameworks such as Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), the Sports for Development (S4D) Model (Shulenkorf, 2012), the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) framework (Silvers, 2004). Although they provide necessary and sufficient information, they often lack the degree of dynamism required for the functions of governments, cultures and businesses of developing countries.

Consequently, this study seeks to investigate the process through which stakeholder engagement takes place and how the event management processes inculcate the sustainability principles as causal factors contributing to the creation of sustainable sport events (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020). Meanwhile, the formulation of a systematic approach integrating stakeholder engagement and event operation procedures provides a fresh theoretical contribution to the literature on sustainable sports events. This integration is crucial, as it helps to respond to practical concerns in facilitating sustainable practices while enriching academic knowledge of related challenges in the management of sports events.

1.8.2 Practical Contribution

This research provides actionable insights for policymakers, event organizers, and other stakeholders involved in organizing sports events. Identifying stakeholder roles, interactions, and challenges enable the formulation of strategies to improve collaboration and align stakeholder efforts with sustainability goals. Henceforth, collaborative decision-making is particularly significant in mitigating power imbalances as well as ensuring equitable participation in planning and execution processes (Cicognani et al., 2020).

The research findings also highlight best practices in event management processes, including resource optimization, community engagement, and waste

management, which are essential for sustainable event outcomes (Jones & Smith, 2023). These insights are particularly relevant for Le Tour de Langkawi as the application of this research can enhance organizational practices and foster long-term sustainability in Malaysia's premier international cycling event.

1.8.3 Alignment with National and Global Priorities

This research supports Malaysia's sustainable development goals in keeping with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 and the National Tourism Policy 2020–2030 (MIDA, 2022). These national strategies emphasize inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and the importance of tourism as a key economic driver. By focusing on Le Tour de Langkawi, the study aligns with Malaysia's efforts to market sustainable sports tourism, which boosts economic growth, enhances environmental stewardship, and fosters social integration as part of the country's broader development agenda.

Furthermore, this research aligns with Malaysia's National Sports Policy 2021 which highlights the role of sports as a catalyst for socio-economic development, community well-being, and national unity. The policy advocates for sustainability in sports event management, encouraging collaboration among stakeholders to ensure long-term economic, environmental, and social benefits.

Internationally, the study corresponds with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. The commitment to stakeholders and collaborative partnerships within this research reaffirms the importance of local solutions and collaborative governance to address global challenges, making an impactful contribution to sustainable development globally.

1.9 Definition of Terms

1.9.1 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals, groups, or organizations with a vested interest in the planning, execution, and outcomes of a sports event. These include event organizers, local authorities, community representatives, private sponsors, and participants. Stakeholders play critical roles in shaping the success and sustainability of events by

contributing resources, expertise, and perspectives (Freeman, 1984; Wallace & Michopoulou, 2021).

1.9.2 Stakeholder Collaboration

Stakeholder collaboration refers to the process through which diverse stakeholders engage in collective decision-making, resource sharing, and problem-solving to achieve shared objectives. In the context of sustainable sports event management, collaboration is essential for aligning efforts, addressing challenges, and ensuring that events achieve long-term sustainability goals (Shulenkorf, 2012).

1.9.3 Sustainable Sports Events

Sustainable sports events are those designed to balance economic, social, and environmental goals. These events integrate sustainability principles such as zero carbon emissions, waste reduction, human rights, community participation, and stakeholder collaboration into their planning and execution (IOC Commission for Sport and Environment, 2012; Weiler & Mohan, 2010)

1.9.4 Event Management Processes

Event management processes encompass the planning, coordination, and implementation activities involved in organizing a sports event. These processes include aspects such as logistics, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability integration. Effective event management ensures that resources are optimized, challenges are addressed collaboratively, and sustainability principles are embedded in all stages of the event (Silvers, 2004; Schnitzer, Kronberger, & Wenger, 2020).

1.9.5 Sustainability

Sustainability, in the context of sports events, refers to practices that deliver long-term economic, social, and environmental benefits while minimizing negative impacts. Sustainable practices align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 12

(Responsible Consumption and Production), emphasizing responsible resource use, inclusivity, and environmental stewardship (United Nations, 2015).

1.9.6 Community

A community is defined as a locality comprising individuals residing in a geographical area, utilizing shared resources to subsist and progress. These community members engage in processes to distribute and exchange resources to meet local needs and aspirations. In addition, they may also play a vital role in supporting sports events and fostering sustainability (Matarrita-Cascanta & Brennan, 2012).

1.9.7 Sports Tourism

Sports tourism involves all travel-related activities undertaken by individuals or groups to participate in sports events. Whether professional or recreational, or to engage in sports-related activities outside their usual residence; it also includes travel to support athletes during training or competition (Schlemmer et al., 2020).

1.9.8 Sustainable Community Development

Sustainable community development achieves a balance between people's economic and social needs. It also includes the earth's capacity to meet these needs, both in the present and for future generations. This concept emphasizes the harmonious integration of human and environmental systems to ensure long-term well-being (Furrer, 2002; WCED, 1987).

1.9.9 Sports for Development (S4D)

Sports for Development (S4D) refers to the use of sports to create positive impacts, including promoting public health, fostering social inclusion, supporting economic development, as well as facilitating intercultural exchange and conflict resolution. It underscores the transformative potential of sports in advancing community and societal goals (Lyras & Welty Peachey, 2011).

1.9.10 Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)

Le Tour de Langkawi or LTDL commonly used acronym is an annual international cycling race held in Malaysia and serves as a premier example of sports tourism in the country. It provides the context for this study, highlighting the challenges and opportunities in stakeholder collaboration and sustainable event management (MIDA, 2020).

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter establishes the foundation for the research, emphasizing the critical role of stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events, with a specific focus on Malaysia's sports event industry. Besides, it provides an overview of the research background, identifies key theoretical and practical gaps, and outlines the objectives and significance of the study.

The chapter also begins by exploring the concept of stakeholder collaboration, underpinned by theoretical frameworks such as Stakeholder Theory, the Sports for Development (S4D) Model, and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model. These frameworks provide valuable insights into aligning diverse stakeholder interests and incorporating sustainability principles into event management practices. However, their application in developing countries like Malaysia faces significant challenges, including conflicting priorities, communication barriers, and power imbalances, which impede effective collaboration and hinder the achievement of sustainability goals.

This section also examines Malaysia's sports event industry, highlighting its significant contributions to the nation's economic, social, and environmental development. High-profile events such as the Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games, Formula 1 Grand Prix, and Le Tour de Langkawi illustrate the industry's potential to drive economic growth, foster social cohesion, and enhance Malaysia's global reputation as a sports tourism destination. Despite these successes, the chapter identifies gaps in the integration of sustainability principles into event management practices, particularly in areas such as resource optimization, waste management, and community engagement.

The research problem is articulated next, focusing on the inadequacies in stakeholder collaboration and the absence of comprehensive frameworks to embed

sustainability into sports event management. These challenges have led to fragmented efforts, marginalized stakeholder groups, and missed opportunities to achieve long-term sustainability goals in Malaysia's sports event industry.

To address these challenges, the study sets forth the following research objectives:

a) To investigate the event stakeholders' collaboration that contribute to sustainable sports events in Malaysia.
b) To explore the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event.
c) To develop a sustainable sports event framework based on stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process.

The significance of this research lies in its dual contributions to theory and practice. Academically, it advances the understanding of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable event management, particularly within the context of developing countries. Practically, it provides actionable strategies for event organizers and policymakers to align their practices with global sustainability initiatives, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Key terms such as stakeholder collaboration, sustainability, and sports tourism are also defined in this chapter to ensure conceptual clarity and consistency throughout the study.

In conclusion, Chapter 1 establishes a clear rationale for the research, framing the urgent need to address stakeholder collaboration and sustainability challenges within Malaysia's sports event industry. It sets the stage for subsequent chapters, which will delve deeper into theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, and practical strategies for achieving sustainable outcomes in sports event management.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Preamble

This chapter offers a comprehensive literature review that forms the foundation for the study of stakeholder collaboration in the context of sustainable sports events. The review is organized in line with the research objectives, starting with an exploration of sustainability and its relevance to sports event management. It then transitions into a discussion of how sports events contribute to the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainability, with global examples such as the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and the Lillehammer 1994 Winter Olympics serving as case studies of successful sustainability initiatives.

The chapter also examines the evolution of the sports event industry, from its origins as a simple platform for athletic competition to its status as a complex system with far-reaching impacts on local economies, social cohesion, and environmental responsibility. Special attention is given to Malaysia's sports event sector, including notable events like the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur, the Formula 1 Grand Prix, and Le Tour de Langkawi. These examples highlight both the challenges and opportunities unique to Malaysia's context and provide insight into how sustainable practices can be integrated into sports event management.

Theoretical frameworks are also discussed in depth, with a particular focus on Stakeholder Theory, the Sports for Development (S4D) Model, and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model. These frameworks provide essential perspectives on stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and the incorporation of sustainability principles throughout the event lifecycle.

Through this review, key gaps in the existing literature are identified, particularly within Malaysia's sports event industry. Issues such as fragmented stakeholder collaboration (Wondirad, Tolkach & King, 2020) , power imbalances (Wallace & Michopoulou, 2021) and the insufficient integration of sustainability strategies are addressed, pointing to the need for a more unified, strategic approach to managing these events (Lim, Ramely & Wafi, 2021).

Drawing from these insights, a conceptual framework is proposed that merges theoretical perspectives with practical considerations. This framework aims to guide the examination of stakeholder partnerships and managerial processes in the context of sustainable sports event management. By synthesizing the existing body of knowledge, this chapter provides a robust foundation for achieving the research objectives and contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable practices in sports event management.

2.2 Foundations of Event and Sports Event Management

2.2.1 Sports Event Industry in Malaysia

Over recent decades, the sports event industry in Malaysia has become a crucial component of the country's socio-economic development. This has been due to once seen purely as platforms for athletic competition, sports events are now recognized for their potential to foster cultural exchange, social integration, and economic growth. Malaysia's growing prominence as a regional hub for sports tourism reflects this shift, with the country actively leveraging sports events to boost its global image, stimulate the economy, and enhance social cohesion (Kaplanidou et al., 2013). The government's strategic focus on sports event tourism, driven by agencies like the Ministry of Youth and Sports as well as Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture have significantly shaped the landscape of sports events, positioning them as a key vehicle for community development and tourism promotion (Mallen & Adams, 2023).

2.2.2 International Sports Event hosted in Malaysia

Sport events such as the Commonwealth Games (1998), Formula 1 Grand Prix (Sepang), and Le Tour de Langkawi have elevated the country's status in the international sports arena. These events not only serve as catalysts for tourism and infrastructure development, but they also present opportunities for fostering social and cultural ties (Mair & Smith, 2021). The growing popularity of sports events in Malaysia underscores the need for well-coordinated strategies to ensure these events deliver sustainable benefits across economic, environmental, and social dimensions.

2.2.2.1 The 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur

The 1998 Commonwealth Games held in Kuala Lumpur marked a pivotal moment in Malaysia's sports events history. As the first time Malaysia hosted such a prestigious event, the games contributed significantly to the country's international stature and provided a platform for infrastructure development. Key venues such as the National Stadium and Bukit Jalil Sports Complex were constructed, laying the foundation for future sporting events (Mallen & Adams, 2023). However, questions surrounding the long-term utility of these facilities surfaced as the years passed, with underutilization posing a challenge to the sustainable economic impact of the Games (Kaplanidou & Taks, 2020). This experience underscored the importance of considering post-event usage and ensuring that infrastructure investments contribute to ongoing economic benefits.

2.2.2.2.Formula 1 Grand Prix in Sepang

The Formula 1 Grand Prix, held at the Sepang International Circuit since 1999, has been instrumental in transforming Malaysia's sports tourism industry. The event has attracted thousands of international visitors, significantly boosted tourism revenues and fostered economic growth through local hospitality and service sectors (Sánchez et al., 2020). While the F1 Grand Prix has contributed to Malaysia's global brand, its long-term economic sustainability remains uncertain, particularly as the costs of hosting the event continue to rise. Dependence on government subsidies and corporate sponsorship has raised concerns about the event's financial viability beyond its immediate benefits (Tichaawa & Bob, 2015). Additionally, the environmental impact of the event, particularly its carbon footprint and waste generation, has prompted calls for more sustainable event management practices (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014).

2.2.2.3 Ironman Langkawi

The Ironman Langkawi is a premier sporting event that has placed Malaysia on the global sports tourism map. As part of the global Ironman series, this event draws international participants and spectators to the island of Langkawi, contributing significantly to local tourism and hospitality sectors (González-Serrano et al., 2020). The event generates substantial revenue through hotel bookings, transportation, and

local services. However, the sustainability of the event has been questioned due to its environmental impact, including waste generation, resource consumption, and the large carbon footprint associated with long-distance travel by athletes and spectators. The event's organizers have implemented some green practices, including waste reduction and recycling initiatives, but challenges remain in balancing the environmental and economic benefits of the event (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). The long-term challenge for Ironman Langkawi will be ensuring that its economic benefits continue to be felt by local businesses, while also integrating more sustainable practices into the event planning and execution processes.

2.2.2.4 Monsoon Cup

The Monsoon Cup, once a prominent sailing event in Malaysia, was held annually in Kuala Terengganu and initially served as a key part of Malaysia's sports tourism strategy. The event attracted international competitors and boosted the local economy through tourism-related activities such as hospitality and transportation (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). Despite early successes, the Monsoon Cup faced significant challenges in sustaining its operations. Financial sustainability became an issue, with the event overly reliant on government funding and struggling to secure long-term sponsorships. Additionally, political issues surrounding the event's management, including disputes over funding and governance, led to its eventual cessation (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020). The lack of effective stakeholder collaboration, particularly with local businesses and communities, further hindered its long-term success. Furthermore, environmental sustainability was not sufficiently addressed, contributing to missed opportunities for creating a legacy. The Monsoon Cup's closure has highlighted the importance of political stability, stakeholder engagement, and long-term planning for the sustainability of sports events.

2.2.2.5 Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)

Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL) stands as Malaysia's premier international cycling event, reflecting the nation's commitment to advancing cycling as both a competitive sport and a driver of tourism. Since its inception in 1996 by former Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, LTDL has evolved into a

prestigious multi-stage cycling race, gaining recognition under the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Asia Tour before advancing to the UCI ProSeries race. This global exposure has positioned Malaysia as a key player in sports tourism, attracting elite professional teams, cycling enthusiasts, and international spectators, thereby contributing to economic growth, tourism development, and local business expansion (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022; Yamaguchi, Oshimi, & Derom, 2024).

LTDL has faced challenges in sustaining its financial viability and ensuring that economic benefits extend beyond the event itself. While the race significantly contributes to the tourism and retail industries, its economic spillover effects remain limited due to insufficient collaboration with local businesses and stakeholders. Studies indicated that the lack of integration between event organizers and small-scale enterprises restricts the potential for long-term economic impact and sustainable growth (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020). Additionally, LTDL's heavy reliance on government funding and fluctuating sponsorship agreements has led to financial uncertainty, occasionally resulting in scaled-down race routes and reduced prize money (Jabaruddin, Zamzuri, & Nasir, 2024).

Environmental sustainability presents another pressing concern, as the large-scale nature of LTDL contributes to significant carbon emissions, waste production, and ecological strain. While event organizers have attempted to integrate eco-friendly initiatives, existing efforts in waste management, carbon footprint reduction, and sustainable resource utilization remain inadequate (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). The extensive logistical operations, including team transport, support vehicles, and disposable materials, amplify the event's environmental impact, prompting increased calls for structured sustainability strategies such as waste management systems, carbon offset programs, and green event policies (Jabaruddin et al., 2024). Additionally, concerns have been raised by local communities and environmental activists regarding the potential impact on protected areas and rural landscapes when race routes pass through environmentally sensitive regions (Elfithri, Mokhtar, & Abdullah, 2021).

A major challenge in LTDL's organizational framework is the limited stakeholder engagement, particularly the weak collaboration with local businesses and communities. Although the event provides a temporary boost to tourism, small businesses often face short-term disruptions, restricted access, and economic losses due to road closures and a lack of direct involvement in event planning (Hashemi, Singh, & Xiang, 2024). Furthermore, many community members feel excluded from decision-

making processes, leading to dissatisfaction and resistance to event-related disruptions. Enhancing cooperation among government agencies, private sponsors, and local communities is crucial for fostering a more inclusive, economically sustainable sports event with long-term benefits (Wondirad et al., 2020).

2.2.3 Strategies for Managing Sports Events in Malaysia

The management of sports events in Malaysia requires a strategic, structured approach to integrate the diverse needs and expectations of various stakeholders. These events, especially large-scale international competitions, involve complex logistics, significant investments, and multi-stakeholder involvement. Effective coordination among government agencies, local businesses, NGOs, and community representatives is crucial to achieve both the immediate objectives and long-term sustainability goals of the event (Ziakas, 2014).

Stakeholder collaboration is central to event management success, as it ensures a shared understanding of goals, maximizes resources, and promotes efficient implementation. Engaging stakeholders early in the event planning process enhances local communities' capacity to benefit from sports events, both during and after the event (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). A collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership and engagement, which is critical for ensuring the event's long-term legacy and embedding sustainability across its social, environmental, and economic dimensions (Schulenkorf, 2012).

The role of sports events in promoting sustainability has increasingly become a key focus of event management strategies. Sustainability goals whether economic, environmental, or social are increasingly integrated into event planning, reflecting a growing recognition that sports events must contribute positively to the local community and economy long after the event concludes (Mair & Smith, 2021). Malaysia's strategic vision for sustainable sports events, reinforced by frameworks like the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlights the broader societal benefits these events can bring, such as fostering cultural exchange, supporting gender equality, and promoting healthy lifestyles (González-Serrano et al., 2020).

2.3 Sporting Events Globally

2.3.1 The Intersection of Sustainable Development and Sports Event

The concept of sustainable development, although rooted in the 19th Century (Caradonna, 2014), has gained significant attention in recent decades among both researchers and practitioners. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development's 1987 report, *'Our Common Future'*, sustainable development is defined as the efforts in developing that fills up the current needs without compromising the needs of the future generations.

Sustainable development encompasses three key pillars, namely economic, environment, and community (Hopwood et al., 2005; Alhaddi, 2015). The economic pillar emphasizes long-term growth that is shared by all nations and communities; the environment pillar aspect focuses on the protection and management of natural resources to ensure their availability for future generations; and the community pillar aims at permanently improving the quality of life for present and future generations. The growing concern surrounding sustainability has led to increased scholarly attention, reflecting its multidimensional nature. As this topic spans a wide range of disciplines, its application in practice and its documentation in literature can vary significantly depending on the specific area of research or practice.

In the context of sporting events, sustainability has also become a prominent area of discussion. According to Mair and Smith (2021), sports events have the potential to become significant vehicles for communication, participation and affiliation, fostering community growth, shared values, as well as social identities (Warner & Dixon, 2011; Lee & Koo, 2016). Sports and physical activity contribute to sustainable development goals (SDGs) in various ways, with the actions of individuals, societies, as well as both non-profit and for-profit organizations playing an essential role. As such, sports is seen as both a driver of and an enabler for sustainable development (Yélamos, Carty & Clardy, 2019; González-Serrano et al., 2020). This is supported by a growing body of academic literature, with an increasing number of authors using bibliometric methods to study the structure and evolution of research in this field (González-Serrano et al., 2020; Lis & Tomanek, 2020; López-Bonilla et al., 2020).

Despite the growing interest in sport and sustainable development, many bibliometric studies focus on specialized subtopics, making it challenging to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how the two concepts mainly *'sport'* and *'sustainable*

development' intersect. Only a few studies have explored the link between sustainability and sports tourism (González-Serrano et al., 2020) or sustainability and golf tourism (López-Bonilla et al., 2020). However, these studies reflect the increasing academic interest in examining the intersections of sport and sustainable development. For example, Jiménez-Garcia et al. (2020) noted a substantial increase in publications on sustainability in sports tourism, particularly from 2016 to 2019, contributing to nearly 51% of the total literature on the topic. According to these authors, this surge is directly related to the growing global prominence of sustainable development issues, driven by the 2015 United Nations SDGs.

Despite this rise in research output, Jiménez-Garcia et al. (2020) also observed that many thematic areas within sustainability and sports are still fragmented, with few established connections between them. This suggests that the research area remains in its relative infancy and that the relationships between sustainability and sports are not yet well-established. Lis and Tomanek (2020), when conducting thematic mapping of sport management studies, highlighted that *'sustainable development in sport'* was a developing umbrella term that encapsulated various keywords such as "sustainability," *'sport for development'*, and *'sport-for-development'.* These terms have appeared more frequently in recent research, further demonstrating the increasing importance of sustainable practices within the sports sector.

The increasing prominence of sustainable development within the context of sports events signals an important shift in how these events are organized and perceived. As the academic community continues to explore the intersection of sport and sustainability, it is evident that future research needs to focus on strengthening the connections between these domains. The integration of sustainable practices into the planning and execution of sporting events is not only necessary for achieving SDGs, but also for ensuring the long-term viability and positive impact of sports on society, the environment, and the economy.

2.3.2 Pillars of Sustainable Development

The organization of major sports events has become a critical aspect of public policy, with their legacies increasingly being used as benchmarks for sustainable development in terms of economic efficiency, environmental integrity, and social equity (Getz & Page, 2020). The concept of sustainable development, introduced by the

Brundtland Commission during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, was defined as *"development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* (United Nations, 2015). However, scholars have debated the distinction between sustainable tourism and sustainable development. According to Sharpley and Telfer (2015), sustainable tourism refers to tourism that can maintain its viability in a region for an indefinite period while ensuring minimal negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts. In contrast, sustainable development is tourism that is developed and maintained in a way that does not degrade the environment or local culture to a level that prohibits successful economic and social development (Weed & Bull, 2018). These definitions highlight that sustainable tourism must align with broader sustainable development principles rather than focus solely on economic viability.

Hinch and Higham (2004) argued that when sports tourism is maintained by compromising the cultural and physical environments, it goes against the fundamental principles of sustainable development. Their framework, illustrated in Figure 1, conceptualizes sustainable sports tourism as the intersection of economic, social, and environmental sustainability goals. These three dimensions collectively form what is widely known as the triple bottom line (Jones, 2022). According to this model, each dimension plays a critical role in achieving sustainability in sport tourism. The economic goals of sport tourism focus on economic benefits to local and other stakeholders and ensuring that the industry remains economically viable (Hinch & Higham, 2004). Meanwhile, social and cultural goals include participation, planning, education, health, visitor satisfaction, as well as the enhancement of local social and cultural dimensions (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2020). Finally, environmental goals aim to minimize ecological degradation through the protection of significant ecosystems, minimal resource degradation, and balance between neutral and built facilities (Mair, 2021).

The interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental aspects is vital, as achieving a well-balanced integration of these goals is essential to foster harmonious interactions among them (Hinch & Higham, 2004). If economic interests are prioritized over environmental sustainability, the long-term viability of sports tourism could be compromised due to resource depletion, ecosystem damage, and loss of cultural authenticity (Jones, 2022). Likewise, social and cultural benefits cannot be achieved if local communities do not receive economic advantages from sport tourism (Getz &

Page, 2020). The intersections within Figure 1 demonstrate how sustainability in sport tourism depends on balancing these dimensions. For instance, the overlap of economic and social goals ensures that economic gains from sport tourism translate into improved community well-being (Weed & Bull, 2018). The intersection between social and environmental concerns focuses on eco-friendly tourism practices that aligned with local traditions and cultural values (Mair, 2021). Similarly, the economic-environmental nexus addresses balancing financial sustainability with minimal environmental impact (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2020).

Despite these theoretical alignments, Hinch and Higham (2004) cautioned that sport tourism does not inherently guarantee sustainability. Instead, they argued that each stakeholder involved may have different goals and interests during their interactions around the sporting event. For example, while governments and corporate sponsors may prioritize economic benefits and financial viability, local communities often emphasize cultural preservation and environmental protection (Jones, 2022). This misalignment of objectives can result in conflicting priorities, reducing the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives (Mair, 2021). Consequently, strategic planning and governance structures are essential to ensure that sustainability goals remain at the forefront of sport tourism development.

To achieve sustainable sports tourism, event organizers need to implement a holistic strategy that effectively integrates economic, social, and environmental considerations. Hinch and Higham (2004) stress that for events to generate lasting impact, organizers must have a thorough understanding of sustainability at both the micro-level, such as business return on investment, and the macro-level, including community well-being. An imbalance among these dimensions can lead to negative consequences, including environmental degradation, loss of cultural identity, and economic disparities (Ramshaw & Gammon, 2020). Complementing this view, Jones (2022) emphasizes that meticulous planning and well-defined strategic direction are crucial for ensuring the long-term viability of sports tourism.

By embracing such a comprehensive strategy, sports event organizers can better manage competing stakeholder interests while prioritizing sustainability. Hinch and Higham (2004) further highlight that effective management, coupled with an in-depth understanding of the interconnections among social, economic, and environmental factors, enables sustainable sports tourism to become a powerful driver of local and global development. This reinforces the critical need for coordinated stakeholder

engagement and governance frameworks that align sports tourism initiatives with enduring sustainability goals.

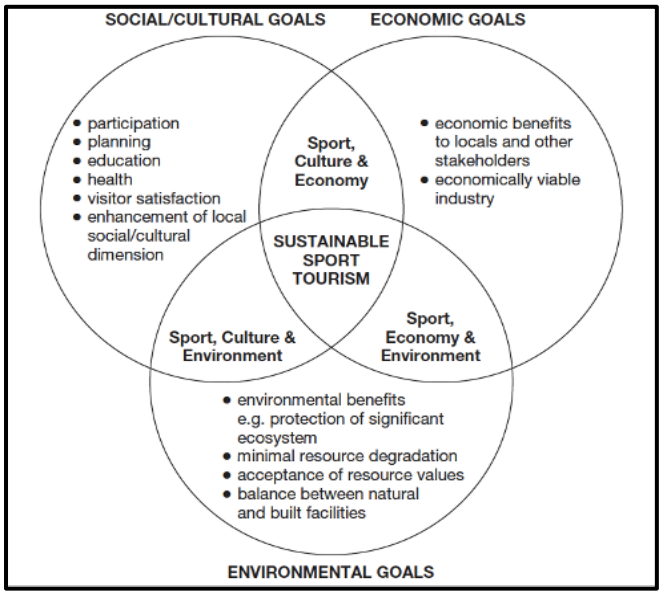


Figure 2.1 Sustainable Sports Tourism Model, adopted from Hinch & Higham, (2004)

2.4 Sustainable Sports Event Management

2.4.1 Sustainability in the Context of Sports Events

The concept of *'sustainable'* or *'green'* sports, as demonstrated by 2020 Tokyo Olympics, represents a significant effort to align the world's largest sporting event with key sustainable development objectives, such as achieving zero carbon emissions (to address climate change), zero waste, human rights, community participation, and collaboration. The idea of sustainable sports events began to take shape during the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway, which earned the nickname *'White-Green Games'* for its incorporation of environmental sustainability into the organization of the event (Weiler & Mohan, 2010).

During the 1994 Winter Olympics, 20 sustainability initiatives were introduced, including the use of natural materials for medals, promotion of public transportation, waste management strategies, and wildlife conservation. Since then, numerous major sporting events have embraced the goal of organizing more sustainable and environmentally conscious events. While some critics argued that organizing sustainable sports events presents substantial challenges, these efforts, particularly from a sustainability communication perspective, send a powerful message about the

evolving role of sports in shaping the future of event management. Large-scale international events like these play a pivotal role in promoting this vision globally.

The 2012 London Summer Olympics marked another significant advancement in promoting sustainable practices for mega sport events. Sustainability principles were integrated from the planning phase through to the post-event period (London 2012's Sustainability, 2013). For example, the transformation of the London Olympic Park once industrial and contaminated land into a vibrant, sustainable urban area set a new standard. This redevelopment included neighbourhood built to meet sustainability criteria and the construction of eco-friendly sports venues such as the London Olympic Stadium, the London Aquatics Centre, and the Copper Box Arena. These venues featured sustainable materials, such as the use of 100% sustainably sourced timber in the Velodrome and recycled copper in the Copper Box Arena. Water conservation measures were also implemented, including rainwater recycling systems that reduced water use by 40%. Furthermore, the Olympic Park's energy needs were supplied by biomass boilers burning wood chips and other sustainable fuels, providing heating and cooling to the area. These sustainable energy systems continue to benefit the local community even after the Games concluded (London 2012's Sustainability, 2013).

The sustainability efforts at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, held in Asia, served as an inspiring model for other Asian countries, including Malaysia, to consider integrating sustainability into future sports events. Japan's sustainability strategies during the Tokyo Olympics offered valuable insights for countries planning sustainable sporting events, whether on a large or small scale. Sports has been recognized as a powerful tool for advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030, with key SDGs supported by sustainable sports including SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

For these efforts to be effective, comprehensive collaboration from all stakeholders is crucial. Promoting awareness of the importance of sustainability in sports events is vital, and it is essential that this message reaches a broad audience. Social media platforms, which transcend geographical boundaries, offer an excellent opportunity for event organizers and sports fans to share information and highlight the sustainability efforts of events like the Olympics. These platforms that raise public awareness and increase understanding the role sports can play, help in achieving the

SDGs, thereby contributing to a more sustainable future (Mohamad Saifudin Mohamad Saleh, 2021).

2.4.1.1 Economic Pillar in Sustainable Sports Event

The economic pillar in the sustainability of sports events plays a significant role in understanding the long-term viability as well as it provides benefits. While economic growth is often the primary focus for event organizers and stakeholders, it is essential to examine the broader dimensions of economic sustainability and to ensure that the distribution of benefits is equitable and sustainable in the long run. The following literature review highlights key areas within the economic pillar of sustainable sports events.

a. Incorporating More Diverse Perspectives on Economic Benefits

The literature on economic benefits of sports events traditionally emphasizes on direct financial gains, such as increased tourism revenue, job creation, and immediate business opportunities (González-Serrano et al., 2020; Sánchez et al., 2020). However, to better understand the full economic impact, a more nuanced perspective is necessary. As the field has evolved, scholars have increasingly recognized the importance of considering long-term economic contributions, such as infrastructure development and local economic diversification (González-Serrano et al., 2020). For instance, the development of sports-related infrastructure, such as new stadiums or transport systems, often continues to generate revenue long after the event has concluded. Moreover, local entrepreneurship is another aspect that needs greater attention. Studies by González-Serrano et al. (2020) as well as Mair and Weber (2021) suggested that major sports events provide business incubation opportunities for local entrepreneurs, particularly in tourism and hospitality sectors. In this sector, small businesses can thrive by offering innovative services like local craft markets or sustainable tourism packages. These long-term entrepreneurial ventures represent a broader view of economic impact than simply the revenue generated during the event itself.

b. Considering Economic Inequities and Distribution of Benefits

A critical concern in the economic sustainability of sports events is how the benefits are distributed across different stakeholders. While large-scale sports events often bring substantial financial rewards, these benefits are not always equitably shared. Research has shown that while event organizers, sponsors, and large corporations reap most of the financial rewards, local communities, particularly marginalized groups, often see minimal returns (Wang et al., 2021). For instance, in certain contexts, only a small percentage of local businesses and individuals benefit from the event, leading to economic inequality and the exclusion of disadvantaged communities.

The need for an equitable distribution of benefits is emphasized in studies by Tichaawa and Bob (2015) as well as Gursoy et al. (2016) that highlighted on stakeholders being involved in event planning, should work towards ensuring economic gains to be widely distributed. This includes providing local businesses with opportunities to contribute and participate, ensuring fair wages for event workers, and creating pathways for the inclusion of marginalized populations in the event economy. Addressing this inequity can foster a more sustainable event, ensuring that its economic benefits contribute to the long-term welfare of the entire community, instead of just a select few.

c. Exploring the Broader Economic Impact Beyond Tourism

Evaluating the economic benefits of sports events requires a perspective that extends beyond tourism, considering their broader financial impact on host regions. Large-scale sports events often lead to significant investments in local infrastructure, such as enhanced transportation networks, upgraded public facilities, and the development of green spaces. These improvements create a legacy, offering continuous economic benefits long after the event has concluded (Sánchez et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the employment opportunities generated by these infrastructure projects extend beyond the event itself, particularly in industries such as construction, hospitality, and urban planning. For example, the 2012 London Olympics played a pivotal role in the regeneration of East London, leaving behind sustainable housing, business spaces, and improved community facilities (London 2012's Sustainability, 2013). This long-term impact is essential for ensuring that the economic advantages of

sports events contribute to sustainable development, rather than being perceived as short-term financial gains.

d. Example of economic impact in sports events

Examining real-world case studies offers valuable insights into the economic impact of sports events and their role in sustainable event management. The 2020 Tokyo Olympics serves as a notable example, as Japan implemented numerous sustainability initiatives that extended beyond traditional event-related economic benefits. The country's commitment to zero carbon and zero waste efforts during the Games (Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, 2021) aligned with broader economic objectives, including reducing environmental degradation and stimulating growth through green investments. These measures reinforced Japan's long-term strategy of integrating sustainability into economic planning.

A similar example is the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, which demonstrated how sports events contribute to economic diversification through tourism, hospitality, and business expansion. According to the FIFA World Cup 2018 Russia Report, infrastructure investments improved transportation networks, boosted tourism, and strengthened international business ties, creating sustained economic benefits for the host country (FIFA, 2019). These case studies illustrated the long-term potential of sports events to generate lasting economic growth, particularly through sustainable infrastructure development and community engagement, thereby advancing the broader economic objectives of host nations.

2.4.1.2 Environmental Pillar in Sustainable Sports Event

Environmental sustainability has become an essential focus in the planning and execution of sports events. Defined broadly, environmental sustainability emphasizes the need for human societies and economic activities to coexist in harmony with the natural environment, ensuring that resources are used in a way that meets present needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet theirs (Brundtland, 1987). In the context of sports events, this means minimizing the negative environmental impacts associated with event organization, including carbon emissions, waste, water usage, and the depletion of natural resources, while also contributing positively to environmental conservation (Mair & Smith, 2021).

Sports events, particularly large-scale international competitions such as the Olympics or the FIFA World Cup, can exert significant pressure on the environment due to the vast infrastructure needed, large number of spectators, and the extensive travel required by athletes and spectators. However, such events also present unique opportunities to promote environmental sustainability on a global scale. By integrating green practices and sustainability initiatives, these events can raise awareness and encourage other sectors to adopt similar practices, ultimately leading to a broader, long-term impact on environmental preservation (González-Serrano et al., 2020).

The increasing focus on sustainable sports events also aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), emphasizing the role that sports can play in achieving global sustainability targets. Sustainable sports events go beyond minimizing harm and actively contribute to the environmental legacy of the host community, offering both immediate and lasting benefits (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

a. Environmental Sustainability Challenges in Developing Countries

The global emphasis on environmental sustainability has grown significantly, yet its implementation remains a major challenge in developing countries, including Malaysia. The rapid pace of urbanization, increased infrastructure demands, and economic growth priorities often lead to environmental degradation, making it difficult to balance sustainability with development needs (Hussein, Abdul Razak & Ibrahim, 2023). For example, Malaysia’s post-independence economic development strategy, which included the extensive exploitation of natural resources such as forests and minerals, has resulted in severe environmental challenges, including deforestation, pollution, and biodiversity loss (Jamaluddin Jahi, 2010). These pressures are further intensified by population growth and increasing migration from rural to urban areas, placing additional strain on resources and infrastructure.

In the context of sports events, Malaysia faces additional obstacles in incorporating environmental sustainability into event planning. While major sporting events such as the Monsoon Cup and the Malaysia Open provide economic and tourism benefits, their environmental impact is often overlooked. Common challenges include inadequate waste management, high carbon emissions from travel, and resource-

intensive infrastructure construction. However, growing awareness of sustainability in the region, influenced in part by international sporting events, has led to an increased focus on eco-friendly event practices (Chelliah, 1990).

b. Sustainable Practices in Sports Events

Incorporating sustainable practices into sports events requires a multi-faceted approach that includes environmental management, resource optimization, and long-term planning. Key areas of focus for sustainable sports events include:

c. Energy Efficiency and Carbon Footprint Reduction

Events can significantly reduce their environmental impact by incorporating renewable energy sources, optimizing energy use, and offsetting carbon emissions. For example, the London 2012 Olympics employed energy-efficient measures, including using renewable energy for stadiums and reducing energy consumption through smart building technologies (London 2012's Sustainability, 2013).

d. Waste Management and Recycling

Sports events generate substantial waste, including plastics, food waste, and packaging. Effective waste management strategies, such as zero-waste policies, recycling programs, and composting, are essential for reducing the environmental impact. The Tokyo 2020 Olympics aimed to achieve a zero-waste event by focusing on recycling and reusing materials, including the creation of medals from recycled materials (Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, 2021).

e. Sustainable Transportation

Given the large number of spectators, athletes, and officials attending sports events, transportation is a significant environmental concern. Promoting the use of public transportation, providing bicycle-sharing programs, and offering shuttle services to reduce traffic congestion and emissions are effective strategies. The London 2012 Olympics successfully implemented a comprehensive transport plan that encouraged the use of public transport and reduced the number of private vehicles around the Olympic Park (London 2012's Sustainability, 2013).

f. Green Infrastructure

Sustainable infrastructure development is a key element in hosting green sports events. This includes using environmentally friendly building materials, ensuring energy-efficient construction, and integrating sustainability into the design of event venues. For example, the Beijing 2008 Olympics utilized several green building practices, including the construction of the iconic Bird's Nest stadium, which incorporated eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient systems (González-Serrano et al., 2020). By focusing on these key areas, sports event organizers can significantly reduce the environmental impact of their events, while also contribute to a sustainable legacy for future generation.

g. Example of Sustainable Practices in Sports Events

Numerous high-profile sports events have successfully incorporated sustainable practices, setting examples for others to follow. Some key examples include:

i. Lillehammer 1994 Winter Olympics

Widely regarded as the first “green” Olympics, the Lillehammer Winter Games emphasized environmental sustainability through initiatives such as wildlife conservation, waste management, and the use of natural materials for medals. The event was a pioneer in integrating sustainability into the event planning process, earning the nickname “White-Green Games” (Weiler & Mohan, 2010).

ii. London 2012 Olympics

The London 2012 Olympics embodied one of the most comprehensive examples of a sustainable mega-event. The event's sustainability initiatives included energy-efficient venues, water conservation measures, waste reduction efforts, and the transformation of contaminated land into sustainable urban spaces. Notably, the Olympic Park continues to benefit from the sustainable infrastructure built for the event, including energy supply systems that serve the local community long after the Games have ended (London 2012’s Sustainability, 2013).

iii. Tokyo 2020 Olympics

Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tokyo 2020 Olympics made significant strides in implementing sustainable practices. This included the use of recycled materials for event infrastructure and medals, reducing plastic waste, and promoting energy conservation throughout the event venues. The sustainability measures adopted by Tokyo 2020 served as a model for future international sports events, particularly in terms of material reuse and waste management (Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee, 2021).

These examples demonstrated that large-scale sports events can successfully integrate sustainability principles into their planning and execution. By implementing environmentally conscious practices, these events not only minimize their immediate environmental impact, but also create lasting legacies that contribute to broader environmental goals.

2.4.1.3 Social Pillar in Sustainable Sports Event

Social sustainability in sports events refers to the long-term positive impact that events have on the communities involved. Besides, the sustainability efforts encompass the ways in which they contribute to the development of social capital, civic pride, community well-being, and social inclusion. Unlike the traditional focus on economic gains, social sustainability emphasizes on improving the quality of life for the community involved, fostering equitable participation, and creating a legacy for future generations (Mair & Smith, 2021). As the world becomes more aware of the importance of sustainability, social aspects have become central to the planning and execution of large-scale sports events. For example, global events such as the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup are increasingly seen not only as opportunities to showcase athletic prowess, but also as platforms to demonstrate the values of social inclusion, community development, and social cohesion.

Sports events can generate significant social benefits by fostering civic engagement, promoting positive social behaviors, and addressing community needs. They serve as a powerful tool for bridging gaps between various segments of society, creating opportunities for social interaction, and addressing social issues such as health disparities, youth engagement, and social cohesion (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). According to Mair and Smith (2021), sports events have the potential to bring

communities together, fostering shared values and promoting social identities that contribute to the broader goal of social sustainability.

a. Evolution of Social Development Concepts

The concept of social development has evolved significantly over the past few decades. Traditionally, social development focused primarily on addressing economic needs, often through top-down approaches aimed at improving living standards (Giampiccoli & Sayman, 2014). However, in recent years, the scope of social development has broadened to include cultural, environmental, and social dimensions. Such holistic approach recognizes the interconnectedness of economic, environmental, and social factors and emphasizes the importance of community-driven development (Giampiccoli & Sayman, 2014). This evolution is reflected in the rise of sustainable development frameworks, such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which call for integrated approaches to addressing the needs of communities, reducing inequalities, and fostering long-term social cohesion.

Within the context of sports events, this shift towards a more comprehensive understanding of social development has resulted in a focus on the social impacts of these events. The concept of social sustainability, which emerged from the broader sustainable development discourse, highlights the need for events to contribute positively to the community in ways that go beyond immediate economic or environmental benefits. For example, sports events can improve social well-being by fostering social cohesion, creating opportunities for community participation, and promoting values such as fairness, inclusion, and equality (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

b. Stakeholder Involvement in Social Development

Stakeholder involvement is central to the success of social sustainability in sports events. Social development, particularly in the context of sports events, requires collaboration among a wide range of actors, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local businesses, and community groups (Rainey et al., 2003). The engagement of local communities in the planning and execution of sports events is essential for ensuring that the benefits are widely distributed, and that

the community plays an active role in shaping the event's legacy (Frisch & Servon, 2006).

Effective stakeholder collaboration can help create shared ownership of the event, which in turn fosters greater community engagement and participation. Frisch and Servon (2006) argued that for community development to be successful, it must involve the concerted effort of multiple actors, including local community, who must be given the opportunity to shape the event's goals and outcomes. Moreover, stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes can enhance the social legitimacy of the event, ensuring that it meets the needs and priorities of the local community (Schulenkorf, 2012).

However, challenges remain, particularly in ensuring that all stakeholders have an equal voice in the process. As identified by Wondirad, Tolkach, and King (2020), a lack of effective collaboration between stakeholders can lead to poor event outcomes and missed opportunities for community empowerment. This highlights the importance of fostering collaborative governance structures that prioritize community involvement and ensure that the voices of marginalized or underrepresented groups are heard.

c. Sports Events as Tools for Social Development

Sports events can serve as powerful tools for social development by providing opportunities for community engagement, youth participation, and social cohesion. According to Schulenkorf and Frawley (2022), sports events have the potential to foster social inclusion by bringing together diverse groups and facilitating positive social interaction. They can also promote values such as teamwork, equality, and respect, which are essential for building cohesive communities.

One of the driving key factors in which sports events contribute to social development is by creating opportunities for local communities to participate in and benefit from the event. This can take the form of volunteer programs, local business opportunities, and community engagement initiatives (Schulenkorf, 2012). Furthermore, sports events can help to improve public health by encouraging physical activity and promoting healthy lifestyles (Mair & Smith, 2021). By focusing on these social outcomes, sports events can have a lasting impact on the well-being of the host community and contribute to the broader goal of social sustainability.

d. Example of Social Sustainability in Sports Events

There are several examples of sports events that have successfully integrated social sustainability into their planning and execution. The London 2012 Olympics is often cited as a leading example of sports events that prioritized social sustainability. The event organizers focused on community engagement, employment opportunities, and volunteer programs to ensure that the local community benefited from the event (London 2012's Sustainability, 2013). The 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics also demonstrated the potential for sports events to foster social sustainability by focusing on community participation, environmental stewardship, and the legacy of the event (Weiler & Mohan, 2010).

Other example, such as the 2016 Rio Olympics, have faced challenges in achieving social sustainability, particularly in terms of addressing issues such as displacement, inequality, and the distribution of benefits (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). These cases highlight the importance of careful planning and stakeholder engagement in ensuring that the social impacts of sports events are positive and inclusive.

2.4.2 Community in Sustainable Sports Events

2.4.2.1 Community Influence in Sustainable Sports Event

The role of community influence in ensuring the sustainability of sports events is multifaceted, encompassing not only community support, but also active engagement that shapes the long-term outcomes of the event. While many studies have acknowledged the importance of community support in sports events sustainability, the concept of community influence extends beyond mere participation. It involves active engagement in decision-making, advocacy, policy influence, and grassroots mobilization that collectively drive the event's legacy. Community influence is central to the social sustainability of sports events, as it shapes public perception, drives engagement, and influences local policy and infrastructure (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020; Kaplanidou & Taks, 2020).

2.4.2.2 Economic, Social, and Emotional Dimensions of Community Influence

The review of literature reveals that economic benefits, social development, and emotional investment are interconnected and collectively contribute to the sustainability of sports events. Economic benefits such as tourism revenue and job creation are the most immediate and tangible outcomes of sports events as they are deeply intertwined with emotional and social factors. For example, economic outcomes, such as increased local spending, often arise from the emotional engagement of the community, such as local community who feel pride in hosting the event. Therefore, they participate in local tourism, merchandise sales, and sponsorship activities (Ziakas, 2014; Kaplanidou & Taks, 2020).

Furthermore, social development stemming from sports events can create enduring benefits for the local community, namely promote social cohesion, improve public health, and enhance community pride. These social outcomes then fuel the economic sustainability of the event by creating an attractive environment for future investment and tourism (Moreno & Camacho, 2014). Emotional investment in such event leads to civic pride, which enhances local participation in future events and strengthens community bonds. Hence, substantially the effort creates positive feedback loop that promotes intergenerational sustainability (Chaparro-Pelaez et al., 2015).

2.4.2.3 The Multifaceted Role of Community in Sustainability

The sustainability of sports events does not only rely on economic metrics, but also plays an equally critical role. As Schulenkorf and Frawley (2022) suggested that social sustainability is achieved when sports events contribute to long-term benefits for the local community, including community empowerment and the preservation of cultural identity. When communities feel involved and empowered throughout the event process, from planning to execution, the event becomes a catalyst for social change that subsequently foster local pride and strengthen civic identity (Schulenkorf, 2012).

To ensure long-term social sustainability, community engagement must go beyond short-term participation. This includes social programs that promote youth sports development, community-driven volunteer programs, and cultural preservation activities that subsequently help cultivate a legacy. As such, sports events should be viewed not only as one-time occurrence, but also as platforms for sustained community

involvement and empowerment. Henceforth, all these lead to intergenerational impact and continued community development (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020).

Real-world examples highlight the practical application of community influence in sustaining sports events. For instance, the 2012 London Olympics showcased how local communities could be involved in event planning, volunteering, and post-event legacy projects. The legacy left by the event continues to benefit local communities through improved infrastructure, social cohesion, and economic regeneration (Mallen & Adams, 2023). Similarly, the FIFA World Cup has demonstrated how national pride and community engagement can translate into long-term social and economic benefits, such as tourism expansion and job creation, which can continue to benefit host nations long after the event concludes (Kaplanidou et al., 2013).

Concisely, the role of community influence in sustainable sports events is vital in ensuring that these events contribute not only to immediate economic benefits, but also to long-term social and environmental sustainability. By emphasizing the emotional and psychological investment of local stakeholders, event organizers can ensure that the event leaves a positive legacy, fostering social cohesion, community pride, and long-term engagement. As such, sustainable sports event management should focus on community empowerment, ensuring that the event's legacy benefits both local and broader communities. Future research should further explore the interconnectedness of economic, emotional, and social factors in shaping the long-term sustainability of sports events and the role of community influence in this process.

2.5 Theoretical Foundations in this study

2.5.1 Stakeholder Theory in the Context of Sustainable Sports Events

2.5.1.1 The Event Stakeholders' Collaboration in Sports Events

Stakeholder Theory, introduced by Freeman (1984), asserts that the success of any organization or event is largely influenced by the effective management of relationships with key stakeholders. In the context of sports events, stakeholders include event organizers, government agencies, local businesses, sponsors, athletes, and the community, each with distinct, yet interconnected roles in the successful planning, execution, and legacy of the event.

Effective collaboration among these stakeholders is critical for the success of sports events. Event organizers, typically the primary actors, need to coordinate efforts with other stakeholders to ensure the efficient allocation of resources, streamline logistical operations, and mitigate potential risks (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). For example, government bodies often oversee regulatory compliance, infrastructure, and security, while private sector stakeholders (sponsors and local businesses) provide financial support and services (Kaplanidou et al., 2013). Collaboration also extends to local communities for playing an essential role in supporting the event and contributing to its social and environmental sustainability (Schulenkorf, 2012).

Stakeholder collaboration in sports events has been increasingly recognized as a mechanism to ensure that the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the event are maximized. For instance, local businesses benefit economically from increased visitor spending, while the event itself provides opportunities for the local community to engage in social and cultural activities (Ramchandani et al., 2015).

2.5.1.2 Collaboration Contributes to Sustainable Sports Events

The concept of sustainability in sports events has evolved to encompass more than just economic growth. Social and environmental sustainability have become essential components of modern sports event management. Collaboration between stakeholders plays a pivotal role in ensuring that sports events contribute positively to all three dimensions of sustainability.

Economic sustainability is achieved when stakeholders collaborate to ensure that the economic benefits of the event are long-lasting and well-distributed among local businesses, government bodies, and community stakeholders. Through effective collaboration, stakeholders can leverage their unique resources in terms of financial, social, and institutional to maximize event revenue, job creation, and tourism growth, contributing to the long-term financial stability of the host community (Mallen & Adams, 2023).

In terms of social sustainability, collaboration ensures that the event benefits the host community by fostering social cohesion, civic pride, and inclusive engagement (Preuss, 2018). The integration of local communities into the event planning and execution process fosters a sense of ownership, which strengthens the event's long-term legacy and impact (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020). Events that fail to engage local

communities in meaningful ways risk alienating stakeholders and failing to contribute to sustainable social outcomes (Al-Emadi et al., 2016).

Environmental sustainability is achieved when stakeholders collaborate on initiatives that reduce the environmental footprint of the event. This includes carbon footprint reduction, waste management, and the adoption of green practices in event planning and execution. Collaboration ensures that event organizers, government bodies, and businesses work together to implement eco-friendly policies such as sustainable waste management, energy-efficient infrastructure, and environmentally conscious transportation options for participants and spectators (Ziakas, 2014; Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

2.5.1.3 Stakeholder Theory in the Context of Sustainable Sports Events

The traditional Stakeholder Theory has primarily focused on identifying and managing the interests of stakeholders, but recent developments in its application to sports event management have introduced a more collaborative approach. Collaborative governance has become an essential extension of Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes on multi-stakeholder engagement across the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of event management (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). Stakeholders now engage not only to achieve short-term goals, but also to ensure the long-term sustainability of the event through collective decision-making and resource-sharing.

A significant development in Stakeholder Theory for sustainable sports events is the shift towards participatory governance, where stakeholders, especially local communities, are integrated into the decision-making process. This broadens the scope of stakeholder involvement and emphasizes inclusive governance. Events that fail to engage local communities and other relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process risk generating a lack of support and may fail to deliver the intended social and environmental benefits (Schulenkorf, 2012). The emphasis on multi-stakeholder collaboration ensures that the economic benefits of sports events are coupled with positive social and environmental outcomes, contributing to the overall sustainability of the event.

2.5.1.4 Gap in Stakeholder Theory for Sustainable Sports Events

Despite the significant advancements in applying Stakeholder Theory to sports events, there remains a critical gap in the theory, particularly in the context of sustainable sports events in Malaysia. The existing literature on stakeholder collaboration tends to focus on Western contexts, where well-established governance structures and stakeholder management processes exist (Mallen & Adams, 2023). However, emerging markets like Malaysia face unique challenges in stakeholder engagement due to differing political, economic, and social contexts.

One of the main challenges is the lack of inclusive governance in many sports events. In Malaysia, the community's involvement in sports event planning often remains passive, with local communities primarily serving as spectators rather than active participants. While event organizers and government agencies have developed strong collaborations, local businesses and community groups are often excluded from the decision-making process. This gap in stakeholder inclusion undermines the potential social and economic benefits that could be derived from more comprehensive engagement strategies (Reid & Arcodia, 2022).

Furthermore, there is limited research on how stakeholder collaboration contributes to sustainable practices within the context of sports events in Malaysia, particularly in relation to environmental sustainability. Green initiatives and eco-friendly policies are often less prioritized, and there is a need to better integrate environmental governance into stakeholder collaboration (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020).

In summary, the integration of Stakeholder Theory with the principles of sustainable sports event management highlights the importance of collaborative governance. Stakeholders as in government bodies, event organizers, sponsors, local businesses, and communities must work together to achieve the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of sports events. However, gaps in stakeholder inclusion and the lack of collaboration among certain groups, particularly local communities, remain critical challenges. There is a pressing need to address these gaps by fostering more inclusive governance structures that empower local communities and businesses to play an active role in the event planning process. By strengthening stakeholder collaboration and focusing on sustainable practices, Malaysia can ensure that sports

events are able to contribute a long-term sustainability that benefits all stakeholders involved.

2.5.2 Sport for Development (S4D) Framework and Community Engagement

The Sport for Development (S4D) framework as shown in Figure 2, introduced by Schulenkorf (2012), presents a model that integrates the principles of community engagement, sports event management, and social development. The framework serves as a guiding tool to facilitate sustainable community development through participatory sports activities. By highlighting the need for collaboration among stakeholders, Schulenkorf's S4D framework aims to foster a long-term, sustainable impact through sports events, focusing not only on the immediate outcomes, but also on their legacy within local communities (Schulenkorf, 2012).

This framework is particularly relevant to this study, which investigates the stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia, specifically the case of Le Tour de Langkawi. The S4D framework provides a conceptual lens to explore how diverse stakeholders including government agencies, event organizers, merchant and local communities to engage collaboratively in the planning, execution, and legacy phases of sports events. Such collaboration is essential for achieving sustainable social outcomes and community empowerment, which are key concerns in Malaysia's evolving sports event industry.

The S4D framework is divided into three interconnected domains: Sports Event Management, Direct Social Impacts, and Long-Term Social Outcomes. These domains represent different phases of a sports event's lifecycle namely its planning, execution, and legacy. These together contribute to the achievement of community empowerment and sustainable development (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020). While the first domain focuses on the operational side of sports events, the second and third domains emphasize on the long-term benefits of social development, such as civic pride, social cohesion, and sustainable community engagement.

In this study, particular emphasis is placed on the domains of Sports Event Management and Long-Term Social Outcomes, which correspond to the investigation of stakeholder collaboration processes and their influence on sustainable event practices in Malaysia. By applying the S4D framework, the study aims to analyze how collaborative stakeholder engagement can address current gaps in Malaysia's sports

event management, fostering integrated approaches to sustainability aligned with global best practices and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Furthermore, insights drawn from the S4D framework will inform the development of a sustainable sport event framework tailored to the Malaysian context, focusing on strengthening stakeholder collaboration and optimizing the social, economic, and environmental legacies of sports events such as Le Tour de Langkawi. Thus, the framework not only supports the theoretical foundation of this research but also provides practical guidance for improving sustainability outcomes in Malaysia's sports event industry.

2.5.2.1 Development of the S4D Framework: From Community Empowerment to Sustainable Events

The development of the S4D framework can be traced back in 2010 when Schulenkorf (2012) argued that there was a lack of a cohesive model for sustainable community development through sports. While sports were recognized as powerful tools for social change, no framework existed to guide the collaboration between communities and external change agents (government bodies, NGOs, event organizers). Community empowerment as the central concept of the S4D framework was seen as a critical driver for achieving long-term positive change. However, it was not until 2010 that the idea of "handing off" events to local communities, allowing them to assume ownership and responsibility, was formally introduced.

According to Schulenkorf (2012), the role of change agents is crucial in the early phases of event planning. Change agents are defined as external facilitators, such as government bodies, sponsors, or NGOs, who help establish initial engagement and collaborations with local stakeholders. However, as the event evolves, the responsibility for managing the event should gradually shift to the local community to ensure sustainable development. This transfer of control is a vital aspect of community empowerment, where local groups gain autonomy and control over event governance, ensuring that the benefits are long-lasting. Schulenkorf (2010) characterizes change agents as pivotal intermediaries who facilitate interaction between stakeholder groups. Operating as external facilitators, they play a crucial role in initiating dialogue, fostering negotiation, and supporting the development of cooperative initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development.

2.5.2.2 Quality of Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

The S4D framework emphasizes collaboration between communities and change agents, Cicognani et al. (2020) highlighted the quality of collaboration as a crucial factor for success. The success of sports events as tools for community empowerment hinges on the depth of collaboration between stakeholders. It is important for communities to not just engage in event participation but to be actively involved in the decision-making processes, leadership roles, and strategic planning.

Effective collaboration requires building trust, mutual respect, and shared ownership among stakeholders. Cicognani et al. (2020) argue that well-functioning partnerships between change agents and communities can enhance competencies and resources while expanding networks and knowledge. Without high-quality collaboration, the desired empowerment and sustainability of sports events are unlikely to materialize, as local communities may not fully embrace ownership or participate actively in the event's long-term management. The framework should therefore focus not only on involving communities but also on ensuring the quality of engagement through regular communication, capacity building, and skills development (Schulenkorf, 2012).

2.5.2.3 Stakeholders Collaboration in Sustainable Sports Event Management

Collaboration among multiple stakeholders is critical in achieving sustainable sports events, as it ensures a shared responsibility for economic, social, and environmental outcomes. This principle is particularly relevant to the Malaysian sports event industry, where events such as Le Tour de Langkawi depend on effective cooperation among diverse stakeholders to achieve sustainability goals. For instance, government agencies may oversee regulatory compliance, while local businesses can contribute to economic sustainability through tourism and service provision. At the same time, local communities should be encouraged to participate in event planning and management to ensure the event aligns with community values and contributes to social cohesion (Ziakas, 2014). This study focuses on examining how such stakeholder collaboration manifests in the context of Malaysia, exploring its impact on sustainable event outcomes and community engagement.

Environmental sustainability is also a growing concern in sports event management, and the S4D framework offers the tools for addressing these challenges. Through collaboration, stakeholders can work together to implement green practices such as carbon footprint reduction, waste management, and eco-friendly infrastructure. Environmental stewardship is essential to ensure that the event does not only harm local ecosystems but also contributes to long-term environmental sustainability (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). In the context of this study, particular attention is given to how stakeholders involved in Le Tour de Langkawi 2023 coordinate environmental initiatives, including tree planting, energy-efficient facilities, and sustainable travel options for participants and spectators. By analyzing these practices, the research aims to identify opportunities and barriers to integrating environmental sustainability within Malaysia's sports event management through collaborative efforts.

2.5.2.4 Addressing Gaps in the S4D Framework

The S4D framework has certain limitations that hinder its broader use in sports events management. One notable gap is the insufficient emphasis on the quality of collaboration between communities and change agents, which directly impacts the effectiveness of community empowerment initiatives (Cicognani et al., 2020). The lack of integration of intangible aspects, such as psychological empowerment, emotional engagement, and national pride, can reduce the long-term social impact of sports events (Kaplanidou et al., 2013). Therefore, the S4D framework should be expanded to address these intangible factors, emphasizing the role of emotion, identity, and belonging in fostering deeper and more sustainable engagement.

The application of the S4D framework in emerging markets, like Malaysia, requires further research into the specific challenges faced by local communities, particularly in terms of cultural differences, political environments, and infrastructure gaps. Understanding how to tailor the S4D framework to these unique contexts will ensure more effective stakeholder engagement and improve the sustainability of sports events in developing countries (Mallen & Adams, 2023).

In summary, the S4D framework offers a robust approach that integrates community empowerment into the management of sports events, with a focus on collaboration, stakeholder involvement, and sustainability. However, gaps remain in addressing the quality of collaboration and the psychological empowerment of

communities. For the S4D framework to be more applicable in the context of sustainable sports events, it is essential to integrate intangible benefits and strengthen the collaboration mechanisms between change agents and local stakeholders. Additionally, adapting the framework to the specific context of emerging markets like Malaysia can enhance its effectiveness, ensuring that sports events contribute to economic, social, and environmental sustainability in the long term.

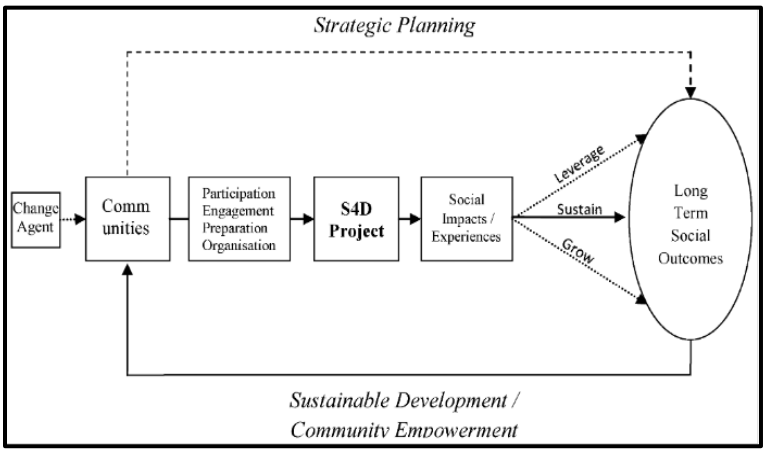


Figure 2.2 S4D Framework, adopted from Schulenkorf (2012)

2.5.3 The Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) as a Model of Sports Event Management Knowledge and Processes

The Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model as illustrated in Figure 3 is recognized as a comprehensive framework that integrates the essential elements of event management, specifically tailored to guide and structure the processes involved in organizing sports events. Initially developed by William O'Toole in his 1999 master's thesis, the model was later refined by Julia Rutherford Silvers and O'Toole in 2003, with the aim of creating a robust knowledge framework for event management (Silver & Nelson, 2009). The EMBOK Model aims to categorize and define the various domains, phases, processes, and core values that guide successful event management (Silver et al., 2006).

This study employs the EMBOK model as a foundational framework to examine the sports event management processes in the context of Le Tour de Langkawi, with particular attention to how these processes enable effective stakeholder collaboration and support sustainability objectives. By applying the structured domains and phases outlined in EMBOK, the study analyzes the planning, implementation, and evaluation

stages of the event to understand how coordinated efforts among diverse stakeholders contribute to sustainable outcomes in Malaysia's sports event industry. The model's comprehensive approach provides a valuable lens through which to identify gaps and opportunities in current management practices, especially in integrating environmental, social, and economic sustainability considerations.

Furthermore, the insights gained from applying the EMBOK framework will inform the development of a tailored sustainable sport event framework specific to Malaysia's context. This framework aims to enhance stakeholder collaboration mechanisms and optimize sports event management processes to align with both international best practices and Malaysia's unique cultural, social, and economic conditions. Thus, the EMBOK model not only supports the theoretical foundation of this research but also serves as a practical guide for advancing sustainable sports event management in Malaysia.

2.5.4 The Need for Combining Theory and Practice in event management

The integration of theory and practice in event management is paramount, as underscored by Silver and Nelson (2009). They argued that event organization is essentially complex and vocational in nature. This complexity is particularly evident in sports events, where multiple stakeholders, timelines, and logistics converge to create a unique environment (Schnitzer et al., 2020). Such a complexity involving sports events requires comprehensive planning and structured approach to ensure the success of integration among all stakeholders (Schnitzer et al., 2020). As Ziakas (2014) noted that planning and coordination required for sports events take into account a strategic approach that balances economic, social, and environmental outcomes. In this regard, the EMBOK Model helps streamline the event management process by offering a structured yet flexible approach to organizing and delivering successful events.

In the context of this study, which investigates stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia, the integration of theory and practice is critical for understanding how diverse stakeholders effectively coordinate within the complex environment of events like Le Tour de Langkawi 2023. This study applies the EMBOK model as both a theoretical framework and practical guide to analyze how event management processes are structured and operationalized to support sustainability goals. By bridging theory with real-world practices, the research aims to

identify how collaborative efforts among stakeholders can be optimized to balance economic, social, and environmental outcomes, ultimately contributing to the development of a sustainable sport event framework tailored to Malaysia's unique context.

2.5.5 The EMBOK Model: A Flexible Framework for Event Management

The EMBOK Model categorizes and defines various domains, phases, processes, and core values that guide event management (Silver et al., 2006). In addition, Silver and Nelson (2009) emphasized that the Model's flexibility makes it adaptable to different event types, such as sports events, festivals, and exhibitions, thereby addressing the diverse tasks and complexities involved in event planning. The flexibility of this Model allows it to meet the requirements of various cultures, governments, education programs, and organizations, hence it is ideal for complex event settings including sports (International EMBOK, 2008).

This flexibility is especially valuable to the present doctoral study, which investigates the multifaceted stakeholder collaboration involved in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia. Events such as Le Tour de Langkawi embody complex environments where diverse stakeholders with differing priorities must be managed effectively. The EMBOK model's adaptable structure enables this study to examine how various stakeholder roles and responsibilities align within the event's administration, design, marketing, operations, and risk domains, all of which are crucial for fostering sustainability. Additionally, the model's emphasis on key processes such as assessment, selection, monitoring, documentation, and communication provides a practical framework to analyze how sustainability principles are integrated throughout the event lifecycle in the Malaysian context.

2.5.5.1 The EMBOK Model and its Application to Sustainable Sports Events

The EMBOK Model's holistic nature makes it a valuable tool for sports event managers seeking to incorporate sustainable practices. The Model's structure allows for a detailed examination of every aspect of event management, from the initial stages of planning and risk assessment to final evaluations and legacy considerations. This ensures that sustainability both environmental and social are embedded throughout the

event lifecycle. An in-depth exploration of each phase in event management is important to integrate sustainability into sports events. This process is readily afforded by the comprehensive nature of the EMBOK Model (Silver & Nelson, 2009).

A study by Richardson et al. (2015) highlighted that clear definitions during the initiation phase, such as the event's mission and project team, are critical to embedding sustainability from the outset. The adaptability of the model facilitates the inclusion of sustainability objectives, ensuring that economic, social, and environmental goals are pursued in parallel. Event planners can use EMBOK to integrate sustainability goals into the five phases of event management, namely initiation, planning, implementation, execution, and closure. For instance, during the initiation phase, planners must define sustainability objectives and secure commitments from stakeholders. In the planning phase, the design of the event should align with these sustainability goals, incorporating eco-friendly infrastructure and community engagement. The implementation phase focuses on executing these plans, while the execution phase ensures that sustainability objectives are maintained in real-time. Finally, the closure phase evaluates the sustainability outcomes, leaving a lasting positive impact on both the local community and the environment (Silver & Nelson, 2009).

2.5.5.2 Challenges and Gaps in Applying EMBOK to Sustainable Sports Events

Despite its comprehensive structure, the EMBOK Model faces challenges when applied to sustainable sports events. Although the model provides a clear framework for managing events, it does not always fully address the complexities of sustainability. A study conducted by Getz and Page (2018) pointed out that environmental and social aspects such as local community empowerment or carbon footprint reduction are not sufficiently detailed in the model. Hence, although conclusively stated that EMBOK may provide a framework for event planning, it has insufficient depth in addressing the complexities of sustainability, particularly in terms of social and environmental aspects (Getz & Page, 2018).

These limitations are highly relevant to this doctoral study, which investigates stakeholder collaboration and governance in the organization of sustainable sports events in Malaysia, using Le Tour de Langkawi 2023 as a case study. This study specifically examines how local community empowerment, environmental stewardship,

and multi-stakeholder engagement are operationalized in practice, directly addressing the gaps highlighted in the EMBOK framework.

Schulenkorf (2012) has also reiterated the importance of stakeholder collaboration and community engagement in sports for development (S4D), suggesting that the EMBOK framework could be enhanced by integrating community-driven initiatives and social empowerment processes aligned with sustainable development goals (SDGs). This study draws on these insights by exploring how collaborative governance structures and community participation contribute to the sustainability of sports events in Malaysia. It further investigates the roles of change agents such as government bodies, NGOs, and local businesses, whose contributions are critical to bridging the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical sustainable event management.

A critical gap in the EMBOK Model is the lack of focus on governance structures and the role of change agents in sustainable sports events. Change agents, such as government bodies, NGOs, and local businesses, play an essential role in facilitating sustainability, but the EMBOK Model does not fully integrate these dynamic relationships into the event management process. Their roles are essential to the success of sustainable event management and therefore must be incorporated into the EMBOK framework (Silver & Nelson, 2009). This doctoral research aims to address this gap by examining these governance dynamics and proposing an integrated framework that incorporates stakeholder collaboration, governance, and sustainability principles tailored to Malaysia's sports event ecosystem.

In conclusion, while the EMBOK Model provides a comprehensive, adaptable framework for managing sports events particularly in the areas of administration, design, marketing, operations, and risk management. This study contends that addressing sustainability challenges requires evolving the Model to explicitly incorporate community engagement, collaborative governance, and social empowerment. By integrating Stakeholder Theory and Sport for Development (S4D) principles into the EMBOK framework, this doctoral study seeks to develop a sustainable sports event framework that enables event managers in Malaysia to plan, execute, and evaluate events that not only meet organizational objectives but also contribute meaningfully to long-term sustainability.

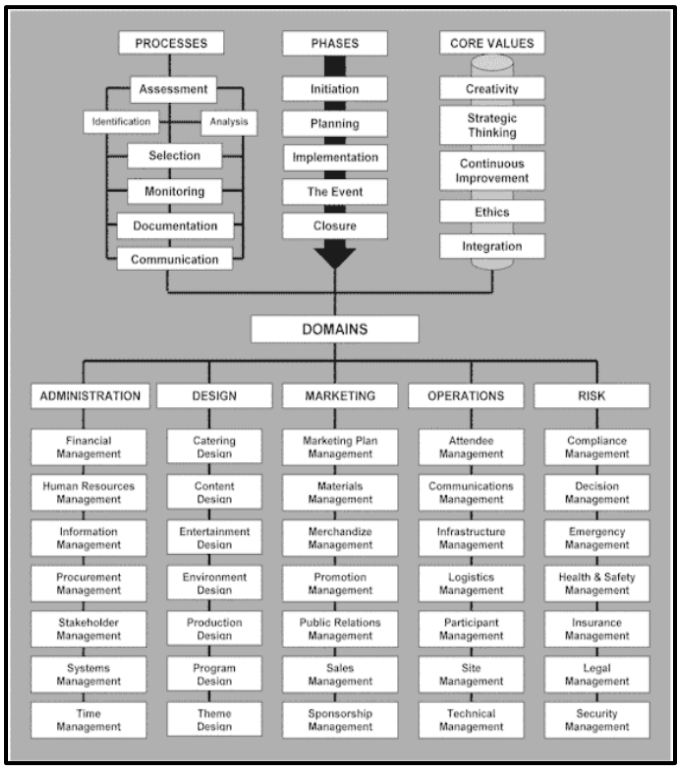


Figure 2.3 International EMBOK Structure (Silver, 2004)

2.6 Theoretical Framework in current research

The theoretical framework of this study integrates Stakeholder Collaboration, Sports Event Process, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a central focus on the stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia. The framework is designed based on the Sports for Development (S4D) Framework (Schulenkorf, 2012), Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model (Silver et al., 2006), and the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015). This framework builds on Sharan's (2006) view of theoretical frameworks in qualitative research as scaffolding to guide inquiry and analysis.

By focusing on stakeholder collaboration as the central component of organizing sustainable sports events, this framework that forms layers of functions; stresses on the need for a structured yet flexible approach to managing events; while promoting sustainability at the economic, social, and environmental levels (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). In this study, the integrated framework guides the qualitative investigation by framing the exploration of stakeholder collaboration as pivotal to the success and sustainability of sports events like Le Tour de Langkawi. It informs the development of semi-structured interview questions and thematic analysis, ensuring

that data collection and interpretation are aligned with the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainability embedded within the framework. By centering stakeholder collaboration within structured yet flexible event management processes, this framework supports a nuanced understanding of how multi-stakeholder interactions contribute to sustainable event outcomes, addressing current gaps in Malaysia's sports event management literature. Ultimately, this approach enables the identification of practical strategies for enhancing collaborative governance and sustainable practices in the organization of sports events in Malaysia.

2.6.1 Justification of Using Stakeholder Theory, S4D, And EMBOK As the Theoretical Foundation in This Study

This study integrates Stakeholder Theory, the S4D Model, and the EMBOK Model to provide a comprehensive framework for managing sustainable sports events. These frameworks were chosen for their ability to address stakeholder collaboration, community empowerment, and effective event management, which are essential for the long-term success and sustainability of sports events. The following texts deliberate on each of these frameworks, relating the contents to this study.

2.6.1.1 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984) is foundational to this study, as it highlights the importance of balancing the interests and roles of various stakeholders, including local authorities, businesses, NGOs, and communities. This theory helps explain how stakeholder engagement impacts the event's sustainability and how collaboration between stakeholders influences event outcomes. As evidenced in previous studies (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020), effective stakeholder coordination is crucial for achieving long-term sustainability in sports events.

2.6.1.2 S4D Model (Sport for Development)

The S4D Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) is incorporated to emphasize community empowerment, collaboration, and social development through sports. The focus of this Model is on participation and community engagement which makes it ideal for this study. Moreover, it addresses the need for local involvement in the event process and it

also ensures that sustainable outcomes are achieved through active collaboration (Schulenkorf, 2012). By integrating a change agent, the S4D framework facilitates collaboration among stakeholders and empowers communities, ensuring that events are not only successful, but also beneficial to the local community in the long term (Schulenkorf, 2010).

a. EMBOK Model (Event Management Body of Knowledge)

The EMBOK Model (Silver et al., 2006) offers a structured framework for managing the various phases of event planning, from initiation to closure. Its emphasis on administration, design, operations, risk management, and marketing ensures that sustainability principles are embedded throughout the event lifecycle. The comprehensive approach of the EMBOK Model allows event organizers to align their processes with sustainability objectives, particularly in terms of operational efficiency, stakeholder coordination, and post-event evaluation (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014).

b. Integration of Stakeholder Theory, S4D, and EMBOK

By combining Stakeholder Theory, the S4D Model, and the EMBOK Model, this study provides a holistic framework for organizing sustainable sports events. Stakeholder Theory helps analyze stakeholder relationships, while the S4D Model focuses on community empowerment and social development. The EMBOK Model ensures that sustainability is embedded throughout every phase of the event. This integrated approach addresses key gaps in the literature, particularly in collaborative governance and community-driven initiatives (Cicognani et al., 2020; Schulenkorf, 2012).

With regard to this study, the adoption of these three frameworks enables a comprehensive exploration of stakeholder collaboration, community empowerment, and effective event management in organizing sustainable sports events. Given the complex and context-specific nature of these phenomena, a qualitative research methodology using semi-structured interviews is employed. This method allows for in-depth exploration of stakeholders' experiences, perspectives, and interactions related to Le Tour de Langkawi, while providing flexibility to probe emergent themes aligned with Stakeholder Theory, the S4D Model, and the EMBOK framework. Semi-structured interviews facilitate capturing rich, nuanced data on how collaboration and

empowerment processes unfold in practice, offering insights that quantitative approaches may not fully reveal. This approach complements the theoretical foundations by enabling an examination of dynamic stakeholder relationships and sustainable event management processes, ultimately providing practical guidance for event organizers and policymakers to enhance sustainability outcomes.

2.6.2 Stakeholder Collaboration and the S4D Framework

The outermost layer of the framework corresponds to stakeholder collaboration, which aligns with the S4D Framework by Schulenkorf (2012). The S4D Framework emphasizes participation, collaboration, and community engagement in sports events, ensuring that all stakeholders are involved in achieving social development goals (Schulenkorf, 2012). The framework integrates a change agent concept to facilitate coordination between stakeholders and ensure active community involvement throughout the event lifecycle (Schulenkorf, 2010). This layer represents the importance of bringing together various stakeholders, including local authorities, businesses, and communities, whose collaborative efforts are crucial for achieving sustainable outcomes in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Cicognani et al., 2020). Recent studies have shown that inclusive stakeholder engagement is central to the success of sustainable sports events (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). Stakeholder collaboration is not just about coordination, but about fostering a long-term relationship that empowers local communities and enhances their capacity for event management (Schulenkorf, 2012).

2.6.3 Sports Event Process and EMBOK Model

The next layer of the framework, which is more focused, represents the Sports Event Process, encapsulated by the EMBOK Model (Silver et al., 2006). The EMBOK Model guides event organizers through five distinct phases, namely initiation, planning, implementation, event, and closure. The Sports Event Process layer in the framework incorporates these phases to guide the planning and execution of sports events, ensuring that each phase is aligned with sustainability objectives (Silver & Nelson, 2009). In this phase, stakeholder collaboration plays a critical role in ensuring that each stakeholder's contribution is maximized, and sustainability goals are met at every stage of the event

(Ziakas & Boukas, 2014; Schulenkorf, 2012). Recent research by Ziakas (2020) further reiterated that each phase requires a careful analysis of stakeholder interactions to ensure that sustainability is not only a goal, but also a process that is embedded within the event's operations.

2.6.4 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The deeper layer of the framework lies the innermost core that is the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), emphasizing on the long-term impact of sports events on the community. This layer is focused on ensuring that the sports event contributes positively to the social, economic, and environmental pillars of sustainability (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). The collaboration between stakeholders, guided by the EMBOK Model and S4D Framework, should be aimed at fulfilling these SDG targets, ensuring that the event is not only successful in the short term, but also leaves a legacy for the community (United Nations, 2015). Recent studies have suggested that achieving SDGs in sports events requires aligning event goals with broader development strategies, including inclusive economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental responsibility (Kim et al., 2015).

2.6.5 The Role of Stakeholder Collaboration in Achieving Sustainability

As shown in the innermost part of the figure, the role of stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia represents the focal point of this study. The research aims to explore how different stakeholders namely government agencies, local businesses, NGOs, and community members collaborate throughout the Sports Event Process to ensure the event meets sustainability goals. The inclusion of the change agent in the framework reflects the need for a central coordinating body that mediates between stakeholders, ensuring that the process is inclusive, effective, and focused on the SDGs (Schulenkorf, 2010; Freeman, 1984). As suggested by Schulenkorf and Frawley (2022), the change agent's role is pivotal in managing stakeholder relations, ensuring that different interests are aligned to achieve common sustainability outcomes.

This theoretical framework, as represented in Figure 4, shows a multi-layered approach to organizing sustainable sports events by combining stakeholder

collaboration with the structured event processes of the EMBOK Model and the participatory, community-oriented focus of the S4D framework. The collaboration among stakeholders is positioned at the core, with the overall aim of contributing to sustainable sports events that are socially, economically, and environmentally impactful. The gaps in stakeholder theory are addressed by emphasizing the collaborative governance, community empowerment, and the integration of change agents to facilitate ongoing collaboration and maximize the event's long-term sustainability (Cicognani et al., 2020; Schulenkorf, 2012). This framework also builds on the need for an expanded view of stakeholder collaboration that goes beyond economic interests to incorporate social and emotional factors as drivers for sustainable engagement (Müller, 2015; Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

In this study, the framework guides the design of semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, enabling an in-depth examination of complex interrelationships among stakeholders and their contributions to sustainability throughout the event lifecycle. It also supports practical recommendations for event organizers aiming to implement sustainable practices and foster positive community development legacies in Malaysian sports events (Joyner et al., 2019).

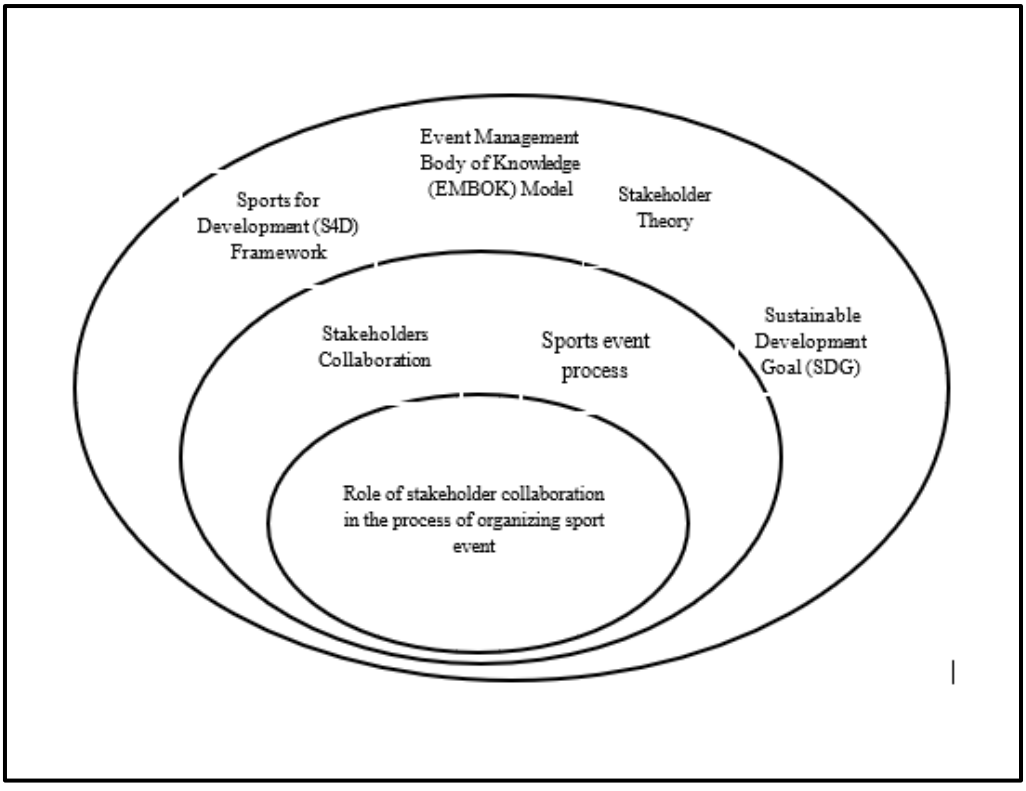


Figure 2.4 Propose theoretical framework (adapted, Sharan, 2006)

2.7 Issues and Gaps in Literature

2.7.1 Challenges in Managing Sports Events in Malaysia

2.7.1.1 Infrastructure and Resource Limitations

A significant challenge in managing sports events in Malaysia is the limited infrastructure available to support large-scale international events. **S**ubstantial investments have been made in sports facilities, questions remain about the long-term viability and utility of these resources (Ziakas, 2014). Without a clear strategy for utilizing these facilities post-event, there is a risk of underutilization, which undermines the sustainability of the event's economic benefits.

2.7.1.2 Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability remains a persistent issue in Malaysia's sports events industry. Major events like the Commonwealth Games and Formula 1 Grand Prix have generated significant economic returns in the short term. Meanwhile, local businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises, have often struggled to share in the benefits. These businesses are frequently overshadowed by large corporate sponsors and international stakeholders (Wang et al., 2021). Additionally, reliance on government funding for major events has raised concerns about the long-term financial sustainability of these events.

2.7.1.3 Environmental Sustainability

The environmental sustainability of sports events in Malaysia is a key challenge. Rapid urbanization and economic development have put significant pressure on the country's natural resources, leading to issues such as pollution, deforestation, and loss of biodiversity (Jamaluddin Jahi, 2010). International sports events offer an opportunity to raise awareness about environmental issues, they also contribute to resource depletion, waste, and carbon emissions. There is a growing need for event organizers to integrate sustainable practices such as waste reduction, energy efficiency, and carbon footprint management into their event planning processes (Mair & Smith, 2021).

2.7.1.4 Social Sustainability

Social sustainability is another critical challenge in Malaysia's sports event industry. Although sport events contribute to the local economy, their social impacts often remain limited to short-term community engagement (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). The lack of meaningful involvement from local communities in the planning, execution, and legacy phases of events hinders the ability of sports events to contribute to long-term social sustainability. Greater community participation and empowerment are essential for ensuring that the benefits of sports events are widely distributed and that they contribute to social cohesion and local development (Schulenkorf, 2012).

2.7.2 Opportunities in Malaysia's Sports Event

2.7.2.1 Leveraging Cultural and Heritage Assets

Malaysia's rich cultural and natural heritage presents unique opportunities for sports event organizers to integrate local culture and traditions into their events. By showcasing Malaysia's cultural diversity and natural beauty, sports events can generate social and cultural benefits, promote national pride, and enhance the event's global appeal (Mair & Smith, 2021). This approach can also attract international tourists and raise Malaysia's profile as a global sports tourism destination.

2.7.2.2 Tourism and International Exposure

Through the integration effort of local culture and traditions, sports events in Malaysia provide significant opportunities for tourism growth. Events like the Commonwealth Games and Formula 1 Grand Prix have attracted large numbers of international visitors, contributing to the country's tourism revenue. Beyond tourism, sports events provide opportunities for local businesses to benefit from the influx of tourists, stimulating growth in the hospitality, transportation, and retail sectors (Yoon et al., 2020). These events also contributed to Malaysia's broader economic goals by attracting international investment and strengthening Malaysia's global brand.

2.7.2.3 Community Engagement

Sports events offer opportunities for long-term social and economic benefits through community engagement and legacy-building. Volunteer programs, youth sports initiatives, and local business opportunities provide lasting impacts for the host community. By embedding social sustainability practices into event planning, organizers can foster local pride, improve public health, and promote social cohesion, ensuring that the benefits of sports events extend far beyond the immediate event period (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020).

In conclusion, while Malaysia has made significant strides in hosting major sports events, challenges remain, particularly in terms of financial sustainability, environmental impact, and stakeholder collaboration. Moving forward, it is crucial for Malaysia to adopt a more integrated approach to sports event management that emphasizes sustainability in economic, social, and environmental dimensions. By leveraging its cultural assets, enhancing community engagement, and ensuring more inclusive stakeholder collaboration, Malaysia can continue to build on its successes, positioning itself as a leading destination for sustainable sports events in Southeast Asia.

2.8 Chapter summary

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature concerning sports event management, focusing particularly on the challenges, opportunities, and sustainability practices within the Malaysian context. It draws on a variety of global and local perspectives to examine how sports events can contribute to sustainable development goals (SDGs) while addressing economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

The chapter begins by outlining the historical and evolving role of the sports event industry in Malaysia, emphasizing its growing importance for socio-economic development, tourism, and community engagement. Notably, events like the Commonwealth Games, Formula 1 Grand Prix, and Ironman Langkawi have significantly enhanced Malaysia's status as a regional hub for sports tourism. However, issues surrounding long-term economic sustainability and the underutilization of infrastructure remain crucial concerns.

The review of notable events, such as the 1998 Commonwealth Games, Formula 1 Grand Prix, Ironman Langkawi, and Le Tour de Langkawi, provides both positive and

cautionary examples of how sports events impact Malaysia's economy, environment, and society. These events have contributed to Malaysia's tourism industry and global brand, yet they have also exposed the need for more strategic long-term planning to ensure sustainability, particularly in terms of infrastructure, community benefits, and environmental impact.

This section highlights the global evolution of sustainable sports event management, focusing on key events like the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and the London 2012 Olympics, which set high standards for integrating sustainability into event planning and execution. It discusses the three pillars of sustainable development namely economic, environmental, and social and the ways in which sports events can play a crucial role in advancing these goals. It stresses the need for collaboration among stakeholders to achieve long-term sustainability.

The chapter further explores the economic, environmental, and social pillars of sustainable development, emphasizing the interconnectedness of these dimensions. Economic sustainability requires a broader perspective, considering not just immediate financial gains but also long-term infrastructure development and local entrepreneurship. Environmental sustainability, though increasingly prioritized in large-scale events, still faces significant challenges, particularly in developing countries like Malaysia. Social sustainability is achieved when events contribute positively to the community, fostering inclusion, social cohesion, and civic pride.

Despite increasing interest in sustainable sports events, the literature remains fragmented, with many studies focusing on specific subtopics, such as sustainability in sports tourism or individual sports. There is a lack of comprehensive research on how sustainability principles can be fully integrated across all aspects of sports event management. In Malaysia, challenges include insufficient infrastructure, economic inequities, environmental degradation, and limited social benefits for local communities. Addressing these issues requires a more integrated and inclusive approach to stakeholder engagement and event planning.

The chapter introduces several key theoretical frameworks, including Stakeholder Theory, the Sports for Development (S4D) framework, and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) model. These frameworks offer valuable insights into stakeholder collaboration, community empowerment, and the strategic management of sustainable sports events. They are applied to analyze the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes of events like Le Tour de Langkawi,

providing a structured approach to understanding the complexities of sustainable event management.

The final section of the chapter identifies critical gaps in the literature, particularly in stakeholder theory and the integration of sustainability practices within event management in Malaysia. These gaps highlight the need for more inclusive governance structures, greater local community engagement, and improved environmental stewardship. The chapter suggests that future research should focus on strengthening collaboration among stakeholders, optimizing resource use, and ensuring that the benefits of sports events are shared equitably across communities.

In conclusion, Chapter 2 provides a robust theoretical and empirical foundation for the study of sustainable sports event management in Malaysia. It outlines the challenges faced by the industry and underscores the importance of strategic, inclusive, and sustainable event planning. By integrating the S4D framework, Stakeholder Theory, and the EMBOK model, the chapter sets the stage for further exploration of how stakeholder collaboration and sustainability can be enhanced in Malaysia's sports event sector. Future research will be key to developing more effective frameworks that support the long-term success of sports events, ensuring that they contribute positively to Malaysia's socio-economic development, environmental conservation, and community well-being.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Preamble

This chapter outlines the research approach employed in this study, which explores the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders involved in organizing Le Tour de Langkawi 2023. The study follows an exploratory research design, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of the roles, relationships, and sustainability practices of key stakeholders throughout the event. The goal is to uncover the complex social dynamics that influence stakeholder collaboration and its impact on the sustainability of the event.

Guided by a constructivist philosophical worldview, this research assumes that reality is socially constructed through interactions and experiences (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). This perspective is particularly appropriate for exploring the subjective meanings stakeholders attach to their roles and collaborations within the context of sustainable sports event management. The research acknowledges that stakeholders, including event organizers, local authorities, and community members, may have different views on sustainability based on their unique roles, experiences, and priorities. For example, event organizers might focus on financial sustainability, while community members may emphasize environmental or social aspects (Schulenkorf, 2012).

The constructivist paradigm aligns well with qualitative research methods, as it values context-specific understanding and participant perspectives. To explore these aspects, the study adopts a single-case study approach, focusing on Le Tour de Langkawi 2023. This design provides a rich, context-bound exploration of stakeholder collaboration in a real-world setting. According to Stake (1995), case studies are particularly suited to investigating complex phenomena within their natural context, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its environment are not easily separated. This approach allows for a nuanced understanding of how collaboration among stakeholders contributes to the sustainability of the event.

For data collection, the study primarily used semi-structured interviews, enabling stakeholders to share their experiences and insights in their own words while maintaining focus on the research questions. The interviews were conducted with key

informants, including event organizers, local authorities, merchants, and community representatives. The semi-structured interview format allowed flexibility, making room for unanticipated themes to emerge during the conversations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Regarding data management and analysis, the interview data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. Following the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2013), the data were coded to identify recurring themes and patterns related to stakeholder collaboration and sustainability practices. The analysis was facilitated using ATLAS.ti software, which assisted in organizing themes, sub-themes, and codes. Thematic analysis provided an iterative and comprehensive approach to exploring the data, ensuring that the findings were rooted in the lived experiences of the stakeholders and aligned with the research questions.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the findings, the study employed member checking, allowing informants to review and validate the researcher's interpretations of their responses. This process ensured that the data accurately reflected participants' views and experiences. Additionally, triangulation was used by cross-referencing interview data with relevant documents and observations, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Yin, 2018).

3.2 Methodology in Prior Studies on Sustainable Sports Events

This study has reviewed the methodologies employed in prior research on sustainable sports events reveals a diverse range of approaches to exploring sustainability integration within event management. These studies predominantly examine the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainability, with research methods varying based on each study's scope, objectives, and context.

3.2.1 Case Study Approach

The case study approach is frequently employed in sustainable sports event research, enabling the examination of real-world events in their natural context. This methodology provides rich, detailed insights into the implementation of sustainability practices. Yin (2018) and Stake (1995) are foundational in case study research, particularly regarding complex social processes. For example, Mair and Smith (2021) applied a case study approach to assess sustainability integration in the London 2012 Olympics, while Bazzanella and Preuss (2018) analyzed Rio 2016 to investigate the

roles of various stakeholders in promoting social sustainability. These studies underscore the value of case studies in capturing the contextual dynamics of sustainability efforts within sports events. In line with broader qualitative research trends, this study adopts a single-case study design to examine Le Tour de Langkawi 2023. This approach facilitates an in-depth exploration of sustainability challenges and opportunities within the Malaysian context.

3.2.2 Surveys and Quantitative Approaches

Surveys have been employed in some studies to assess the perceptions and attitudes of event participants, stakeholders, or the public regarding sustainability practices. For instance, González-Serrano et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative survey to investigate the economic impacts of sustainable practices in sports tourism, focusing on visitor behavior and satisfaction. Similarly, Tichaawa and Bob (2015) used a survey to assess the environmental and social impacts of sporting events on local communities. While surveys provide valuable statistical insights, they typically offer a surface-level understanding of stakeholder perspectives, potentially overlooking the depth of meaning and context captured through qualitative methods. In contrast, qualitative approaches such as interviews and focus groups are better suited for exploring the complex factors influencing sustainability practices at sports events.

3.2.3 Interviews and Qualitative Approaches

Qualitative methods, particularly semi-structured interviews, are widely used in sustainable sports event research. These methods allow researchers to capture detailed experiences and perspectives from event organizers, stakeholders, and participants. For example, Schulenkorf and Frawley (2022) conducted interviews with event stakeholders to examine community engagement and social sustainability in local sports events. Similarly, Mallen and Adams (2023) interviewed policymakers and event organizers to study the long-term environmental and social outcomes of major events in Malaysia. A qualitative methods enable a deeper exploration of the social processes, power dynamics, and interactions that shape sustainability practices in sports events. The use of semi-structured interviews in this research aligns with the growing trend

toward qualitative inquiry, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon in context.

3.2.4 Document Analysis and Observations

Some studies incorporate document analysis and observational methods to examine event policies, reports, and environmental assessments. For instance, Ziakas and Boukas (2014) analyzed policy documents from FIFA World Cup events to explore the communication and implementation of sustainability policies by event organizers. These methods complement interview-based research by offering additional insights into event management processes, decision-making, and policy implementation. Combined with interviews, document analysis and observations provide a more holistic understanding of sustainability efforts in sports events.

3.2.5 Comparative Approaches

A comparative approach has been used in some studies to examine sustainability practices across various events. This methodology often involves comparing how different events, in diverse contexts, address sustainability from economic, environmental, and social perspectives. For instance, Lis & Tomanek (2020) conducted a comparative study on sustainable practices in sports tourism, analyzing differences between international and local events. Comparative studies offer valuable insights into best practices and common challenges across the event sector. However, they are typically less context-specific than single-case studies, which offer deeper exploration into the unique complexities of individual event sustainability practices.

The methodologies employed in prior research on sustainable sports events demonstrate a preference for case study and qualitative approaches, which allow for an in-depth exploration of the complexities and context-dependent nature of sustainability in event management. While quantitative surveys offer useful insights into economic impacts, qualitative methods such as interviews, ethnography, and observations able to provide a richer understanding of the social processes and interactions driving sustainability in sports events. The use of a single-case study approach, combined with semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis, aligns with prevailing methodological trends in the field. It also addresses the gap in literature concerning stakeholder

collaboration within sustainable sports events in Malaysia. By focusing on Le Tour de Langkawi 2023, this study contributes to a deeper, more nuanced understanding of how sustainability is enacted in sports event management.

3.3 Research Approach

Creswell and Creswell (2018) defined a research strategy as a collection of plans and methods that guide the researcher in examining a subject, shaping philosophical assumptions, research design, and data collection techniques. With regard to the research approach, this study adopts a constructivist philosophical worldview, which emphasizes subjective meanings and social context in knowledge construction (Figure 5). The constructivist paradigm aligns with qualitative research, focusing on participant perspectives and contextual understanding. Within this framework, the study employs a case study research design, allowing for an in-depth exploration of a specific phenomenon within its real-world setting. The research method encompasses key processes involving formulating research questions, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and validation, ensuring a rigorous approach to inquiry. The intersection of these three elements namely the philosophical worldview, research method, and research design forms the foundation of this study's research approach. This ensures coherence between epistemological assumptions, methodological choices, and analytical procedures. The following section further elaborates on the philosophical worldview guiding this study, the research method employed and the research design selected, that is case study.

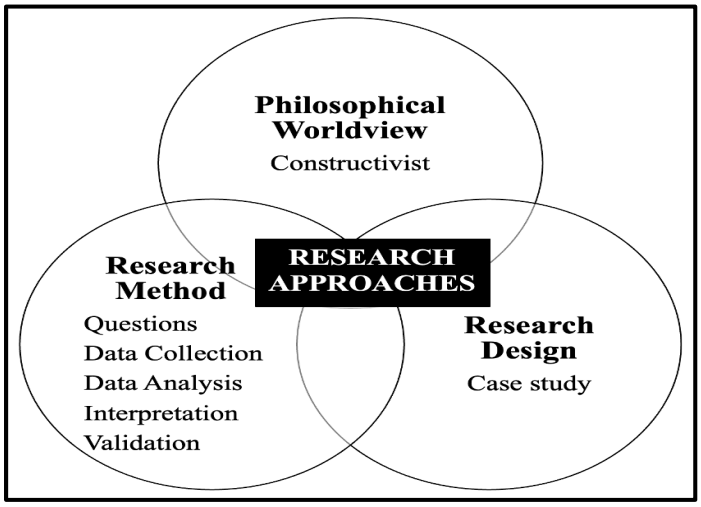


Figure 3.1 The Research Approach (Creswell, 2018)

3.4 Philosophical Worldview

Creswell and Creswell (2018) defined a philosophical worldview as an orientation with regard to the world in terms of the research nature brought about by the researcher. Specifically, a philosophical worldview is how a researcher develops their approach and beliefs in research, informed by discipline orientations, academic communities, and prior research experiences. This study adopted a constructivist worldview, aligning with qualitative inquiry's ontological and epistemological foundations, where meaning is derived from human experiences and interactions (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011).

Constructivism holds that reality is socially constructed and context dependent. This perspective is well-suited to exploring stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports event management, where stakeholders hold varied, experience-based understandings of sustainability (Schulenkorf, 2012; Bazzanella, Peters, & Schnitzer, 2019). Limited collaboration among actors often undermines coordination, impacts event outcomes, and restricts long-term sustainability (Varmus et al., 2018). Given the lack of literature exploring stakeholder collaboration specifically in the context of sustainable sports events, this study adopts a constructivist lens to capture these complexities (Cicognani et al., 2020).

3.4.1 Ontology: Understanding Reality in this Study

Exploring issues on the essence of existence, ontology refers to the nature of reality. A constructivist ontology assumes that reality is subjective, multiple, and socially constructed rather than singular and objective (Scotland, 2012). In this research, which investigates stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports events in Malaysia, a constructivist ontology is particularly appropriate. It recognizes that stakeholders may view sustainability through economic, environmental, or social lenses depending on their interests, roles, and experiences. For example, while organizers may associate sustainability with financial viability, community members may prioritize environmental impact and social inclusivity (Schnitzer et al., 2020).

Recognizing that no single reality exists, the study seeks to understand diverse stakeholder perspectives rather than impose a predefined framework. This approach aligns with the complexities inherent in event management, where competing priorities often coexist (Chalip, 2006). By adopting a constructivist ontology, this study embraces

a richer understanding of collaboration as it naturally unfolds across stakeholder groups in the context of Le Tour de Langkawi (Joyner, Lackey, & Bricker, 2019).

3.4.2 Epistemology: Understanding Knowledge in this Study

Epistemology concerns nature and construction of knowledge. A constructivist epistemology suggests that knowledge is co-constructed between researchers and participants through interaction and interpretation, not discovered as an objective truth (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This philosophical stance aligns with the study's aim to understand how different stakeholders make sense of collaboration and sustainability, emphasizing the role of participants' unique experiences in shaping their understanding of stakeholder collaboration. Such an approach justifies the use of qualitative methods, particularly semi-structured interviews and focus groups, which allow participants to share insights in their own terms. This aligns with the constructivist goal of understanding meaning through context-specific narratives (Patton, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Additionally, constructivist research supports participatory inquiry that empowers informants to engage with issues that matter to them, making this epistemological approach especially appropriate for examining stakeholder involvement in sustainability-focused sports events (Schulenkorf, 2010).

3.4.3 Integration with Research Design

The constructivist worldview, grounded in a relativist ontology and interpretivist epistemology, shapes the entire research design. Recognizing that reality is subjective and knowledge is socially negotiated, this study employs qualitative methods to deeply explore stakeholder experiences and meaning-making processes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The decision to adopt this research design was informed by prior studies in sports event management and stakeholder collaboration, which demonstrate that qualitative, constructivist approaches effectively capture the complexities of stakeholder interactions and the socially constructed nature of collaboration (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020; Schulenkorf, 2012). Unlike quantitative approaches that measure predefined variables, this design allows for an

interpretive understanding of how stakeholders describe and navigate collaboration in practice.

This approach aligns with this study aim to explore how stakeholder interaction contributes to sustainable sports event management in Malaysia. Central to this constructivist paradigm is reflexivity, which requires the researcher to remain critically aware of their own influence on the research process (Finlay, 2002). By integrating reflexivity into the methodology, this study maintains rigor and transparency, acknowledging the co-construction of knowledge between researcher and participants.

3.5 Qualitative Research Method

Creswell and Creswell (2018) defined research methodology as the comprehensive approach that delineates the processes by which a researcher will gather, analyze, and interpret data. This study employed a qualitative case study methodology as delineated by Yin (2018). This method is especially appropriate for examining intricate phenomena within their real-world setting, where the distinctions between the phenomenon and its surroundings are ambiguous. In relation to this study, the qualitative case study approach is particularly suitable for investigating stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports event management within the complex and dynamic environment of Le Tour de Langkawi. The method facilitates an in-depth exploration of the interactions, relationships, and contextual factors influencing sustainability practices and governance in Malaysian sports events. By situating the research within this real-world case, the study can capture rich, detailed data that illuminate the challenges and opportunities for effective stakeholder collaboration, which is critical for advancing sustainable event management in emerging markets like Malaysia.

This study used constructivism as its philosophical framework, which corresponds with Yin's (2018) assertion that case study research is most effective when investigating participants' subjective experiences and interpretations. This research attempts to comprehend the processes, dynamics, and interactions that influence event management practices by examining the collaboration among stakeholders in the organization of sports events in Malaysia. Yin (2018) reiterated that case study research offers a thorough framework for examining the mechanisms and reasons behind occurrences, yielding profound insights into intricate, context-sensitive phenomena such as stakeholder collaboration in sports event management.

This qualitative research design was suitable due to its capacity to facilitate an in-depth exploration of the interactions, relationships, and viewpoints of stakeholders and their combined efforts. Yin (2018) reiterated that qualitative case studies are especially effective for acquiring a detailed comprehension of the social processes and behaviours that influence real-world occurrences. Consequently, the qualitative approach offers comprehensive, contextually nuanced insights on the organization of sustainable sports events, which quantitative methods alone cannot readily capture.

3.6 Research Design – Single Case Study

The researcher's philosophical worldview underpins the selection of research methods, while the research design outlines the specific procedures for carrying out the study. In this research, a single case study design was adopted, drawing heavily from established case study methodologies in qualitative research. A case study is particularly effective in understanding complex phenomena within their real-life context, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly delineated (Yin, 2018). This approach allows the researcher to explore a specific instance of a phenomenon in detail, offering context-rich insights that are necessary to address the research objectives.

The decision to use a single case study is grounded in several methodological considerations that align with the exploratory nature of this research. The Le Tour de Langkawi 2023 serves as a unique opportunity to examine stakeholder collaboration and sustainability practices in sports event management within Malaysia. As Stake (1995) asserts, single case studies are particularly valuable when studying a unique case or phenomenon within its real-life context. The Le Tour de Langkawi 2023 event provides an opportunity to explore the specificities of stakeholder collaboration in the context of sports event management in Malaysia, a region with limited research on this topic.

A key advantage of a single case study is its ability to provide an in-depth exploration of the research problem in a way that comparative studies cannot. Flyvbjerg (2006) asserts that single case studies allow researchers to study the complexities and nuances of a phenomenon, particularly when little is known about the subject. This approach is particularly valuable for exploring new or under-researched areas, such as the dynamics of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports events in Malaysia. The

rich, qualitative data generated from a single case study offers the depth needed to explore the intricate relationships among stakeholders and their roles in achieving sustainability.

Additionally, Scholz and Tietje (2002) argue that single case studies are especially appropriate when the aim is to develop theory or provide a comprehensive understanding of a specific phenomenon. In this research, the goal is to develop a deeper theoretical understanding of how stakeholder collaboration in Le Tour de Langkawi influences sustainable event outcomes. By focusing on this single event, the study contributes to the existing literature on sustainable sports event management, an area that has seen limited empirical research, particularly in the Malaysian context.

As Miles and Huberman (1994) note, case studies offer the flexibility to employ various data collection methods, including interviews and observations to triangulate findings and gain a comprehensive view of the research problem. In this study, multiple data sources, including semi-structured interviews and observations, were used to explore the diverse perspectives of the stakeholders involved in Le Tour de Langkawi 2023. By gathering data from various sources, this research can cross-check findings and ensure a more robust and well-rounded understanding of the research topic.

Moreover, Baxter and Jack (2008) emphasize that single case studies are particularly useful for studying phenomena where multiple variables interact in unpredictable ways, making it challenging to separate them. In the case of Le Tour de Langkawi, various stakeholders, including event organizers, local authorities, community members, and sponsors, have different interests and influence the event's sustainability in diverse ways. The single case study allows for a holistic exploration of these complex dynamics, offering insights into the interactions and power dynamics that drive event sustainability.

While Yin (2018) emphasizes the use of multiple case studies in comparative research, he also acknowledges the value of a single case study when the case is considered critical for understanding a broader phenomenon. In this study, Le Tour de Langkawi 2023 is seen as a critical case for understanding stakeholder collaboration in the context of sustainable sports events. Focusing on this single case allows for a detailed examination of how collaboration among stakeholders contributes to the event's sustainability, providing insights that may be applicable to other similar events in the future.

The use of a single case study does not diminish the rigor of this research; instead, it allows for a thorough investigation of a specific event and its stakeholders. Stake (1995) argues that single case studies can be just as rigorous as multiple case studies when they are carefully designed and methodologically sound. The research design in this study follows established guidelines for case study research, ensuring that the findings are reliable, valid, and credible. The in-depth nature of a single case study allows for the development of detailed, context-specific findings that can contribute to theoretical development in the field of sustainable sports event management. In summary, the choice of a single case study for this research is justified by the need for an in-depth, context-bound exploration of stakeholder collaboration in Le Tour de Langkawi 2023. The case study design allows for a detailed understanding of the interactions and dynamics among stakeholders, and how these contribute to the sustainability of the event.

3.7 Sampling Technique, Selection of Informant, Number of Informant and Selection of Research Site

3.7.1 Sampling Technique

In qualitative research, the goal is not to generalize findings to a broader population but to gain an in-depth understanding of a specific phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). For this study, the researcher adopted a purposive sampling strategy, which is integral to case study research. Purposeful sampling ensures that selected informants have direct experience and relevant knowledge related to the research questions, thus enabling the collection of rich, context-specific data (Patton, 2002).

3.7.1.1 Purposeful Sampling

The primary approach to informant selection was purposeful sampling, as this strategy is particularly suited for selecting participants who are directly involved in the phenomenon under study. In this research, key stakeholders involved in the LTDL 2023 event were selected to gain a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder collaboration and its role in the sustainability of the event. The event organizers, local merchants,

local authorities, and community representatives were identified based on their roles and influence in the event planning, execution, and sustainability efforts.

Patton (2002) asserts that purposeful sampling is essential when the aim is to explore a specific case in depth, ensuring that data collected is meaningful and relevant. The categories of informants were chosen based on their direct involvement in organizing and managing the event, ensuring that their insights would contribute to understanding the complexities of collaboration within the event's organizational processes.

3.7.1.2 Snowball Sampling

In addition to purposeful sampling, snowball sampling was also employed to identify further informants. Snowball sampling is particularly effective in case study research where initial informants, who are central to the research, refer the researcher to other relevant individuals (Yin, 2018). During interviews, key informants were asked to recommend other stakeholders who could provide valuable perspectives on stakeholder collaboration and the sustainability of the event. This snowballing process helped expand the sample to include additional stakeholders who might not have been directly identified at the outset but were crucial for gaining a more complete understanding of the phenomenon.

While purposeful sampling ensures that the initial informants are strategically selected for their direct relevance to the research questions, snowball sampling allowed the researcher to access hard-to-reach participants and explore a broader range of perspectives, which is particularly important in the context of complex, real-world phenomena (Patton, 2002). The combination of these two methods ensured that the sample was both focused and comprehensive, allowing for a more holistic view of the stakeholder collaboration in Le Tour de Langkawi.

3.7.1.3 Critical Case Sampling

While purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were employed in this study, another method worth mentioning is critical case sampling, which focuses on selecting cases that are central to answering the research questions (Flyvbjerg, 2006). In critical case sampling, informants are selected because their experiences or roles are considered

crucial to understanding the broader phenomenon under study. In the case of this research, while the informants were purposefully selected, key informants such as the Chief Operating Officer, Director of Event Management, and local authorities were chosen as critical cases because their roles were directly central to understanding the organizational processes and sustainability efforts in Le Tour de Langkawi. Therefore, the single case study approach can be seen as a form of critical case sampling, where the event itself and the roles of these key stakeholders are crucial for gaining insights into the dynamics of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports event management.

3.7.2 Selection of Informants

For this research, the selection of informants was guided by purposeful sampling to ensure a diverse and relevant representation of key stakeholders involved in LTDL 2023. Purposeful sampling is particularly effective in qualitative research, as it enables the researcher to select individuals who are likely to provide detailed and relevant insights into the research topic (Patton, 2002). Informants were selected based on their direct involvement in the event and their ability to offer insights into its organization, stakeholder collaboration, and the broader social, economic, and environmental impacts of the event. As Yin (2018) suggests, a case study methodology focuses on informants whose experiences are central to addressing the research questions.

The informants in this study were categorized into the following groups:

1. Event Organizers: These informants include individuals from the National Sports Council of Malaysia and event managers directly involved in the planning, execution, and overall management of LTDL. Their roles in coordinating the event and managing various stakeholders make them crucial for understanding the internal workings of stakeholder collaboration.
2. Local Authorities: Local government representatives (e.g., local authorities from Meru Raya, Perak, Baling, Kedah, and Kuala Lumpur) were selected to provide insights into the public sector's role in facilitating or constraining collaboration. Local authorities are critical as they often coordinate logistics, provide resources, and oversee the implementation of regulations that impact the sustainability of sports events (Wallace & Michopoulou, 2021).

3. Merchants and Local Businesses: As key players in the local economy, merchants and small business owners involved in the event were selected to understand their perspectives on how LTDL impacts their businesses, both economically and socially. This group's insights are vital in evaluating the economic sustainability of the event and their level of engagement in the collaborative process (Sharpley & Telfer, 2015).
4. Community Representatives: The involvement of local communities (e.g., from Kota Bharu, Terengganu, Baling) is crucial in understanding the social sustainability aspects of the event. As highlighted by Schulenkorf (2010), community engagement in sports events is fundamental for ensuring long-term social cohesion and ensuring that the community derives meaningful benefits from hosting such events.
5. Event Attendees: The attendees of the event, including international tourists and local spectators, were selected to provide feedback on their experience of the event, its organization, and its overall impact on the community and environment. Their perspectives offer valuable information on the broader social and economic implications of the event (Getz & Page, 2020).

This purposeful selection of informants ensures that the study includes diverse stakeholders who collectively represent the multifaceted nature of Le Tour de Langkawi 2023, thereby allowing for a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder collaboration and sustainability.

3.7.2.1 Categories of Informants:

1 Event Organizers:
Le Tour de Langkawi - Chief Operating Officer
National Sports Council of Malaysia - Director of Event Management
Le Tour de Langkawi - Event Manager
Selangor Sports Council - Assistant Director
Government and Local Authorities:
Local authority - Arm Forces (Meru Raya, Perak)
Local authority - Police (Karak, Pahang)
Local authority - RELA (Baling, Kedah)

2 Local Merchants:
Local Merchant (Baling, Kedah)

Local Merchant (Kuala Lumpur)
Local Merchant (Seremban 2, Negeri Sembilan)

3 **Local Community Representatives:**
Local Community (Meru Raya, Perak)
Local Community (Banda Hilir, Melaka)
Local Community (Kuala Terengganu,
Terengganu) Local Community (Kota Bahru,
Kelantan)

4 **Event Attendees:**
Event Attendees (Genting, Pahang)

3.7.2.2 Selection Criteria

The criteria for selecting informants were informed by the purposeful sampling approach, which ensures that participants have relevant experience or knowledge pertinent to the research questions (Patton, 2002). The following criteria were applied:

a. Direct Involvement

Informants were selected based on their firsthand experience in the planning, organization, or execution of LTDL 2023. This ensured that they could provide relevant and in-depth insights into the collaboration and decision-making processes that shape the event's sustainability efforts.

b. Role Relevance

Informants were chosen based on their specific roles within the event, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives were captured. This approach reflects Schulenkorf (2012), who emphasizes the importance of selecting diverse stakeholders to understand the various dimensions of sustainability in sports event management. By selecting informants with different roles, this study was able to capture both the logistical and social dimensions of sustainability, ensuring a holistic view of stakeholder collaboration.

By selecting informants from various categories, the research ensured a comprehensive representation of the diverse perspectives involved in Le Tour de Langkawi. This diverse dataset allowed the study to explore the complexities of

stakeholder collaboration and its role in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia. Furthermore, the use of triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1994) helped ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings by cross-referencing data from different stakeholder groups. Table 1 is designed to explain the description of the informants and their respective designation as well as the sources of evidence.

Table 3.1
Description of the Informants, Respective Designations and the Sources of Evidence

Informant Description	**Informant Codes**	**Sources of Evidence**
Chief Operating Officer Le Tour de Langkawi	E1	Interview transcription
Director of Event Management National Sports Council of Malaysia	E2	
Event Manager Le Tour de Langkawi	E3	
Assistant Director, Selangor Sports Council	E4	
Local Authority Armed Forces (Meru Raya, Perak)	A1	
Local Authority Police (Karak, Pahang)	A2	
Local Authority RELA (Baling, Kedah)	A3	
Local Merchant (Baling, Kedah)	M1	
Local Merchant (Kuala Lumpur)	M2	
Local Merchant (Seremban 2, Negeri Sembilan)	M3	
Local Community (Meru Raya, Perak)	C1	
Local Community (Banda Hilir, Melaka)	C2	
Event Attendees (Genting, Pahang)	C3	
Local Community (Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu)	C4	
Local Community (Kota Bahru, Kelantan)	C5	

3.7.3 Number of Informant and Saturation Point

In qualitative research, determining the number of informants is not a fixed process, and theoretical saturation is typically assessed during data collection and analysis rather than predetermined at the start (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). For this study, a total of 15 informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that participants were directly involved in the organization and management of LTDL 2023. These informants represented key stakeholders, including event organizers, local authorities, merchants, and community representatives.

Saturation is the point at which no new themes or insights emerge during the data collection process, and the data begins to repeat itself (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, as Charmaz (2006) notes, saturation is an ongoing process that occurs through the dynamic interaction between data collection and analysis. Rather than predetermined, saturation was reached progressively, as the researcher conducted interviews and engaged in ongoing analysis of the data. As the interviews proceeded, it became clear that the informants' responses began to show repetition, with no significant new insights emerging after the 15th interview. This pattern is consistent with the definition of saturation outlined by Guest et al. (2006), who suggest that saturation is achieved when additional informants provide little to no new information.

While 15 informants were chosen based on the purposeful sampling strategy, the decision to stop at this number was based on the data analysis process. By continuously analyzing the data after each interview, the researcher ensured that the sample size remained adequate to capture the depth of information necessary for answering the research questions. This iterative process of data collection and analysis confirmed that 15 informants were sufficient to meet the study's objectives and achieve saturation, ensuring that the findings were sufficiently comprehensive.

3.7.4 Selection of Research Site

This study explored the collaboration among event stakeholders and the event management process in the organization of sports events in Malaysia. According to Yin (2018), selecting a relevant research site is critical to defining the case and understanding the central phenomenon. Boeije (2010) further reiterated the importance of choosing a site that appropriately reflected the issues central to the study. Given these

considerations, the present research focused on LTDL 2023, an internationally recognized cycling event that involves multiple stakeholders, making it an ideal site to explore both collaboration and event management processes.

The LTDL 2023 is a multi-stage race held annually since 1996 and has attracted various stakeholders, including event organizers, local authorities, merchants, and spectators. The research specifically focused on the finish line of each race stage. This site was chosen because it has brought together key stakeholders namely as local authorities, merchants, event organizers, and attendees making it a strategic location to investigate stakeholder collaboration. Moreover, the finish line was a practical focus, given time and logistical constraints, as each stage was completed in approximately under four hours. The finish line served as a focal point through which this study captured the critical interactions and collaboration. These contributed to the success of the event, offering a comprehensive understanding of the event management process and stakeholder dynamics. Following are eight stages of the race hosted in 2023, as shown in Table 2:

Table 3.2
Stage Breakdown and Winner Times of Le Tour de Langkawi 2023

Stage	**Date**	**Start**	**Finish**	**Distance (km)**	**Winner Time**
1	23 September 2023	Kerteh	Kuala Terengganu	187.4	4h 25' 48”
2	24 September 2023	Kuala Terengganu	Kota Bharu	186.2	4h 15' 14"
3	25 September 2023	Jeli	Baling	183.1	4h 14' 13"
4	26 September 2023	Bukit Mertajam	Meru Raya	140.2	3h 06' 05"
5	27 September 2023	Slim River	Genting Highlands	126.4	3h 24' 06"
6	28 September 2023	Karak	Melaka	174.5	4h 08' 19"
7	29 September 2023	Muar	Seremban 2	123.8	2h 31' 45"
8	30 September 2023	Setia Alam	Kuala Lumpur	156.5	3h 12' 27"



Figure 3.2 Le Tour de Langkawi 2023 race route infographic

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ensuring ethical integrity is a fundamental aspect of this study. The ethical guidelines outlined by Merriam and Tisdell (2015), as well as other established scholars, serve as the foundation for the ethical approach used in this study. The following ethical considerations were implemented to ensure this study was conducted responsibly, with due respect for the participants:

1. Informed Consent: As recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2018) as well as Sarantakos (2005), informed consent is a critical part of ensuring participants understand the aims, methods, and potential risks of the study. Prior to participation, all informants were provided with a consent form as attached in Appendix 6 that clearly outlines:
   a) A detailed description of this study, including objectives, procedures, and potential risks (Sarantakos, 2005).
   b) Information on how the participants are selected.
   c) Assurance that participation is voluntary as they may withdraw at any time without consequence.
   d) The confidentiality of their responses and anonymity in the final report.

2. Confidentiality and Anonymity: This study ensured the privacy of all participants by safeguarding their identity. Pseudonyms are used to protect participants' identities, and no identifying details are included in the research findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). All data is securely stored in password-protected files, and only the researcher has access to the raw data.

3. Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw: Consistent with ethical guidelines (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), participation in this study was entirely voluntary. Informants were explicitly informed that they had the right to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. This was emphasized during the consent process.

4. Data Storage and Protection: In accordance with Saunders et al. (2018), all collected data in this study were securely stored and only accessible to the researcher. The data were kept for a reasonable period, following which securely destroyed. This was to ensure that participants' personal information was protected from unauthorized access or misuse.

5. Member Checking: To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommended conducting a process of member checking. This involved sharing preliminary findings with key informants to verify the accuracy of the data and the interpretation of their responses. This step helped to validate the findings and ensured that the participants' views were correctly represented.

6. Respect and Sensitivity: This study adhered to ethical standards of respect, ensuring that all participants were treated with dignity. Sensitivity was exercised throughout the research process, particularly during interviews, to acknowledge any cultural or emotional aspects (Creswell, 2012). This approach aimed to create a safe and respectful environment for all informants.

7. Ethical Approval: This study received research approval through the UiTM Research Ethics Depository (RED) system (refer Appendix 4). This was in compliance with the university's ethical standards for research involving human

participants. The UiTM RED system ensures that this study meets ethical guidelines and aligns with local and international ethical research practices. This approval from the UiTM Ethics Committee guaranteed that this study adhered to the university's ethical framework and legal requirements.

By ensuring that this study was conducted according to these ethical guidelines, the researcher aimed to protect participants' rights, ensure confidentiality, as well as produce reliable and trustworthy research outcomes.

3.9 Data Collection and Protocol

3.9.1 Data Collection Technique

A case study design provides a rich, in-depth understanding of the experiences of individuals or populations within their real-world context (Yin, 2018). This study adopts the case study methodology to explore the dynamics of stakeholder collaboration and the process of organizing LTDL 2023. Yin (2018) emphasizes that case studies are particularly effective in examining complex phenomena within their natural context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined. The use of a single case study allowed this research to delve deeply into the collaborative processes involved in LTDL 2023, focusing on the experiences and interactions of key informants who played central roles in the event.

This approach enabled a comprehensive examination of the stakeholder collaboration involved in LTDL 2023, offering insights into the operational, social, and economic dimensions of event management. Through the case study methodology, the study aimed to understand the context-dependent dynamics of sustainability in large-scale international sports events, as experienced by a diverse range of stakeholders involved in the event's organization.

3.9.1.1 Data Collection and Multiple Sources

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the collaboration and event processes, this study employed two primary data sources: interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders involved in the Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL) 2023, including event organizers, local authorities, merchants, and community

representatives. These interviews provided in-depth insights into the perspectives, experiences, and roles of each stakeholder in the event's planning and execution. Additionally, observations were carried out during the event to capture real-time interactions and dynamics between stakeholders. These observations offered valuable context to the interview data, particularly in understanding the collaborative interactions that occurred on the ground such as how local businesses interacted with event organizers and how the community engaged with the event. Yin (2018) emphasizes the importance of using multiple data sources, even within a single methodology, to enhance the richness and validity of case study findings. In this case, the combination of interviews and observations provided a well-rounded understanding of the stakeholder collaboration process and its impact on the organization of LTDL.

3.9.1.2 Permission and Gatekeepers

Securing permission from gatekeepers is a critical aspect of ensuring access to key stakeholders and research settings (Creswell, 2012). In this study, access was obtained through official channels as attached in Appendix 5, starting with approval from the Ministry of Youth and Sports and then followed by authorization from event organizers and state government representatives. The researcher managed to address potential access challenges by leveraging pre-existing relationships with the National Sports Council of Malaysia and event organizers. Yin (2018) highlighted the importance of access to key individuals within a case study. These relationships are essential for gaining access to the research site, particularly at the event locations, where informants may be more difficult to reach.

3.9.1.3 Pre-existing Relationships

The researcher's experience as a Youth and Sports Officer and the established relationships within the National Sports Council of Malaysia played a crucial role in gaining access to key informants and event sites. These pre-existing relationships offered a strategic advantage in securing permission from event organizers and stakeholders within the event's operational and organizational framework. Yin (2018) reiterated that pre-existing relationships can facilitate access to critical data in a case

study. For this research, these contacts were vital to ensure that the researcher could obtain valuable data from event informants.

3.9.1.4 Ethical Research Approval

Ethical research practices are fundamental to the credibility of any study. This research adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring the confidentiality of all participants and obtaining informed consent prior to data collection (Appendix 6). Participants were fully informed about the research objectives, their right to withdraw at any time, and the use of the data collected. The researcher guaranteed that all collected data were securely stored and only used for the purposes of the research. In accordance with the ethical standards with the UiTM Research Ethics Depository (RED) system, all necessary permissions were obtained, whilst the rights and privacy of participants were strictly protected throughout the study.

3.9.2 Interviews

Interviewing is an essential data collection method when the researcher seeks to understand the subjective experiences, interpretations, and behaviours of participants, particularly when these elements cannot be directly observed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Interviews provide opportunities to explore topics that may not be accessible through other methods such as questionnaires or observation. Hence, this effort enables researchers to gather rich, detailed insights into the participants' views and lived experiences (Blaxter et al., 2006). As DeMarrais (2004) noted, interviews facilitate a conversation between the researcher and participant focused on the research topic, making it an effective technique for exploring complex phenomenon.

3.9.2.1 Types of Interview Structure

Interviews can be structured in various ways, ranging from highly structured, standardized formats to more flexible, unstructured ones. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), the interview structure exists on a continuum from highly structured to semi-structured and unstructured, each with distinct advantages and limitations (Table 3). Creswell (2009) explained that the choice of interview structure should align with the research questions and the depth of information required. A structured interview,

while efficient, may limit the richness of data, whereas an unstructured interview, though yielding more detailed information, can introduce variability in the responses. The semi-structured interview is often the most suitable for qualitative studies as it balances the need for guided conversation with the flexibility to explore new topics as they emerge (Creswell, 2009). In this study, semi-structured interviews are particularly relevant due to the complex and multifaceted nature of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports event management. This approach enables the researcher to probe participants' experiences and perceptions in depth while maintaining focus on key themes related to sustainability and collaboration.

Similar studies in sports event management and stakeholder engagement have successfully employed semi-structured interviews to capture rich, nuanced data. For instance, Wondirad, Tolkach, and King (2020) utilized semi-structured interviews to explore stakeholder perceptions and collaborative dynamics in the management of international sports events. Their approach enabled the collection of in-depth insights into how stakeholders negotiate their roles, address conflicts, and contribute to sustainable event outcomes. This methodology allowed for flexibility in probing unexpected themes, which proved essential for understanding the complexities of multi-stakeholder collaboration. Their successful use of semi-structured interviews underscores the suitability of this method for the present research, which similarly seeks to uncover the diverse perspectives and intricate interactions among stakeholders in the sustainable management of Le Tour de Langkawi.

Table 3.3
Interview Structure Continuum (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015)

Highly Structured/ Standardized	Semi-structured	Unstructured/Informal
●Wording of questions is predetermined ●Order of questions is predetermined ● Interview is oral form of a written survey ● In qualitative studies, usually used to obtain demographic data (age, gender, ethnicity, education, and so on)	● Interview guide includes a mix of more and less structured interview questions ● All questions used flexibly ● Usually, specific data required from all respondents ● Largest part of interview guided by list of questions or issues to be explored ● No predetermined wording or order	● Open ended questions ● Flexible, exploratory ● More like a conversation ● Used when researcher does not know enough about phenomenon to ask relevant questions ● Goal is learning from this interview to formulate questions for later interviews ● Used primarily in ethnography, participant observation, and case study

3.9.2.2 Choice of Semi-Structured Interviews

This study employed the semi-structured interviews. This approach offers the necessary flexibility to allow informants to express their views freely while still maintaining a focus on the research questions. These semi-structured interviews were particularly effective in exploring the roles and experiences of event stakeholders involved in the collaboration and organization of a sports event. This flexibility was vital for uncovering insights into complex issues such as stakeholder coordination, which may not be readily accessible through more rigid methods (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Moreover, open-ended questions allow participants to share their perspectives in depth, providing valuable qualitative data that address the core research question.

3.9.2.3 Rationale for Person-to-Person Interviews

The study conducted face-to-face interviews due to the sensitive nature of the research topic as it focussed on stakeholder collaboration in sports event management. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), one of the advantages of in-person interviews is the opportunity to establish rapport and create a comfortable environment that renders for discussion of sensitive or emotional topics. These personal interactions provided the researcher with the chance to probe deeper into issues that might not emerge in less

personal settings, such as focus groups. Moreover, face-to-face interviews helped ensure clarity in communication and enabled the researcher to observe non-verbal cues, further enriching the data collected (Yin, 2018).

3.9.2.4 Managing Sensitive Topics

The choice of individual interviews also helped manage sensitive topics. Some informants may feel uncomfortable discussing issues in public or group settings, as these topics could be sensitive or potentially emotionally charged. In this research, the semi-structured format allowed the researcher to adjust the flow of conversation and probe deeper into sensitive issues. Hence, this assured participants to feel comfortable expressing their views (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The ability to engage with informants on a personal level can also provide a safe space for participants to share their experiences in ways that would be difficult in a more formal or group-based setting.

3.9.3 Interview Protocol

3.9.3.1 Preparation before the Interview

The researcher began by contacting informants through phone or communication platforms like WhatsApp, a convenient method that reflects modern communication practices. This step confirmed participation and informed the informants about the study. As noted by Merriam and Tisdell (2015), such initial contact was crucial for ensuring informants understand the scope of the study and feel comfortable participating. To enhance trust and transparency, the researcher emailed the accreditation and approval letter from the graduate centre, emphasizing the confidentiality of the data and ensuring informants that their responses would remain anonymous and unpublished without explicit consent (Creswell, 2009).

3.9.3.2 Setting and Conducting the Interview

Interviews were conducted in quiet and neutral locations such as meeting rooms or less crowded cafés to minimize distractions. Hence, it made informants to feel at ease. According to Yin (2018), a comfortable setting fosters open dialogue, critical for

obtaining rich data. The researcher ensured the availability of a reliable audio recording device and a notebook for notetaking to capture detailed responses and prevent data loss.

3.9.3.3 Obtaining Informed Consent

Before the interview began, the researcher clearly explained the study's purpose and secured informed consent through a signed consent form. This process aligned with ethical protocols, ensuring informants' anonymity, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any stage without negative consequences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Creswell, 2009). These practices upheld participant autonomy and ethical research standards.

3.9.3.4 Designing the Interview Questions

Interview questions were crafted based on Patton's (2002) framework, prioritizing clarity, open-endedness, and relevance to the study objectives. Questions such as *"How do you foresee collaboration among stakeholders during the event?"* and *"What processes do you understand will lead to sustainability in this event?"* directly addressed the study's research questions. Open-ended questions encouraged informants to share detailed perspectives, enhancing the richness of the data collected (Patton, 2002).

3.9.3.5 Probing and Follow-Up

During the interviews, the researcher employed probing questions to explore responses further and clarify ambiguities. This ensured deeper insights and a holistic understanding of informants' experiences, a hallmark of effective qualitative research (Yin, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The semi-structured format of the interviews allowed flexibility to adapt the flow of the conversation, enabling the researcher to address emerging issues as they arose.

3.9.3.6 Conclusion and Follow-Up

At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher sought permission to follow up if additional questions arose during the upcoming analysis. This practice ensured completeness and depth in the findings. Additionally, informants were encouraged to recommend other individuals who might offer relevant insights, providing opportunities to further enrich the data. While snowball sampling was not the primary method, this step helped ensure a comprehensive understanding of the stakeholder network involved in organizing the event.

3.9.3.7 Time Consideration

Each interview was designed to last approximately between 45 minutes and one hour, providing ample time for in-depth exploration without overburdening the informants. This duration reflected standard qualitative research practices and allowed for focused yet detailed data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

3.9.4 Observation

Observation is a key method in qualitative research, particularly for exploring stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports events, as demonstrated in this study of Le LTDL 2023. Stake (1995) emphasizes that observation enables researchers to capture the dynamics of real-time interactions, offering deeper insights into complex behaviors that may not be fully articulated through interviews or documents. In this study, observation focused on stakeholders which are the event organizers, local authorities, merchants, and community members during the LTDL 2023 race, aiming to understand how collaboration influences sustainability efforts in sports event management.

This method addressed the first research objective by providing a direct view of stakeholder interactions, particularly in areas such as communication, decision-making, and the integration of sustainability initiatives. Yin (2018) supports the use of multiple data collection methods, including observation, to enrich case study research. By observing these interactions during the race, the researcher identified challenges such as communication breakdowns and resource allocation issues, which may not have been fully captured in interviews.

Furthermore, observation during LTDL 2023 allowed the study to explore the event management processes contributing to sustainability, supporting the second research objective. Observing practices in real-time revealed how stakeholders responded to sustainability challenges and applied principles such as waste management and resource optimization. These insights would have been difficult to gather through interviews alone.

Lastly, the observational data contributed to the development of a sustainable sports event framework, aligning with the third research objective. The firsthand insights gained during the race informed strategies for improving stakeholder collaboration and addressing barriers to effective engagement, providing a foundation for future sustainable event planning.

3.9.5 The Role of the Researcher

In this study, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, which is a key characteristic of qualitative research. As noted by Merriam and Tisdell (2015), the researcher's active role in gathering and interpreting data makes it essential to be mindful of potential biases that could influence the research findings. Biases related to personal experiences, preconceptions, or expectations can skew the analysis and affect the overall credibility of the study. Therefore, the researcher took proactive measures to minimize these biases by maintaining objectivity throughout the data collection and interpretation process.

To avoid such risks, the researcher deliberately employed self-elimination as the criteria for eliminating preconceptions. This was done with an initial epistemological position of adopting an 'immersion without prejudice' in the data. The researcher was fully committed to exploring and explicating the central phenomenon of interest, through mature and unambiguous method. Yin (2018) cautioned that one must appear impartial in the process to have no impact on the dataset in question and to avoid selective interpretation of this data.

3.9.6 Ensuring Validity and Reliability of this Study

In qualitative research, ensuring the validity and reliability of findings was crucial to establishing the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. This section

outlines the strategies employed to ensure that the findings accurately reflected participants' experiences and produced consistent, dependable results. These strategies not only enhanced the credibility of the study, but also contributed to the robustness of the insights derived from the data.

3.9.6.1 Addressing Validity

Validity in qualitative research refers to the credibility of the findings and the extent to which the research accurately represented the context, participants' perspectives, and the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, several strategies were employed to ensure that the findings were valid and accurately reflected the participants' experiences in the context of stakeholder collaboration and sustainability within Le Tour de Langkawi 2023.

a. Member Checking

To ensure the validity of the findings, member checking was utilized. This process involved sharing the research findings with participants and asking them to review and confirm the accuracy of the representation of their perspectives. This not only allowed for corrections, but also provided an opportunity for participants to validate the results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By involving participants in the verification process, member checking ensured that the study's findings faithfully captured their experiences, hence increasing the overall credibility of the research.

b. Constant Comparative Method

The Constant Comparative Method is another critical strategy used to ensure validity. This method is a widely recognized approach in qualitative research that involved the continuous comparison of data from different sources, participants, and points in time (Johnson, 1997; Morse et al., 2002). This method facilitated the identification of emerging patterns, inconsistencies, and connections within the data, allowing for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the participants' experiences. By applying Constant Comparative Method, this study was able to cross-verify findings from different sources, ensuring that the conclusions drawn were consistent and accurately reflected the participants' lived realities.

c. Triangulation

Triangulation was also employed to further strengthen the validity of this research. By using multiple data sources, methods, or theories, the study cross-verified the findings, minimizing the risk of bias inherent in relying on a single source or method (Patton, 2002). For example, data from interviews and observations were compared to ensure that the results were consistent and not influenced by any one method or viewpoint. Triangulation not only enhanced the accuracy of the findings, but also ensured a comprehensive understanding of stakeholder collaboration in the context of LTDL 2023.

d. Supervisory Committee Review

Supervisory Committee Review was incorporated to enhance the validity of this study. The supervisory committee, consisting of experts in the field, reviewed the data and analysis at various stages of the research. Their feedback provided an additional layer of oversight, ensuring that the interpretation of the data remained accurate, consistent, and aligned with the participants' actual experiences. This review process was integral in maintaining the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

3.9.6.2 Addressing Reliability

Reliability in qualitative research refers to the consistency and dependability of the research process. While this qualitative research did not aim for exact replication, it emphasized the systematic application of methods that ensured the research process was transparent and well-documented (Yin, 2018). Therefore, in this study, several methods were employed to address the reliability of the findings.

a. Systematic Documentation and Transparency

To ensure reliability, the study rigorously documented each step of the research process, from data collection through to analysis. Detailed field notes, coding procedures, and methodological steps were recorded, providing transparency and ensuring that future researchers could replicate the methodology (Harding, 2013). This systematic documentation allowed for an in-depth examination of the data collection

and analysis processes, providing dependability in the research findings by making the methodology transparent and replicable.

b. Constant Comparative Method to Enhance Reliability

The Constant Comparative Method also played a significant role in enhancing the reliability of the study. By continuously comparing data segments across different participants and sources, this method ensured that the analysis was consistent, systematic, and free from researcher bias (Memon et al., 2017). This consistent approach in categorizing and coding data contributed to the reliability of the results, ensuring that similar data were treated similarly throughout the analysis process of the research.

c. Peer Review and Reflexivity

To further enhance the reliability of this study, the research process incorporated peer review and maintained a focus on reflexivity. Regular discussions with colleagues and experts provided valuable feedback with regard to the approach of this study, hence it helped to minimize bias and improved consistency. Reflexivity involved the researcher reflecting on his own biases, preconceptions, and influence on the research process (Finlay, 2002). This allowed the researcher to remain aware of and address any potential biases, ensuring that the findings were grounded in the participants' experiences rather than influenced by the researcher's assumptions.

d. Supervisory Committee Review for Consistency

The supervisory committee also contributed to ensuring the reliability of the study. The members' ongoing review of the research process focussed on the data collection, coding, and analysis. This assistance has provided an additional check on the consistency and transparency of the research process. The committee feedback ensured that the study adhered to a systematic approach, minimizing researcher bias and enhancing the reliability of the findings.

3.10 Data Interpretation: Thematic Data Analysis

This study employed thematic analysis to interpret data collected on stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia. Creswell (2009) described data analysis as a systematic process of organizing, interpreting, and representing data to reveal deeper insights. Yin (2018) emphasized that case study research requires a methodical approach to uncover patterns and themes, which thematic analysis effectively supports.

Thematic analysis, developed by Holton (1970) and refined by Braun and Clarke (2013), was chosen for this study, for its ability to identify recurring themes and relationships within the dataset. This method helped address the research questions by uncovering how stakeholder collaboration contributed to sustainable sports events, the management processes involved, and their role in establishing a sustainable event framework. The analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2013) seven-step process as illustrated in Figure 7:

1. **Transcribing** – Converting interviews and observations into written form.
2. **Reading and Familiarization** – Immersing in the data to gain a comprehensive understanding.
3. **Coding** – Identifying and labelling relevant data segments.
4. **Searching for Themes** – Grouping codes into broader themes aligned with the research questions.
5. **Reviewing Themes** – Refining and validating the identified themes.
6. **Defining and Naming Themes** – Clearly articulating the scope and significance of each theme.
7. **Finalizing the Analysis** – Synthesizing themes into a coherent narrative to answer the research questions.

By using thematic analysis, the study systematically identified patterns in stakeholder collaboration and sports event management processes, offering insights into their collective role in organizing sustainable sports events and contributing to a sustainable event framework. This method aligned with the study's goal of advancing knowledge in the field of sports event management and sustainability.

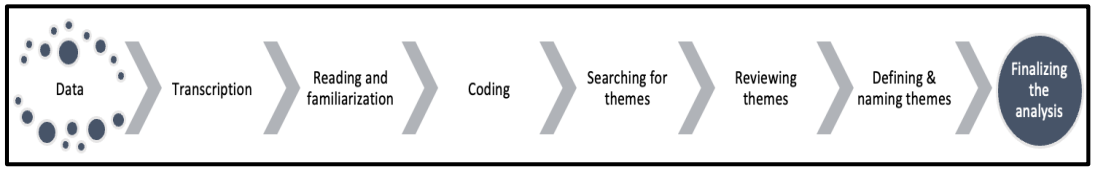


Figure 3.3 Seven Steps of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) Self-elaborate

3.10.1 Initial Steps: Transcribing, Reading, and Familiarization

The data analysis for this study followed a systematic process involving transcription, reading, and familiarization with the data. These were essential steps in ensuring a thorough understanding of the stakeholders' perspectives on collaboration in the organization of sustainable sports events in Malaysia. As recommended by Braun and Clarke (2013), these steps were foundational for a rigorous thematic analysis.

3.10.1.1Transcribing

The process began with transcribing the recorded interviews. All interviews were recorded using a digital audio device, and the transcriptions were manually typed into Microsoft Word. Given that the interviews were conducted primarily in Bahasa Melayu, transcribing them in their original language ensured that the full depth of the informants' experiences and insights was preserved. To ensure accuracy and meaningful translation, the transcripts were then sent to an English language expert for back-to-back translation. This method ensured that the essence and intent of the original conversations were maintained during the translation process.

According to Braun and Clarke (2013), transcription is crucial for preserving the data in its entirety, which enables a faithful representation of participants' views. In this research, transcription allowed for a careful examination of each word and phrase in context, preventing any loss of important information. Transcription made the data more manageable and accessible for detailed coding and analysis, as it transformed spoken data into written form that can be revisited multiple times during the analysis process.

3.10.1.2Reading

After the transcription, the researcher scrutinised through the data multiple times to become fully immersed in the content. Reading the transcriptions several times helped the researcher form an initial understanding of the data. During this phase, the researcher engaged with the data at a surface level as well as identified recurring phrases, concepts, including any immediate patterns or themes that might emerge. This approach is supported by Braun and Clarke (2013) as they argued that repeated reading is essential for establishing a strong foundation for the thematic analysis. The researcher became familiar with the structure and key topics within the data, which helped in formulating deeper insights during later stages of analysis.

Through this repeated reading process, the researcher began to identify possible themes or patterns, central to the study's research questions, such as how stakeholder collaboration contributes to sustainable sports events. Reading also allowed the researcher to notice potential gaps or inconsistencies in the data, to be explored in greater detail during the later stages of the analysis.

3.10.1.3Familiarization

Familiarization with the data is an essential phase that involves deepening the researcher's understanding of the context, nuances, and meanings within the data. Braun and Clarke (2013) emphasized that this step is vital for gaining insight into the data's underlying themes and participants' perspectives. The researcher engaged with the data on a deeper level, focusing on the context in which responses were given by identifying emotional cues, implicit messages, and unspoken aspects of the participants' experiences.

The process of familiarization involves reading the transcripts multiple times, making detailed notes on significant patterns or ideas that emerge, and considering how these patterns relate to the research questions. By familiarizing oneself with the data, the researcher can identify subtle details such as body language or tone that might suggest deeper emotional or relational dynamics in the data, especially in relation to stakeholder collaboration.

During this phase, the researcher also applied an analytical sensibility (Braun & Clarke, 2013), using the theoretical framework and research questions to interpret the

data. This helped to ensure that the analysis remained focused on the central phenomena stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events while allowing for the emergence of new, relevant themes. By the end of the familiarization phase, the researcher gained a comprehensive understanding of the data, which served as the foundation for the coding and theme identification process.

3.10.2 Coding

3.10.2.1 Open Coding (Disassembling)

The coding process is the identification of relevant data pieces from the data collected to answer the research questions. Braun and Clarke (2013) define code as a particular word or phrase that encapsulates the essence of the reason one believes that a certain data is relevant. In the open coding stage, the first step is to break down the transcribed data into manageable chunks and assign labels (codes) to these segments. This stage is exploratory, without predefined categories, allowing for a broader understanding of the data. The goal is to capture a wide range of insights that address the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The researcher carefully read through the transcribed data and identified specific segments such as sentences, phrases, or even words that encapsulate key ideas and relevant information for each research question. This process allows for an open exploration of the data without restricting it to predefined categories (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Once the key segments were identified, a code was assigned to each segment. Codes are short labels or keywords that summarize the essence of the data. For example, initial codes such as “organizers”, “merchants”, “community and authority roles”, “networks”, “collaboration”, “logistics coordination” and “community spectatorship” are used to capture the main topics of discussion in the interviews. This stage was crucial for capturing the diversity of responses from participants. By assigning open codes to the data, the researcher ensured that no potentially valuable insights were overlooked (Yin, 2018). This process allowed for flexibility, as new codes and patterns can emerge from the data throughout its examination.

3.10.2.2Axial Coding (Reassembling)

Once the initial open coding was completed, the researcher moved to axial coding, where the focus shifted to organizing and connecting the initial codes to identify relationships and broader themes. This stage helped refine the data and formed more abstract interpretations that answered the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Yin, 2018).

During the axial coding, the researcher revisited the initial codes and began grouping them based on similarities or relationships. Codes that were closely related or shared similar meanings were merged, while others might be subdivided or refined. For example, codes such as "network", "trust", "collaboration", "alliances" and "engagement" might be grouped under a broader theme like "stakeholder partnership".

The researcher then identified categories, or groups of related codes, that collectively represented emerging themes. These themes began to explain the patterns in the data. For instance, the theme of "stakeholder partnership" could reflect the dynamics of collaboration among various stakeholders in organizing the event (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

As part of axial coding, the researcher examined how different themes and codes were interrelated by exploring questions like "How do these themes connect to each other?" This helped to identify deeper connections and to refine the understanding of how stakeholder collaboration contributed to the sustainability of sports events (Yin, 2018).

By applying open and axial coding, the researcher systematically categorized and analyzed the data. For this research, open coding captured a broad spectrum of ideas, ensuring that all relevant data were included, while axial coding connected these ideas into more abstract themes. Together, these coding stages allowed for a more detailed understanding of the collaboration between stakeholders and its role in organizing a sustainable sports event in Malaysia, as highlighted by Braun and Clarke (2013) as well as Yin (2018).

3.10.3 Identifying Patterns: Codes to Themes (Sub-Themes and Themes)

Once coding was completed, the researcher identified patterns in the data to move from individual codes to broader sub-themes and themes. With reference to Braun

and Clarke (2013), this research process involved recognizing significant groupings in the data that directly addressed the research questions. The researcher first examined the frequency of code appearances to identify prominent patterns. However, with regard to this research, as Braun and Clarke (2013) noted, codes that appeared less frequently could still hold critical relevance and must not be overlooked. These less frequent codes often uncovered subtle but meaningful insights that contributed to a deeper understanding of stakeholder collaboration and event management processes.

The researcher organized related codes into sub-themes and further consolidated them into overarching themes. For example, codes like "trust", "network", "collaboration", "engagement" and "alliances" may form a sub-theme under a broader theme such as "stakeholder partnerships". This process being iterative had the researcher revisited the data multiple times to refine the themes, hence ensuring their robustness and grounding in the dataset. Each theme was evaluated based on its relevance to the study's research questions, such as understanding how stakeholders collaborate to support sustainable sports events or how event management processes contribute to sustainability. Finally, these patterns were integrated into the study's theoretical framework, such as Shulenkorf's S4D model, ensuring the findings were both data-driven and theoretically grounded. By systematically identifying themes, the researcher constructed a coherent narrative that offered a comprehensive understanding of the collaboration and processes involved in organizing sustainable sports events.

3.10.4 Searching, Reviewing, and Finalizing Themes

A theme captures significant patterns in the data related to the research questions, serving as a central organizing concept that links codes and sub-themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study identified themes by grouping related codes into sub-themes and further organized these sub-themes into broader themes. The researcher also considered unexpected relationships that may emerge during analysis, ensuring that the themes reflected both anticipated and unanticipated patterns within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Further to the above, the researcher created a thematic table to map the relationship among codes, subthemes, and themes to maintain clarity and structure (Table 4). This table provides a visual summary of how the data align with the research objectives. Braun and Clarke (2013) reiterated the importance of revising themes after

their initial identification to ensure coherence and alignment with the research questions. This iterative refinement helped the researcher remain selective, focusing on telling a clear and relevant story rather than attempting to cover all aspects of the data.

The researcher also sought consultation and agreement from the supervisory committee to ensure the validity of the theme, apart from to ensure the alignment with the study's theoretical framework. Discussion resolved differences in interpretation due to diverse perspectives, enabling further refinement of themes. During this stage, the researcher's adjustment was to maintain focus and relevance, if the themes seemed unrelated to the research questions. This process ensured that the final themes robustly captured the stakeholder collaboration and event management in organizing sustainable sports events.

Table 3.4
Sample of this Research Themes and Sub-themes with their Associated Codes (Braun & Clarke, 2013)

Interview excerpts	**Codes**	**Subthemes**	**Theme**
"...As merchants, our role here is solely focused on selling our food."(M3)	Merchant's Role	Stakeholder Roles	Stakeholder Collaboration
"...I have been here selling food around 10 years.." (M3)			
"...today we promoting and selling MyVita Lab. Its a supplement for dietary products, sports nutrition, and energy drinks... (M2)			
"...My main function during LTDL events is to ensure security and manage any issues that may arise, as part of the 'Ops Cantas' operation." (A2)	Authorities' Role		
"we are directed to assist in managing the event safety…" (A1)			
"...I received instructions to manage the LTDL event and ensure security as part of my duty assignment…". (A3)			
"...I think the community is more like spectators, adding excitement to the event…" (C4)	Communities' Role		
"...we know the race will be held here…so I come to support our rider..(C2)			

"...I am representing the MSN, the caretaker overseeing the whole event process, assumed the role of de facto organizer for the reestablishment of LTDL..." (E2)	Organizer's Role
"...Our team was responsible for managing the start lines of the race...This included liaising with local authorities and making sure the race could happen and ran smoothly in Selangor…" (E4)	
"...As the COO, my primary responsibility is vast... for example, to oversee the technical aspects of LTDL's organization. This includes managing logistics, ensuring the smooth operation of race routes, coordinating with local authorities, and so on..."(E1)	

3.10.5 Reporting Analysis

The final step in thematic analysis is presenting themes and sub-themes as a coherent narrative that answers the research questions. This process builds on the prior stages of transcription, familiarization, coding, and theme development, ensuring the findings are grounded in the data and aligned with the study's objectives. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), this step involves crafting a meaningful narrative that integrates data with relevant literature and theory, highlighting both anticipated and emerging insights.

The following are themes identified, mainly "stakeholder collaboration", "trust and networks", and "sustainability practices" are presented alongside sub-themes like "logistical coordination" and "community engagement". Each theme was supported by data excerpts, such as quotations, to illustrate its relevance to the research questions. These themes were also linked to theoretical frameworks, such as Shulenkorf's S4D model, to contextualize the findings within the existing knowledge. As new patterns emerged, alternative theoretical perspectives were introduced to extend or challenge current frameworks (Bendassolli, 2013).

To maintain coherence, the researcher focused on themes directly related to the research questions, prioritizing those that illuminated stakeholder collaboration and sustainable event management processes. Visual tools like thematic tables were employed to organize and present the findings clearly, showing the relationship among codes, sub-themes, and main themes.

Finally, the narrative was refined through iterative review and consultation with the supervisory committee, ensuring alignment with the research objectives and theoretical framework. This systematic approach ensured the findings contribute meaningfully to both the theoretical discourse and practical applications in sustainable sports event management.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted for exploring the role of stakeholder collaboration in the process of organizing a sustainable sports event in Malaysia. Guided by a case study research design, this study focuses on understanding the lived experiences and perceptions of stakeholders involved in the organization of the Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL). Yin (2018) emphasizes that case studies are particularly effective in examining complex phenomena within their natural context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined. This approach is particularly suited to addressing the study's research questions by uncovering collaborative dynamics and management processes that contribute to sustainability in sports events.

This study adopted a qualitative methodology, as recommended by Yin (2018) and Stake (1995), emphasizing the importance of real-life context in exploring complex social phenomenon. The research is structured to address the following questions:

1. How do stakeholders' collaboration contribute to a sustainable sports event in Malaysia?
2. What is the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event?
3. How can stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process contribute to establishing a sustainable sports event framework?

To gather rich and meaningful data, this study employed in-depth semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including event organizers, local authorities, community representatives, and merchants. These interviews were designed to capture detailed perspectives on stakeholder roles, collaborative practices, and management processes in organizing a sustainable sports event. Stake (1995)

highlighted that such qualitative methods are essential in case study research, as they provide a detailed and holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

The data collected was analyzed using thematic analysis, following the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2013). This method allowed the researcher to identify recurring patterns and themes in the data, offering insights into the collaborative mechanisms and sustainability practices among stakeholders. The analysis was aligned with the study's research questions and theoretical framework, ensuring that findings were directly relevant to the organization and management of sustainable sports events.

By combining a phenomenological approach with thematic analysis, and integrating Yin's (2018) case study methodology, this chapter establishes a robust framework for exploring stakeholder collaboration and its role in creating sustainable sports events. This methodological approach not only provided a clear path for answering the research questions, but also contributed to the broader discourse on sustainable event management.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

4.1 Preamble

This chapter describes the results of the study, fulfilling the research objectives and answering the research questions, all of which focused on stakeholder collaboration and event management in sustainable sports event in Malaysia. The work of analysis is based on thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2013) guidelines and has been conducted using the ATLAS-ti software. This approach made it easier to transcribe and code data into useful codes and subcodes that reflected the nature of stakeholders' interactions and the nature of event management.

This study utilizes data from 15 semi-structured interviews with purposively sampled participants, namely event organizers, local authorities, merchants, and members of the community accommodate with direct observation conducted during the LTDL 2023 from September 23rd to 30th, 2023. Analyzing the 15 case transcripts also helped in understanding the nature of the phenomenon as well as coming up with behavioural patterns and new themes as recommended in qualitative research (Akoh, 2020; Zach, 2006). Hence, this step makes it easier to arrive at credible results and analysis since the process is thorough (Milinga et al., 2022).

Akoh (2020) and Zach (2006) argued that qualitative research is valuable for determining patterns, behaviours, and themes that are not discernible using other methods. This current research highlights the need for a detailed analysis of transcripts to identify patterns that are consistent with theoretical assumptions. Henceforth, this comes up with new theorizations that are also in line with the purpose and methodology of the present study. In respect to these points, the use of such qualitative research practices helps to enhance and substantiate the understanding of the activities and relationships of stakeholders and the processes within the event.

The results are organized by key themes that emerged from the analysis, mainly stakeholder roles, partnership development, communication strategies, community involvement, operational planning, coordination efforts, safety management, and drivers of sustainability. Such themes offer a holistic view through which the relational dynamics of stakeholder collaboration and the processes of events can be viewed.

4.2 Results

This chapter presents the results of the study, structured to address the research questions on stakeholder collaboration and sports event management processes in the context of sustainable sports events in Malaysia. The analysis is based on the data from 15 semi-structured interviews conducted during the LTDL 2023. The results are organized in terms of the study's three research questions. Each section presents the results systematically, highlighting key themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis. These three research questions are as follow:

1. **Research Question 1**
   How does stakeholder collaboration contribute to a sustainable sports event in Malaysia?
2. **Research Question 2**
   What is the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event?
3. **Research Question 3**
   How can stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process contribute to establishing a sustainable sport event framework?

4.3 Results for Research Question 1

This section presents the results for Research Question 1: *How does stakeholder collaboration contribute to a sustainable sports event in Malaysia?* The findings highlight the pivotal roles played by various stakeholder groups and the collaborative networks they formed to support the sustainability of Le Tour de Langkawi. The results emphasize the interdependent efforts of organizers, authorities, merchants, and community members, illustrating how their collective actions advanced sustainability goals throughout the event. Insights were derived from interviews with 15 key informants who were directly involved in LTDL 2023. The data are organized into five overarching themes, each further broken down into sub-themes and detailed codes that reflect specific aspects of collaboration.

4.3.1 Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities in Le Tour de Langkawi

4.3.1.1 Stakeholder Roles

The success of LTDL 2023 was made possible by the collaboration of several key stakeholder groups. Each played a unique role, and more importantly, each group helped support and balance the others. This interaction between stakeholders including event organizers, authorities, merchants, and community members was essential in addressing challenges and ensuring the event ran smoothly.

4.3.1.2 Organizer Role

At the heart of the event were the organizers**,** who handled the overall planning and coordination. Their responsibilities included managing logistics, arranging technical aspects, and working closely with local authorities. As one representative from the National Sports Council of Malaysia (MSN) explained, *"I am representing the MSN, the caretaker overseeing the whole event process, assumed the role of de facto organizer for the reestablishment of LTDL…"* [E2]. Another organizer shared, *"…Our team was responsible for managing the start lines of the race... This included liaising with local authorities and making sure the race could happen and ran smoothly in Selangor..."* [E4]. The Chief Operating Officer of LTDL 2023 emphasized the broad scope of their work: *"…As the COO, my primary responsibility is vast... for example, to oversee the technical aspects of LTDL's organization. This includes managing logistics, ensuring the smooth operation of race routes, coordinating with local authorities, and so on…"* [E1]. Base on observation during the LTDL 2023 race, the organizers were observed frequently liaising with local authorities to finalize logistics and ensure race routes were clear. The seamless coordination demonstrated on the ground showed how organizers effectively managed both technical and strategic aspects. Their proactive communication with authorities, particularly in areas like road closures and race timing, was key to the event's smooth execution.

4.3.1.3 Authority Role

The result also showed the organizers could not handle everything on their own. This is where authorities**,** including police and RELA personnel, played a key

supportive role. They were responsible for maintaining safety, managing the crowd, and responding to any issues on the ground. One officer explained, *"...My main function during LTDL events is to ensure security and manage any issues that may arise, as part of the 'Ops Cantas' operation."* [A2]. Another added, *"...We are directed to assist in managing the event safety..."* [A1]. Their ability to coordinate effectively with other agencies was critical, as one authority noted: *"...The relationship between RELA, the police, and the district office is described as strong and united. We have effective collaboration among stakeholders..."* [A3]. This close cooperation allowed organizers to focus on their tasks without being overwhelmed by public safety concerns. This result of the study is in line from observation which the presence of authorities was vital. Their coordination was especially evident at high-risk areas, such as major intersections and crowd-heavy zones. The police and RELA worked seamlessly with organizers, ensuring race safety while allowing event operations to proceed unhindered. Their visible presence in securing race routes and managing the crowd's movement contributed significantly to the smooth flow of the event.

4.3.1.4 Merchant Role

While organizers and authorities ensured smooth operations and public safety, merchants added economic and experiential value to the event. They engaged the crowd by offering food, drinks, and health-related products, helping to create a festive and inviting atmosphere. One merchant explained, *"...As merchants, our role here is solely focused on selling our food..."* [M3], while another shared, *"...Today we are promoting and selling MyVita Lab. It's a supplement for dietary products, sports nutrition, and energy drinks..."* [M2]. These activities not only supported local businesses, but also helped attract more visitors and keep them engaged throughout the event. Undeniably, merchants were observed interacting actively with attendees, many of whom stopped by to purchase food or beverages. The merchants' booths, situated along the race route, played a pivotal role in maintaining a lively atmosphere, contributing not just economically but also by enhancing the event experience for spectators.

4.3.1.5 Community Role

Completing this ecosystem were the community, whose informal contributions added energy and spirit to the event. Although they were not involved in organizing or managing the logistics, their presence as spectators was crucial for building atmosphere and enthusiasm. One local resident observed, *"...I think the community is more like spectators, adding excitement to the event…"* [C4]. Another stated, *"...My contribution is all about bringing enthusiasm and energy to the event…"* [C5], and a third shared simply, *"...I come to meet the riders, It's exciting..."* [C2]. From the observation, The community's role as spectators during LTDL 2023 was critical to the event's success. Observing the crowd's energy along the race routes, it was clear that their enthusiasm was contagious. Spectators cheered loudly, encouraged participants, and expressed pride in the event's significance. The presence of the community helped enhance the atmosphere, creating a festive environment that contributed to the overall success of the race.

4.3.1.6 Stakeholders Partnership

The success of LTDL 2023 was largely driven by the strong partnerships among its stakeholders. Beyond carrying out their individual duties, stakeholders actively engaged in cooperation through shared networks, mutual trust, inter-agency collaboration, strategic alliances, and ongoing engagement. These elements not only streamlined event operations, but also created a unified, coordinated approach to managing a complex, large-scale event (Cheng & Wong, 2021).

4.3.1.7 Networks

A key enabler of this partnerships was the presence of well-established networks between stakeholders. These networks supported effective communication, logistical coordination, and resource alignment across agencies. One organizer described, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K…"* [E2]. Another added, *"...After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local authorities, particularly MBSA, the municipal council… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to*

ensure everything was lined up locally…" [E4]. These quotes illustrate how structured communication and regular interaction were foundational to successful collaboration. An authority figure confirmed this by stating, *"…The relationship between RELA, the police, and the district office is described as strong and united. We have effective collaboration among agencies…"* [A3]. Observing the interactions during LTDL 2023 revealed the importance of these networks in ensuring the event's smooth operation. At the central meeting points, the collaboration between the various agencies, such as the State Sports Council and local authorities, was coordinated meticulously. These meetings were critical for setting expectations and ensuring everyone was aligned, facilitating seamless communication across different stakeholder groups during the event.

4.3.1.8 Trust

In addition to structured networks, trust played a vital role in sustaining these partnerships. Stakeholders needed to rely on one another to fulfil their roles and work towards common objectives. An officer highlighted this, saying, *"…Cooperation among various agencies, including the police, has been effective, with clear instructions provided by the police chief, ensuring smooth coordination and management of the event…"* [A1]. On the organizers' side, leadership transparency helped build trust: *"…During the meetings, he (E1) would outline what was expected from us, and we'd work from there to ensure that all the logistics and local planning were in place…"* [E4]. A senior organizer added, *"…I'm attending central meetings to contribute ideas, suggesting themes, routes, and enhancing the image of LTDL. Additionally, I serve as the spokesperson for media and press, ensuring clear communication of LTDL's objectives and updates…"* [E1].

4.3.1.9 Inter-agency Collaboration

Inter-agency collaboration was also essential for managing the event's logistical and safety demands. Organizers acknowledged the importance of working across multiple ministries and departments. One noted, *"…Identifying key stakeholders is vital… While various ministries are involved, the State Sports Council has become particularly significant in our approach…"* [E2]. Another echoed this sentiment:

"…The stakeholders in LTDL play crucial roles in various aspects of organizing the event… It is important for different stakeholders to collaborate to ensure the success of the event…" [E1]. Enforcement agencies also supported this view: *"…Cooperation among various agencies, including the police, has been effective…"* [A1]. This study found that inter-agency collaboration improves problem-solving and helps prevent logistical delays. From observation, the integration of different agencies was clearly visible. For example, police officers worked alongside municipal officers to ensure that race routes were clear and that crowds were well managed. This inter-agency collaboration was evident in the way teams from various departments responded rapidly to any emerging issues whether related to security, crowd control, or logistical challenges. The continuous presence of different agencies in both race headquarters and key race stages ensured that potential issues were handled promptly, minimizing disruptions to the event.

4.3.1.10 Alliances

The strategic alliances between federal and state-level agencies were key to aligning resources and ensuring smooth implementation. These alliances bridged the gap between policy and practice. As one organizer explained, *"…Strengthening partnerships with the State Sports Council has been crucial for effective coordination and successful execution…"* [E2]. Another reiterated, *"…The stakeholders in LTDL play crucial roles in various aspects of organizing the event. It is important for different stakeholders to collaborate to ensure the success of the event…"* [E1]. A team member credited the MSN role in facilitating these efforts: *"The key person on the MSN side was Emir. He played an important role in guiding us on what Selangor could do to help make this event a success."* [E4].

4.3.1.11 Engagement

Lastly, the overall success of the event was deeply rooted in active engagement from stakeholders. They were not passive contributors but were involved throughout the planning and delivery process. One organizer shared, *"…Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K…"* [E2].

Another elaborated, *"…After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local authorities… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication…"* [E4]. An authority figure reinforced this by saying, *"…The relationship between RELA, the police, and the district office is described as strong and united. We have an effective collaboration among agencies…"* [A3]. This study found the commitment to active engagement from all stakeholders was particularly evident during the event. Observing the team meetings, it was clear that continuous collaboration took place, particularly during real-time decision-making processes. Stakeholders were seen exchanging updates and discussing logistical adjustments, especially during unanticipated circumstances like weather changes or security issues. This consistent communication and involvement reinforced the event's success, ensuring that each stakeholder felt both responsible for and invested in the outcome of the event.

4.3.2 Stakeholders Communication and Coordination in Le Tour de Langkawi

4.3.2.1 Communication

Effective communication and coordination among stakeholders are foundational to the successful execution of large-scale events such as LTDL 2023. This theme explores how various communication strategies, logistical coordination efforts, campaign outreach, and safety communication practices have been used to align stakeholder actions and ensure a smooth, cohesive event experience.

4.3.2.2 Communication Strategies

One of the most important parts of this process was using the right communication strategies**.** Regular meetings, official letters, and simple day-to-day chats helped different teams stay informed and connected. As one organizer explained, *"We mainly communicate with main organizers like KBS and MSN through regular meetings to discuss event logistics and updates. With the state council, it's a mix of meetings and official mail for important decisions and updates."* [E1]. These regular discussions helped everyone understand their tasks. Another organizer added, *"…During the meetings, he (MSN) would outline what was expected from us, and we'd work from there to ensure that all the logistics and local planning were in place…"*

[E4]. Building strong relationships with the State Sports Council also helped a lot: *"Strengthening partnerships with the State Sports Council has been crucial for effective coordination and successful execution."* [E2].

4.3.2.3 Logistics Coordination

Communication was also very important for logistics coordination. Different groups such as local councils, the police, and national agencies had to work together to plan road access, crowd control, and safety. One organizer said, *"...Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K..."* [E2]. Another shared, *"...After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local authorities, particularly MBSA, the municipal council… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally…"* [E4].

4.3.2.4 Event Campaigns

The event campaigns helped spread information to the public. These campaigns used TV, radio, social media, and messaging apps to let people know about the event. A local community member shared, *"...I get updates from the Sports Arena through various channels. Many of us tune in to channel 801 on Astro to stay informed… Even Radio Tiga, Radio Perak has also broadcasted the information, ensuring widespread awareness within the community…"* [C1]. Authorities also used platforms like WhatsApp to reach people quickly, *"...Communication efforts, including ..., social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents…"* [A1]. From what this study observed, the effectiveness of these event campaigns became clear. Observations showed that attendees were engaged not only through traditional media such as radio broadcasts but also through social media platforms, where event updates were shared in real-time. People were seen checking their phones for the latest updates, showing how digital campaigns kept the crowd informed and engaged. Social media walls set up at event venues also displayed live race progress, allowing spectators to follow the race closely.

4.3.2.5 Safety Communication

Another key part of communication was sharing safety communication. This made sure that everyone within the event areas including residents, vendors, and participants knew what to expect during the event and how to stay safe. One officer explained, *"…Cooperation among local residents, businesses, and authorities is described as excellent, with businesses setting up stalls, residents attending the event, and the local council informing everyone in advance…"* [A2]. An organizer also said, *"…After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local authorities… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication…"* [E4]. According to Kim and Lee (2021), well-managed safety communication significantly reduces public anxiety and improves compliance with event guidelines.

4.3.2.6 Communication Platforms

In organizing an event as complex as LTDL 2023 choosing the right platforms to share information is just as important as the message itself. Different stakeholder in LTDL 2023 namely the organizers, authorities, and community members used both digital and traditional platforms to stay connected, coordinate tasks, and engage with the public. This section explores the communication platform used in LTDL 2023 ensuring the messages reached a wide and diverse audience.

4.3.2.7 Digital Platforms

The digital media played a central role in making communication fast, efficient, and accessible. Tools like WhatsApp, email, and social media were used not only to coordinate between agencies, but also to keep the public informed. An authority member explained, *"…Communication efforts, including …, social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents…"* [A1]. These platforms made it easy to share updates in real time, particularly in group chats and local community pages. Another officer shared, *"…They learned about the event through various channels. Firstly, the community was informed via Facebook posts and updates from the local council page. Additionally, many residents discussed it in WhatsApp groups…"* [A2].

These examples show how digital tools helped create a two-way communication flow by allowing both stakeholders and the public to stay informed and engaged.

4.3.2.8 Printed Media

While digital media was fast and widespread, printed media also played an important supporting role especially for older residents or those less active online. Banners along roads, local newspapers, and radio broadcasts helped ensure no group was left out. As one officer described, *"…Communication efforts, including banners along roads … have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents and ensuring smooth coordination among stakeholders…"* [A1]. These physical signs were not only helpful for promotion, but also for guiding traffic and providing key event information. A community member added, *"…For older community members, they rely heavily on traditional media like radio and newspapers to get information about events like Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)…"* [C2]. On-site observations during LTDL 2023 confirmed the importance of printed media, especially for engaging older community members and those less active on digital platforms. Large banners were prominently displayed along the race route and at event entry points, providing vital information about race schedules and road closures.

4.3.2.9 Community Engagement and Involvement

Community engagement played a key role in making LTDL 2023 more inclusive, lively, and meaningful. The active involvement of local community helped create a vibrant atmosphere, while also building stronger emotional and cultural ties between the public and the event. Their participation was not only seen in their presence at the event, but also in the sense of ownership and pride they expressed, which added to the overall success of LTDL 2023.

4.3.3 Facilitating Active Community Participation

4.3.3.1 Local Community Engagement

The contribution of local communities went far beyond being spectators. Their presence brought energy and a strong sense of identity to the event. Residents expressed

pride in taking part, even informally. As one participant shared, *"My contribution is all about bringing enthusiasm and energy to the event, even though I'm not officially involved in organizing it..."* [C5]. Organizers recognized this passion and made efforts to involve the community more deeply. *"...The local community is vital for us. We want them to feel connected to LTDL, so we provide opportunities for them to experience the excitement firsthand..."* [E3]. This shows how the organizers viewed community involvement as essential to the event's success. The inclusiveness of LTDL 2023 also extended to different groups, including indigenous communities. One authority noted, *"Even the indigenous people…They come to the event themselves..."* [A2]. This broad participation reflects the event's wide appeal and its ability to bring people together. By actively including the community, LTDL 2023 helped promote unity, local pride, and social sustainability. The enthusiasm of local community members during LTDL 2023 was palpable. Observations showed crowds cheering enthusiastically along the race routes, with many participants wearing event-themed attire, indicating strong emotional and social investment in the event. Community members were seen engaging with race participants, sharing their excitement with one another, and actively promoting the event on social media, further fostering a sense of pride and connection.

4.3.3.2 Community Spectatorship

Watching the event as a spectator may seem passive, but in LTDL 2023, it was a powerful form of involvement. Local spectators helped create a lively environment that made the race feel like a community celebration. As one person explained, *"...I'm a local attending the event as a spectator and supporter, adding excitement to the atmosphere."* [C5]. Organizers valued this connection and worked to make sure residents had many chances to take part in the event experience. *"...The local community is vital for us. We want them to feel connected to LTDL..."* [E3]. For many locals, seeing professional athletes racing through their hometown was a special and unforgettable experience: *"I'm here to witness professional team riders and support our national team…"* [C5]. This kind of community engagement helps build what scholars call social capital which is the shared trust, pride, and cooperation within a community (Shulenkorf, 2012). It also aligns with the Sports for Development (S4D) model, which highlights community participation as a driver of long-term social impact. In this way,

LTDL 2023 became more than just a race; it became a platform for building unity and national pride.

4.3.3.3 Inclusion of School Students

Involving schools and students added even more energy and excitement to the event. Their participation not only brought a younger audience to the race, but also helped develop early interest in sports and community involvement. As one authority shared, *"Students have been present since earlier..."* [A3]. Understanding the value of youth engagement, organizers encouraged schools from various states to take part: *"We also ask states to involve schools and their students in supporting Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)..."* [E1]. Residents also noted the impact students had on the atmosphere: *"Engaging schools and students does bring more energy to the event..."* [C2]. Their presence and excitement clearly boosted the overall experience for both the cyclists and the crowd. *"The students chant and support really lift up the race..."* [A1]. Getting students involved in events like LTDL 2023 supports intergenerational engagement and encourages young people to take pride in community and national events. Observing the students' involvement during LTDL 2023 2023 added an energetic dimension to the event. Groups of students were seen lining the race route, chanting and cheering on the athletes, their excitement contagious to everyone around them. The students' active participation, including the coordinated chants and flags, elevated the atmosphere, drawing attention to the positive influence of youth engagement on the overall event experience.

4.3.3.4 Community Insights for Improvement

This sub-theme focuses on the feedback and observations provided by the community, emphasizing the value of their perspectives in improving future events. While community participation in LTDL 2023 added energy and pride to the event, it also brought valuable ideas and feedback. Local community shared their views on how to improve future editions of the event, offering both suggestions and constructive criticisms. This sub-theme highlights how the community's insights from event awareness up to youth involvement, as found in the result of the study.

4.3.3.5 Community Response

Based on the research findings, community members offered several suggestions to make LTDL 2023 more engaging and impactful. Many felt that more pre-event activities would help build excitement and support. One resident proposed, *"LTDL activities such as fun ride could foster economic support and national unity..."* [C2]. Another suggested, *"Community groups can organize related activities or pre-event ceremonies which can build the event momentum."* [C4]. These ideas show that residents are not only interested in attending the event, but are also eager to contribute through community-led initiatives. However, not all feedback was positive. Some residents felt that communication and collaboration with the local community could be improved. As one participant commented, *"...I feel that the organizer hasn't adequately coordinated or reached out for collaboration..."* [C5]. This feedback highlights the need for two-way communication between organizers and communities, as supported by previous research; showing that strong local involvement leads to higher event satisfaction and long-term public support.

4.3.3.6 Community Awareness

Raising awareness was one of the strengths of LTDL 2023 communication efforts. Authorities and organizers used a mix of channels to keep residents informed, namely social media, WhatsApp, banners, and public announcements. One official described this as a joint effort: *"...Cooperation among local residents, businesses, and authorities is described as excellent, with businesses setting up stalls, residents attending the event, and the local council informing everyone in advance..."* [A2]. Another noted, *"...Communication efforts, including banners along roads, social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents..."* [A1]. These efforts helped reduce confusion around traffic changes and encouraged public support. For example, one authority explained, *"...We ensure that residents are informed in advance about the road closures and alternative routes..."* [A1]. These quotes in the result showed an effective communication like this plays a key role in building trust between the event organizers and the local community.

4.3.3.7 Volunteerism

The potential of local youth to serve as volunteers was another important insight shared by the community. Volunteers can help manage tasks, support visitors, and promote community spirit. One resident said, *"The youth here can contribute as volunteers to help LTDL."* [C4]. Another informant noted, *"In the villages around here, there are many youth associations. I believe the youth can contribute as volunteers to help LTDL."* [C4]. Encouraging youth volunteerism not only supports the event's logistics, but also empowers young people to take part in national initiatives. It gives them skills, confidence, and a sense of belonging.

4.3.4 Economic Impact and Opportunities

Since its inception, LTDL 2023 has brought clear economic benefits to local merchants and played a growing role in supporting Malaysia's economy. The event not only creates short-term gains, such as increased income and business activities, but also supports economic opportunities through tourism, branding, and job creation. This theme explores how LTDL 2023 contributes to both immediate and future economic development, presented under two sub-themes, mainly driving immediate economic impact and long-term economic opportunities**.**

4.3.4.1 Immediate Economic Impact

LTDL 2023 creates a short-term economic boost for many local communities, particularly through increased customer demand, business activity, and trading opportunities. The presence of event spectators, athletes, and teams brings a surge of spending across various sectors.

4.3.4.2 Income

The result has found the local merchants and food vendors reported higher sales during the event. The increase in visitors led to more demand for food, drinks, and other necessities. As one merchant shared, *"Le Tour de Langkawi is a significant event for us local merchants. It brings in extra income and customers that we might not usually see."* [M3]. Another merchant added, *"The customer demand for food and drink from*

this event has led me to ask my brother-in-law to assist me." [M3]. The local authorities also observed this economic impact stated, *"...due to this sudden surge of people, it's really giving business to the locals..."* [A1]. One merchant even noted, *"...We had to double up our food and drink supplies to cater to the influx of customers…"* [M1]. These responses show that LTDL 2023 has an immediate and direct impact on local earnings.

4.3.4.3 Business Activity

The event also boosts business activity across different sectors. Restaurants, night markets, and service providers experience more customers and higher demand. One community member shared, *"Local business gets the benefit from this event… today, us locals couldn't even find a place to eat because the owner said the food was sold out."* [C2]. An authority added, *"...I've noticed that even food vendors from the night market are doing business now. I think they have been invited to do business during LTDL."* [A2]. Another participant noted, *"Yes, locals engage in various sectors—business, services, employment, especially in the hotel industry. LTDL has been an economic catalyst here."* [C2]. These statements show how LTDL 2023 helps activate the local economy across multiple areas. From observation, the visible increase in business activity was particularly evident in areas surrounding the event venues. Restaurants were bustling, with long queues outside popular dining spots, and food vendors at the night markets had set up additional stalls to accommodate the influx of customers. Merchants observed more foot traffic and sales, particularly around the race route, where people stopped for meals and snacks. The local hotel industry also saw a surge in bookings, as race participants and spectators filled up accommodations. Observations confirmed that local businesses, particularly food vendors and service providers, capitalized on the event's draw, experiencing a significant boost in revenue due to the higher volume of customers and visitors during the race days.

4.3.4.4 Business Opportunities

LTDL 2023 also creates space for new business ideas and expansion. Businesses related to cycling, food, and tourism are among those that benefit. One organizer shared, *"...Bike shops are opening... the bikes and accessories… after that,*

there's a restaurant with a bike concept..." [E1]. Another highlighted the scale of economic activity: *"...With approximately 1.4 million ringgit allocated for just a two-week period, Malaysian hotels are fully booked..."* [E2]. Authorities encouraged the inclusion of small traders: *"Allowing local traders to operate during events would not only attract more people but also contribute to the overall atmosphere."* [A1].

4.3.4.5 Long-Term Economic Opportunities

LTDL 2023 also creates lasting value by increasing Malaysia's visibility, generating jobs, and strengthening the country's position as a sports tourism destination. This study suggested these long-term benefits support economic sustainability beyond the event itself.

4.3.4.6 Branding and Visibility

LTDL 2023 offers sponsors and local businesses a platform to promote their brands to both local and international audiences. As one organizer stated, *"...LTDL sponsors are not just our partners, it is also a way to promote our brand to the world..."* [E2]. A merchant added, *"...For me, it's not just about making money. I see these events as opportunities to introduce our products to a wider audience..."* [M2]. A community member noted, *"...This event had shown some of the major brands in the cycling world..."* [C2]. Events like LTDL 2023 help build national branding and attract business and tourism interest (Torres & Khan, 2022). The branding and visibility efforts during LTDL 2023 were clearly evident in the numerous banners, flags, and logos displayed throughout the event venues. Observations showed that sponsor logos were prominently placed along the race route, in the media coverage, and on various race-related merchandise. The excitement surrounding the race and the media coverage further amplified the sponsors' visibility, creating opportunities for both brand promotion and business expansion. Participants and spectators were seen engaging with the sponsor's products, further solidifying LTDL 2023's role in building brand awareness and expanding market reach for both local and international businesses.

4.3.4.7 Job Creation

LTDL 2023 also creates jobs, both temporary and long-term due to the demand of this event. These jobs are found in event planning, logistics, accommodation, and media. One organizer mentioned, *"This event has generated an instant need for a lot of event operatives."* [E3]. Another organizer also explained, *"With LTDL, there's a domino effect – new jobs are opened up."* [E1]. The demand for services such as printing, catering, and transportation supports local employment as stated by an organizer *"There's a need for event management services, printing, and various other logistical requirements."* [E1].

4.3.4.8 Income Improvement

The presence of visitors boosts income for hotels, restaurants, and local businesses. One organizer explained, *"...With approximately 1.4 million ringgit allocated for just a two-week period, Malaysian hotels are fully booked…"* [E2]. A local resident supported this, *"...business, services, employment, especially in the hotel industry. LTDL has been an economic catalyst for Langkawi…"* [C2]. This kind of spending benefits the whole community and helps strengthen local economies.

4.3.4.9 Tourism Potential

LTDL 2023 helps Malaysia gain recognition as a sports tourism destination. With international media coverage and participation, the event increases the country's visibility. One resident proudly shared, *"...An international competition such as LTDL, and it happens in my place. I feel proud because the whole world is watching Terengganu."* [C4]. Another organizer also noted, *"...Throughout LTDL, many views come in, media, people contribute to local businesses..."* [E1]. By leveraging LTDL 2023's international reach, Malaysia strengthens its position as a sports tourism hub, fostering sustained tourism growth, economic development, and global recognition.

4.3.5 Collaborative Environmental Stewardship

This section reveals the result on how collaborative practices among stakeholders contribute to environmental sustainability in the context of LTDL 2023.

The result emphasizes the implementation of eco-friendly practices and the adoption of green event strategies. Two sub-themes are discussed, namely collective eco-friendly practices and green event strategies.

4.3.5.1 Collective Eco-Friendly Practices

Stakeholders involved in LTDL 2023 have shown shared responsibility in applying eco-friendly practices. Their efforts reflect not only compliance with global standards, but also a commitment to environmental awareness among the public and the event's participants.

4.3.5.2 Waste Management

Waste management is one of the core areas where collective efforts are visible. Compliance with regulations set by the *Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI),* such as designated waste zones, play a major role in controlling litter during the race. An organizer explained, *"...UCI has introduced new regulations, the waste zone, meaning riders can't litter..."* [E2]. These regulations were not treated as formalities. Organizers incorporated them into race guidelines to ensure all involved understood their importance: *"...As organizer…the race guideline has to ensure that the race leaves minimal environmental concern..."* [E3]. Local authorities also participated in monitoring attendee behaviour, with one officer stating, *"...We also have been instructed to make sure the attendees do not litter..."* [A2]. Even spectators were reminded throughout the event to keep the area clean. One informant also noted, *"...I can hear several times the MC's ask us not to litter..."* [C1]. These joint efforts reflect a shared environmental ethic and align with best practices in sustainable event management showing how collective responsibility can help reduce environmental impact at large events.

4.3.5.3 Promoting Green Practices

LTDL 2023 also goes beyond waste control by actively promoting green practices such as tree planting and community rides. Tree planting is one of the event's signature environmental activities. While one organizer admitted, *"It sounds cliché, planting trees. But actually, if we plant trees, it directly cuts off carbon emissions"* [E1],

the effort remains meaningful. Events are well-planned and include wide participation. For example, tree-planting programs involve riders and are broadcast live to emphasize their significance: *"I have already done a meeting officially. They will plant trees outside, just beside the starting area. So, riders will join this program, and it will be broadcast live"* [E1]. Organizers also work with state authorities to involve local communities: *"I have also asked the state secretary to organize an event for tree planting for the locals"* [E1]. LTDL 2023 also includes an annual fun ride that brings the community together while encouraging environmental consciousness: *"There is also a fun ride for LTDL... we aim for community as participants, it's an annual ride just for LTDL"* [E3]. One community member shared appreciation for these efforts: *"Yes, I am happy the organizer organizes a fun ride for us... it creates a community activity"* [C5].

4.3.5.4 Green Event Initiative

LTDL 2023 takes a broad approach to environmental stewardship by incorporating sustainability into its branding, collaborations, and race planning. As one organizer noted, *"...it's more on the environment. You can see our race tagline, 'beat the heat..."* [E1]. This shows that sustainability is not just a side effort, but a core message. Strategic partnerships also supported this vision as an organizer had stated *"Collaborating with industry players for green campaigns is a step forward."* [E1]. These collaborations allow LTDL 2023 to work with brands and sponsors that also promote environmental causes. The route of the race is another area where care is taken to reduce harm. LTDL 2023 ensures that natural areas, especially forested zones, are respected: *"With a significant portion of the race route passing through forested areas, we take extra precautions to minimize our environmental impact."* [E2]. In addition, organizers are looking into more sustainable transportation options to reduce carbon emissions. This includes promoting electric vehicles: *"We're exploring ways to promote sustainable transportation options, such as encouraging the use of electric vehicles."* [E1].

4.3.6 Summary of Results for Research Question 1

This study examined how stakeholder collaboration contributes to the sustainability of LTDL 2023. The findings confirm that collaboration among diverse stakeholders is crucial for the event's long-term success, particularly across the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainability. The results are organized into five key themes, each supported by sub-themes and stakeholder insights. To improve clarity and facilitate interpretation, Table 5 summarizes the thematic structure of the findings discussed in this section.

Table 4.1
Summary of Results for Research Question 1

RQ1- How do stakeholder collaborations contribute to a sustainable sports event in Malaysia?				
Themes				
Stakeholder Collaboration	**Communication and Coordination**	**Community Engagement and Involvement**	**Economic Empowerment through Collaboration**	**Collaborative Environmental Stewardship**
Stakeholder Roles **Organizers** **Authorities** **Merchants** **Community**	**Communication** Communication strategies Logistic Coordination Event Campaigns Safety Communication	**Facilitate Active Community Participation** Local Community Engagement Community Spectatorship Inclusion of Schools	**Driving Immediate Economic Impact** Income Businesses Activity Business Opportunities	**Collective Eco-Friendly Practices** Waste Management Promoting Green Practices Green event initiative
Stakeholders Partnership **- Network** **- Trust** **-Agency Collaboration**	**Communication platform** - Digital - Printed	**Community Insights for Improvement** Community Response Community Awareness Volunteerism	**Long-Term Economic Opportunities** Branding Visibility Job Creation Income Improvement	

- Alliance	Tourism Potential
- Engagement	

4.4 Results for Research Question 2

This section presents the results for Research Question 2: *What is the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event?* The findings are categorized into the key phases of event management, namely initiation, planning, implementation, execution, and evaluation. Each phase highlights processes, stakeholder roles, and strategies that contribute to successful and sustainable event management. Insights were derived from interviews with 15 key informants who were directly involved in LTDL 2023. The data are organized into two themes, each further broken down into sub-themes and detailed codes reflecting specific aspects of event management process.

4.4.1 Event Process in Le Tour de Langkawi

4.4.1.1.Initiation Phase

Based on the research findings, the initiation phase lays the foundation for the LTDL 2023 by involving key stakeholders, shaping the event concept, and securing necessary resources. This stage is essential to ensure collaboration, establish clear goals, and streamline the allocation of responsibilities.

a. Stakeholder Identification

Identifying and engaging stakeholders early in the planning process is crucial for effective collaboration, resource mobilization, and regulatory compliance. In the case of LTDL 2023, involving ministries, state agencies, and sports councils from the beginning helped ensure alignment of goals and responsibilities. Informant E2 emphasized the importance of this step *"...Identifying key stakeholders is vital…various ministries are involved, the State Sports Council has become particularly significant in our approach… strengthening ties with them has proven crucial for effective coordination..."* [E2]. Structured stakeholder mapping helps reduce operational silos and ensures that event planning is integrated across all relevant agencies. Informant E1 also reinforced the importance of multi-level collaboration *"...The stakeholders in*

LTDL play crucial roles in various aspects of organizing the event…it is important different stakeholders collaborate to ensure the success of the event..." [E1]. Stakeholder meetings served as platforms for coordinating efforts among national and state actors. As E2 explained *"...Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K..."* [E2]. These inter-agency discussions correspond with the Operations and Risk Management Domains of EMBOK, where planning for logistics, safety, and regulations takes place (Bowdin et al., 2022). Individual leadership within stakeholder organizations also played a key role. As E4 shared *"The key person on the MSN side was Yazid. He played an important role in guiding us on what Selangor could do to help make this event a success."* [E4].

b. Event Concept

The results of the study also found the development of a strong event concept being fundamental to the identity and sustainability of LTDL 2023. This involves defining the race's objectives, design, branding, as well as wider social and economic impact. Informant E1 explained *"I prioritize working diligently to ensure that all technical aspects of LTDL are handled efficiently and effectively. This includes attending central meetings to contribute ideas, suggesting themes, routes, and enhancing the image of LTDL."* [E1]. LTDL 2023's event concept also contributes to local economic development, as stated by M3 *"Le Tour de Langkawi is a significant event for us local merchants. It brings in extra income and customers that we might not usually see."* [M3].

Beyond economics, the event also supports youth development, as noted by C1*"It's not just about the race; it's about inspiring the next generation of cyclists."* [C1]. Furthermore, E1 emphasized on the event's nation-branding function and stated *"Nation profiling is crucial for all countries. They seek a unique platform to profile their nation, and LTDL serves this purpose."* [E1]. Finally, sustainability is embedded into LTDL 2023's identity. E1 shared *"You can see my tagline, 'Beat the Heat.' This is climate change."* [E1].

c. Initial Budget

Financial planning is essential during the initiation phase, as it determines whether the event can meet its operational goals. In LTDL 2023, budgeting involved collaboration between organizers, government agencies, and sponsors to distribute costs and secure financial stability. E2 explained: *"I then formed a dedicated team to manage different aspects and presented the budget meticulously. Obtaining approval from the state council and relevant authorities was crucial but challenging..."* [E2]. LTDL 2023's estimated cost is high, reportedly RM40–50 million if self-funded, requiring shared responsibility. E2 emphasized this approach *"When dealing with state governments, leveraging their authority to minimize event costs is a key strategy."* [E2]. E2 further illustrated the role of state contributions *"...We establish communication with the State Secretary under the State S.U.K. ... For this event, we need tents and other equipment, so they will handle the tents and other logistics..."* [E2].

d. Initial Support

Securing initial institutional and community support is another important factor in the success of LTDL 2023. Strong existing relationships with sponsors and government agencies provide both financial and operational benefits. E2 highlighted the role of long-term relationships *"Terengganu's sponsorship is influenced by Emir's positive relationship with the state government from previous events."* [E2]. Partnerships with state-level sports councils were also crucial. As E2 explained *"Strengthening partnerships with the State Sports Council has been crucial for effective coordination and successful execution."* [E2]. Such support reduces costs and streamlines planning. E1 noted that many stakeholders contribute informally, *"Stakeholders feel like part of the event. They don't charge us for trivial things because they see the bigger picture."* [E1].

4.4.1.2 Event Planning

From the interviews conducted, it has been found that the planning phase is a vital component of LTDL 2023, ensuring that operational decisions are structured, stakeholder roles are clearly defined, and resources are optimally allocated. This phase transforms the event concept into actionable strategies that guide its implementation.

a. Safety

Ensuring the safety of participants, officials, and spectators is a top priority for LTDL 2023. Safety planning involves coordination among various government agencies, law enforcement, and medical teams. Informant A1 emphasized the effectiveness of coordinated security efforts *"...Cooperation among various agencies, including the police, has been effective, with clear instructions provided by the police chief, ensuring smooth coordination and management of the event."* [A1]. Stakeholder meetings help align safety protocols early in the planning process. As E2 noted: *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K."* [E2]. The role of RELA in security and traffic management was also noted by A3, *"...As a member of RELA, our duties during LTDL encompass various aspects, including security and parking management."* [A3]. Efficient road closures and crowd control measures ensure the race operates without interruption, as highlighted by E1, *"UCI acknowledges our traffic members are respected by the people. When they decide to close the road, everything is done correctly."* [E1]. From observation, the traffic management team was efficiently coordinating road closures and ensuring that race routes were clear for both participants and spectators. The visible professionalism of the traffic personnel was evident, with clear signage and consistent communication with the public. At key intersections and high-traffic areas, members of the traffic team were seen directing both vehicles and pedestrians with precision, minimizing delays and maintaining safety. The respect shown by local residents, who complied with road closures and respected the instructions given, further reinforced the statement. The UCI's acknowledgment of this effort highlights the seamless execution of these tasks, ensuring the safety of all involved while maintaining order and respect throughout the race. This smooth operation of traffic management played a crucial role in the event's success, as it ensured the safe passage of cyclists while allowing spectators to enjoy the event without disruption.

b. Engagement

Another result of this study showed an effective stakeholder engagement plays a key role in ensuring collaborative event execution and inclusive planning. Engaging local authorities and local schools have improved logistical readiness and built public

support. This aligns with the Administration and Operations Domains of EMBOK (Silvers, 2020). E4 highlighted the importance of local-level coordination, *"We handled everything at the local level in Selangor. This included liaising with local authorities and making sure the race could happen…"* [E4]. Regular meetings help maintain communication between stakeholders. As E2 explained, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K."* [E2]. LTDL 2023 also integrates schools into its planning, encouraging youth participation. E1 stated, *"We also ask states to involve schools and their students in supporting Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)..."* [E1]. This public engagement creates a vibrant race atmosphere. As A1 noted *"The students chant and support really lift up the race."* [A1]. During LTDL 2023, the involvement of schools and students was particularly noticeable along the race route, where groups of enthusiastic students gathered to cheer on the cyclists. These students were seen wearing school uniforms, waving flags, and chanting energetically, adding to the festive and vibrant atmosphere of the event. Their support was contagious, and the energy they brought created an uplifting environment for both participants and spectators. The students' active engagement, whether through cheering or waving banners, demonstrated their pride in the event and their sense of involvement. The visible excitement from the students indeed contributed significantly to the race's atmosphere, making it not just a sporting event but also a community celebration. This enthusiasm was in line with A1's observation, where the chants and support from the students clearly helped lift the spirits of the cyclists, boosting morale and creating a truly dynamic race experience.

c. Logistic Planning

Logistics planning is central to LTDL 2023 smooth operation. It involves stakeholder coordination, structured planning sessions, and collaboration with contractors. Regular coordination meetings are crucial for aligning expectations. E1 shared, *"We mainly communicate with main organizers like KBS and MSN through regular meetings to discuss event logistics and updates."* [E1]. E4 further emphasized structured planning, *"...During the meetings, he (MSN) would outline what was expected from us, and we'd work from there to ensure that all the logistics and local planning were in place..."* [E4]. Contractor management is also an important part of

logistical planning. E2 explained, *"...For contractors, we arrange dedicated meetings to discuss project progress and needs…"* [E2].

d. Resource Planning

This study found the resource planning involves the strategic allocation of infrastructure, equipment, financial inputs, and essential services. E2 emphasized the importance of cost-sharing and multi-agency support *"...We want them to contribute to some of the organizing costs. For example, for this event, we need tents and other equipment..."* [E2]. Engaging the State Secretary (S.U.K.) and other state departments ensures infrastructure readiness, *"They will handle the tents and other logistics. Additionally, road conditions need to be optimal for the LTDL route, so they will coordinate with the state-level JKR..."* [E2]. E1 also noted additional resource needs in operations, *"...There's a need for event management services, printing, and various other logistical requirements..."* [E1]. Health services are also part of resource planning. E2 reflected on the role of ATM, *"...ATM is primarily focused on health. Initially, I didn't understand why ATM... but after discussions, I realized that ATM specializes in trauma health…"* [E2].

e. Staffing

Human resources are vital to the execution of LTDL 2023. E2 explained internal communication methods, *"...I communicate with the LTDL team through meetings, quick chats, and memos for event updates...Within our team, we have regular staff meetings and briefings…"* [E2]. Staff selection was done based on expertise and familiarity with the event. As E1 noted, *"Dato also gave me the freedom to choose who I wanted…for LTDL, I need to use staff from my division to carry out the task."* [E1]. External collaboration is also key. A3 described how RELA officers were involved, *"The police reached out to our officers, seeking permission for our involvement in LTDL..."* [A3]. Mobilizing institutional staff improves efficiency and continuity. E2 shared, *"Some MSN staff not currently part of our division expressed eagerness to be involved in LTDL."* [E2].

4.4.1.3 Implementation

The implementation phase is where event plans are transformed into action. For LTDL 2023, this stage involves the coordination of multiple stakeholders, the execution of safety and logistical strategies, real-time communication, and the management of live operations. The Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model provides a valuable framework for analyzing these activities, particularly within the domains of Operations, Administration, and Marketing (Silvers, 2020).

a. Coordination

The result showed an effective stakeholder coordination is crucial to the smooth execution of LTDL 2023. It ensures that various agencies, organizers, and service providers work in alignment to manage logistics, safety, and on-site operations. Informant E4 described the ongoing local coordination efforts. *"The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally."* [E4]. Central meetings facilitated strategic alignment across ministries, police, and local councils. As E2 noted, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K."* [E2]. Regular communication was also emphasized by E1, *"We mainly communicate with main organizers like KBS and MSN through regular meetings to discuss event logistics and updates."* [E1]. Law enforcement participation further ensured safety and traffic control. Informant A3 stated, *"The police reached out to our officers, seeking permission for our involvement in LTDL."* [A3].

b. Marketing and Promotion

LTDL 2023 visibility depends on its marketing efforts, which are designed to engage the public, attract sponsors, and promote Malaysia as a sports tourism destination. The event employs a mix of digital, traditional, and localized outreach strategies. Informant A1 highlighted the effectiveness of multi-channel promotion, *"...Communication efforts, including banners along roads, social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness."* [A1]. A2 echoed this, referencing the use of digital platforms, *"They*

learned about the event through various channels. Firstly, the community was informed via Facebook posts and updates from the local council page." [A2]. Broadcast media also plays a key role in expanding reach. Informant C1 shared, *"...I get updates from the Sports arena through various channels. Many of us tune in to channel 801 on Astro to stay informed."* [C1]. E1 emphasized how broadcasting contributes to national branding, *"When we enter a state, we say, 'We are doing this for you,' providing a platform for promotion. Live telecasts help us display Malaysia globally."* [E1].

c. Communication

Clear and inclusive communication is essential to the real-time coordination of LTDL 2023. The event team uses both structured and informal communication methods to manage stakeholders and keep the public informed. Internal communication was highlighted by E2, *"I communicate with the LTDL team through meetings, quick chats, and memos for event updates."* [E2]. Public messaging helps maintain cooperation and excitement. A2 noted, *"...Cooperation among local residents, businesses, and authorities is described as excellent, with businesses setting up stalls."* [A2]. A1 emphasized the role of multi-platform communication, *"...Communication efforts, including banners along roads, social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness."* [A1]. Older community members were reached through traditional media, as noted by C2, *"For older community members, they rely heavily on traditional media like radio and newspapers to get information about events like LTDL."* [C2]. Localized updates also ensured timely public information. A3 shared, *"Locals are informed about LTDL and road closures through channels like WhatsApp groups and notice delivered through municipal council."* [A3].

d. Oversight

Effective oversight is key to managing live operations, resolving issues on the ground, and maintaining the integrity of the event. In LTDL 2023, oversight is handled by both national organizers and local teams. E4 described the responsibilities of his team during race execution, *"...Our team was responsible for managing the start lines of the race... This included liaising with local authorities and making sure the race could happen and ran smoothly in Selangor."* [E4]. The overall technical management

was handled by the Chief Operating Officer. As E1 explained, *"As the COO, my primary responsibility is vast... to oversee the technical aspects of LTDL's organization. This includes managing logistics, ensuring the smooth operation of race routes, coordinating with local authorities, and so on."* [E1]. At national level, the Malaysian Sports Council (MSN) played a leadership role. E2 stated, *"I am representing MSN, the caretaker overseeing the whole event process, assumed the role of de facto organizer for the reestablishment of LTDL."* [E2].

4.4.1.4 Execution

The execution phase of LTDL 2023 marks the culmination of planning efforts and reflects the operational competence of stakeholders. This phase includes real-time monitoring, operational implementation, crisis management, feedback collection, and location development. Each of these components contributes to the smooth delivery and long-term sustainability of the event. Guided by the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model, this section explores five critical sub-themes: Event Monitoring, Event Operation, Crisis Management, Feedback, and Location Development.

a. Event Monitoring

Event monitoring is essential for real-time oversight, risk mitigation, and issue resolution. Through continuous coordination, event teams can adjust operations and maintain event integrity. This aligns with the Operations and Risk Management Domains of EMBOK, which prioritize safety, efficiency, and adaptability (Silvers, 2020). State-level meetings played a key role in ensuring coordination. Informant E3 shared: *"State meetings are crucial. They provide an opportunity for us to align strategies and resources, ensuring that everything is well-coordinated for the prize ceremony."* [E3]. Crowd management and public communication were also vital. A1 emphasized, *"We ensure that residents are informed in advance about the road closures and alternative routes."* [A1]. Venue design further supports monitoring efforts, as A1 noted, *"The vast area allows for smoother crowd control, mitigating risks of overcrowding or chaos."* [A1].

b. Event Operation

The success of LTDL 2023 depends on precise operations, collaborative coordination, and real-time responsiveness. Informant E4 highlighted coordination at race venues, *"Our team was responsible for managing the start lines of the race... This included liaising with local authorities and making sure the race could happen and ran smoothly in Selangor."* [E4]. Technical oversight is also critical, as E1 explained, *"I prioritize working diligently to ensure that all technical aspects of LTDL are handled efficiently and effectively."* [E1]. Public messaging also supported crowd management. A1 noted, *"We ensure that residents are informed in advance about the road closures and alternative routes."* [A1].

c. Crisis Management

Crisis management ensures resilience during unforeseen disruptions. Through strong security coordination, adaptive communication, and multi-agency cooperation, LTDL 2023 maintains operational stability. Informant A2 shared his role during operations, *"...My main function during LTDL events is to ensure security and manage any issues that may arise, as part of the 'Ops Cantas' operation."* [A2]. This proactive security planning is vital in managing large crowds. A3 added, *"...As a member of RELA, our duties during LTDL encompass various aspects, including security and parking management. Whatever the police require, we respond accordingly..."* [A3]. Crowd behaviour is a key concern, especially among younger attendees. A2 stated, *"Events like these attract a large crowd, and sometimes young people can get unruly... But we also have plainclothes officers monitoring."* [A2]. Crisis management also includes logistical problem-solving. M1 mentioned, *"The challenge arose from the lack of detailed information about the event, especially only depending on social media like Facebook, leading to difficulties in adequately preparing and catering to the sudden increase in customers."* [M1]. Additionally, E2 reflected on bureaucratic limitations, *"Unlike in the past, where decision-making and contracting were more straightforward as a company, the shift to government processes has added complexity."* [E2].

d. Feedback

Stakeholder feedback helps improve future event planning and operational delivery. In LTDL 2023, feedback particularly highlighted the need for clearer communication, early coordination, and structured engagement. M1 emphasized poor communication *"...Yes, we merchants did receive information… however the information lacked clarity... I don't feel fully coordinated by the organizer..."* [M1]. Timely dissemination of event information is key. M3 suggested, *"Better communication is key. The local authority should disseminate information earlier so we can prepare adequately."* [M3]. Over-reliance on social media, without official updates, created uncertainty. M1 added, *"...Only depending on social media like Facebook led to difficulties in preparing and catering to the sudden increase in customers."* [M1]. M3 reiterated: *"It would be better if we could get more information and prepare well in advance."* [M3]. Inclusive communication strengthens participation. M1 proposed, *"I hope the local authorities can invite local merchants to participate and provide information well in advance. It would help us prepare better and make these events more successful for everyone involved."* [M1].

e. Location Development

LTDL 2023 contributes to long-term infrastructure development and improves regional mobility. These impacts go beyond the race and support broader community benefits. Informant C4 noted infrastructure improvements, *"Many roads from Kertih to Kuala Terengganu have been repaired. It's good."* [C4]. Such upgrades enhance both race logistics and public utility. C2 added, *"Yes, roads get fixed, ensuring safety and smoother traffic."* [C2]. During LTDL 2023, the improvements to the roads between Kertih and Kuala Terengganu were visibly evident. Observations showed smoother, well-maintained road surfaces, particularly along the race route, which not only facilitated the cyclists' performance but also improved traffic flow for local commuters. At key points, traffic moved more efficiently, and road safety signs were clearly visible, reflecting the impact of recent repairs. Spectators and residents along the route expressed their satisfaction with the smoother roads, as evidenced by the positive feedback shared by local community members. The road upgrades ensured that both the logistics of the race and the safety of the participants were prioritized. The improved infrastructure also contributed to a safer and more enjoyable experience for all involved,

supporting C2's observation that these repairs contributed to smoother traffic and overall safety during the event. This study also found the road repairs enhance tourism potential and safety. A1 commented, *"The decision seems beneficial due to the tourism in this area. Events like LTDL thrive here, and last year's success is a testament."* [A1]. This supports regional branding and tourism development. A2 observed, *"I read from social media about the positive comment about the road repaired."* [A2].

4.4.1.5 Event Evaluation

The evaluation phase of LTDL 2023 plays a key role in assessing the effectiveness of event execution and identifying areas for improvement. By reflecting on stakeholder experiences, communication issues, and inclusivity challenges, the organizers of the event can strengthen future planning and sustainability. Guided by the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model, this section presents three core sub-themes, namely communication barrier**,** event disruption, and stakeholder inclusion**.**

a. Communication Barrier

This study found one of the key challenges identified during the evaluation of LTDL 2023 is the lack of clear, timely, and structured communication between organizers and stakeholders. This issue negatively affected event preparation and coordination, particularly for local merchants and small business owners. Informant M1 expressed frustration over unclear instructions, *"...Yes, we merchants did receive information… however the information lacked clarity... I don't feel fully coordinated by the organizer..."* [M1]. Inconsistent information also led to uncertainty among stakeholders, as noted by M3:*"...It was more of a coincidence, to be honest… I knew about LTDL, but the information from the local authorities was limited..."* [M3]. When stakeholders are not well-informed, it leads to misaligned expectations and last-minute challenges. M3 also acknowledged the need for earlier and more structured engagement, *"...I admit there might be some fault on my end for not taking the information seriously before. It would be better if we could get more information and prepare well in advance…"* [M3]. Incorporating stakeholder feedback into planning cycles is essential for refining communication processes and improving event credibility (Getz & Page, 2021).

b. Event Disruption

Event disruptions in LTDL 2023 were mostly caused by inadequate planning and communication, which created confusion for local vendors and community participants. These disruptions affected stakeholder readiness and generated mixed reactions from the community. Informant M1 described a key challenge, *"...The challenge arose from the lack of detailed information about the event, especially only depending on social media like Facebook, leading to difficulties in adequately preparing and catering to the sudden increase in customers…"* [M1]. Despite these issues, stakeholder reactions were mixed. Informant M3 reflected, *"Some locals have complained, but overall, there's understanding and support for the event."* [M3]. From observation, Some residents were seen expressing mild frustration as they were temporarily unable to access certain areas during the race. The observed cooperation between residents and event organizers reflected the community's general understanding and willingness to support the event, despite the temporary inconveniences caused by road closures.

c. Stakeholder Inclusion

The evaluation revealed gaps in stakeholder inclusion, particularly among community members and small businesses. Many felt left out of the planning process, which limited their involvement to that of passive spectators. Informant C4 highlighted this limited role, *"...I feel, directly, maybe not. I think the community is more like spectators, adding excitement to the event..."* [C4]. This issue aligns with the Administration Domain of EMBOK, where stakeholder engagement must go beyond passive roles to foster a sense of ownership and long-term commitment (Bowdin et al., 2022). Some stakeholders joined the event only by chance, due to insufficient outreach. As M3 explained, *"...It was more of a coincidence, to be honest… I knew about LTDL, but the information from the local authorities was limited... I got involved almost by chance..."* [M3]. Informant C5 further expressed disappointment in the lack of outreach, *"...I feel that the organizer hasn't adequately coordinated or reached out for collaboration... my presence today is fueled by passion..."* [C5]. This emphasizes the need for organizers to implement structured inclusion strategies.

4.4.2 Sustainable Pillars in Le Tour de Langkawi

4.4.2.1 Economic Drivers

The sustainability of LTDL 2023 is rooted in the integration of economic, environmental, and social dimensions. Each of these pillars contributes to the long-term viability, community impact, and international reputation of the event. The Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model, particularly the administration**,** operations, and risk management domains, offers a structured lens through which these pillars can be understood (Silvers, 2020). Economically, LTDL 2023 stimulates local growth through business partnerships, revenue generation, and destination branding, aligned with the Administration Domain (Mallen & Adams, 2023).

a. Stakeholder Benefits

LTDL 2023 delivers tangible economic benefits for local contractors, service providers, and merchants. These benefits are facilitated through collaborative partnerships and strategic investment, aligned with the Administration and Operations Domains of EMBOK (Silvers, 2020). Stakeholders are engaged early in the planning process through dedicated meetings to ensure logistical readiness. As E2 shared, *"For contractors, we arrange dedicated meetings to discuss project progress and needs…"* [E2]. This collaboration promotes cost-sharing and enhances the event's financial sustainability, *"We seek their contribution to organizing costs, fostering a collaborative approach that facilitates the smooth execution of LTDL."* [E2]. LTDL 2023 also encourages sustainable business practices. Informant E1 emphasized, *"We're fostering partnerships with local businesses, encouraging them to adopt sustainable practices beyond the event's duration."* [E1]. This approach supports the Operations Domain, where sustainable practices extend economic benefits beyond the event lifecycle (Reid & Arcodia, 2022). Employment generation is another outcome, as noted by C2, *"Locals engage in various sectors—business, services, employment, especially in the hotel industry. LTDL has been an economic catalyst."* [C2]. From the observation, the impact of the event on the local economy was highly visible, particularly in sectors such as hospitality, retail, and services. Hotels in the area were observed to be fully booked. For many businesses, LTDL 2023 provides a platform for brand exposure rather than just immediate profits. As M2 explained, *"Supporting LTDL is a form of partnership,*

and joining events like this is not solely about profit or loss. It's about introducing our products to people." [M2].

b. Revenue Generation

Another result of the study found the LTDL 2023 supports regional economies through increased tourism, commercial activities, and sponsorship engagement. Strategic partnerships with state governments enhance financial backing. As noted by E2, *"Terengganu's sponsorship is influenced by Emir's positive relationship with the state government from previous events."* [E2]. The event also attracts tourists, stimulating local spending on hotels, restaurants, and services. Informant C4 shared, *"The promotion about Terengganu can indirectly attract visitors, which is good for the local economy."* [C4]. C1 echoed this and stated, *"It's good for the local economy when people come to Meruraya."* [C1]. The hospitality sector, in particular, benefits from the visitor influx. C2 stated, *"LTDL positively impacts Melaka's economy through transportation and accommodation."* [C2].

c. Destination Promotion

LTDL 2023 serves as a strategic tool for destination branding, raising the profile of host cities and contributing to long-term tourism development. Effective promotion through media campaigns and community outreach enhances regional visibility. A1 noted, *"…Communication efforts, including banners along roads, social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness…"* [A1]. A1 further stated, *"The decision seems beneficial due to the tourism in this area. Events like LTDL thrive here, and last year's success is a testament."* [A1]. Events like LTDL 2023 also foster cultural pride. Informant C4 reflected, *"…An international competition such as LTDL, and it happens in my place. I feel proud because the whole world is watching Terengganu."* [C4]. This demonstrates how event hosting enhances community identity and long-term support, reinforcing the Operations Domain (Reid & Arcodia, 2022).

d. Brand Visibility

LTDL 2023 functions as a platform for corporate visibility, allowing sponsors and businesses to increase brand exposure and market reach. Sponsorship goes beyond funding, offering a branding platform. E2 emphasized, *"...LTDL sponsors are not just our partners, it is also a way to promote our brand to the world."* [E2]. M2 reinforced this idea, *"...Supporting LTDL is a form of partnership... It's about introducing our products to people."* [M2]. This long-term strategy boosts brand trust and market penetration (Mallen & Adams, 2023). The result also showed LTDL 2023 showcases leading international and local brands. C2 observed, *"...This event had shown some of the major brands in the cycling world."* [C2]. C3 added, *"...Yes, I have seen several local big brands, for example, Petronas and Genting."* [C3].

4.4.2.2 Environmental Drivers

The environmental sustainability of LTDL 2023 is shaped by strategic initiatives that reduce ecological impact, promote green practices, and foster stakeholder participation. By incorporating eco-friendly operations, community engagement, and regulatory compliance, LTDL 2023 aligns itself with global standards in sustainable sports event management. These efforts correspond closely with the Risk Management**,** Operations, and Administration Domains of the EMBOK Model **(**Silvers, 2020). This section explores how LTDL 2023 implements green initiatives**,** waste management systems, and community-based environmental practices, demonstrating its commitment to environmental stewardship.

a. Green Event Initiative

LTDL 2023 actively integrates sustainability into its brand identity and operations. The event's messaging emphasizes climate consciousness, as seen in its promotional theme. In this research, Informant E1 noted, *"...It's more on the environment. You can see our race tagline, 'beat the heat.'..."* [E1]. LTDL 2023 promotes green initiatives through partnerships with industry stakeholders. As E1 explained, *"Collaborating with industry players for green campaigns is a step forward."* [E1]. Environmental impact mitigation is central to LTDL 2023 logistics, especially when navigating ecologically sensitive areas. E2 emphasized, *"With a*

significant portion of the race route passing through forested areas, we take extra precautions to minimize our environmental impact." [E2]. E1 also highlighted the push for sustainable transport solutions, *"We're exploring ways to promote sustainable transportation options, such as encouraging the use of electric vehicles."* [E1].

b. Waste Management

LTDL 2023 enforces structured waste management practices to align with global environmental standards, hence to reduce pollution. The implementation of waste zones, as mandated by the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI), reflects international compliance. Informant E2 noted, *"...UCI has introduced new regulations, the waste zone, meaning riders can't litter..."* [E2]. The race guidelines and regulations revealed that LTDL 2023 adhered to strict environmental standards, reflecting both the UCI's new regulations and the organizers' commitment to sustainability. Internally, LTDL 2023 includes environmental standards in race guidelines. E3 emphasized the role of organizers in upholding eco-friendly practices, *"...as organizer…the race guideline has to ensure that the race leaves minimal environmental concern..."* [E3]. Community involvement in waste reduction is equally important. A2 explained, *"...we also have been instructed to make sure the attendees do not litter..."* [A2]. C1 also added, *"...I can hear several times the MC's ask us not to litter..."* [C1].

c. Green Practice

LTDL 2023 extends its environmental commitment through community-based green practices such as tree planting and annual fun rides. These initiatives promote environmental awareness and foster stakeholder collaboration. Tree planting is a key carbon offset strategy. E1 shared, *"...It sounds cliché, planting trees. But actually, if we plant trees, it directly cuts off carbon emissions..."* [E1]. Involving professional cyclists and the public in tree-planting events increases visibility and participation. As E1 explained, *"...I have already done a meeting officially. They will plant trees outside, just beside the starting area. So, riders will join this program, and it will be broadcast live..."* [E1]. Further he added, *"...I have also asked the state secretary to organize an event for tree-planting for the locals..."* [E1]. LTDL 2023 also promotes community rides to involve the public in eco-conscious activities. E3 described this initiative, *"...There is also a fun ride for LTDL... we aim for community as participants, it's an*

annual ride just for LTDL..." [E3]. C5 highlighted the positive community response, *"...Yes, I am happy the organizer organizes a fun ride for us... it creates a community activity..."* [C5].).

4.4.2.3 Social Drivers

The social sustainability of LTDL 2023 is driven by inclusive community engagement, youth participation, wellness promotion, legacy building, and cultural integration. These elements play a vital role in building public support, enhancing community identity, and fostering long-term relationships between the event and its stakeholders. The EMBOK Model, particularly the Operations, Administration, and Marketing domains, provides a robust framework for evaluating LTDL 2023 social impact (Silvers, 2020). This section outlines the key social drivers that contribute to LTDL 2023 continued relevance, sustainability, and positive legacy.

a. Community Engagement

Community participation is foundational to LTDL 2023 social success. The event draws widespread interest across generations, creating a shared social experience that reinforces community pride and togetherness. As Informant C4 shared, *"...adding excitement to the event…many people come here to watch, some bring their children too.."* [C4]. The event is also inclusive of indigenous communities, highlighting its cultural openness. Informant A2 noted, *"...Especially the indigenous people; this is the time they come out in groups…They come to the event themselves…"* [A2]. Participation of indigenous communities was visibly significant. Observations showed that groups of indigenous people were present along the race route, often gathered in larger groups to cheer on the cyclists. They were seen wearing traditional attire and actively engaging with the event, adding to the diverse crowd of spectators. Residents also experience a strong sense of pride in hosting visitors. As A3 stated, *"... It's uplifting to have people from the town and city visit, boosting the community spirit..."* [A3]. Events that consistently foster local involvement create stronger community bonds and improve long-term support (Mair & Weber, 2020). Long-time supporters strengthen LTDL 2023 identity. Informant C1 reflected, *"... I've been following since 1997 when LTDL was held in Langkawi..."* [C1]. Furthermore, C5 added, *"...my love for cycling led me to the*

LTDL each year. The prospect of witnessing professional team riders and supporting our national team is a highlight that I eagerly anticipate..." [C5].

b. Student Involvement

Student participation significantly energizes the event, fosters youth development, and cultivates future interest in cycling. Informant A3 highlighted, *"Students have been present since earlier..."* [A3]. LTDL 2023 intentionally engages schools in event activities. As E1 stated, *"…We also ask states to involve schools and their students in supporting Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)..."* [E1]. Observations showed that numerous schools from various states actively participated by organizing student groups to cheer for the cyclists, creating a lively and supportive environment along the race route. Many students were seen waving flags, chanting, and showing their excitement, contributing significantly to the overall energy of the event. This strategic inclusion, rooted in the Administration Domain, builds institutional partnerships and embeds the event within the educational landscape (Mallen & Adams, 2023). The student impact is both emotional and operational. E3 shared, *"…We appreciate the inclusion of students in LTDL. Their involvement generates excitement..."* [E3]. Furthermore, C2 added, *"Engaging schools and students does bring more energy to the event..."* [C2]. Informant C1 captured the spirited support, *"I saw earlier the students come here to cheer up for the rider…"* [C1]. informant A1 confirmed the statement, *"...The students chant and support really lift up the race…"* [A1].

c. Wellness

LTDL 2023 actively promotes wellness through inclusive events like organising the annual fun ride, encouraging recreational cycling and inculcating community fitness. As E3 explained, *"...there is also a fun ride for LTDL...we aim for community as participants, it's an annual ride just for LTDL..."* [E3]. E1 highlighted the dramatic growth in participation, *"...In 2012... it is hard even to get 100 people to participate... but now… to get 1000 people… easy…"* [E1]. Beyond health, wellness events foster community interaction. C5 shared, *"...yes, I am happy the organizer organizes a fun ride for us... it creates a community activity..."* [C5]. C2 also added, *"...A group of 5-6 individuals initially, connected through our mutual interest in cycling that came from*

previous LTDL events..." [C2]. Wellness initiatives also influence younger generations. A2 noted, *"...the LTDL suddenly changed the youngster's interest in cycling..."* [A2].

d. Legacy Building

LTDL 2023 plays a central role in shaping national identity, promoting sports development, and inspiring future athletes. Informant C5 shared, *"...LTDL able to ignite an interest in cycling among the younger generation..."* [C5]. The event has influenced national icons. E1 recalled, *"...Dato' Azizul...he was a spectator at LTDL every year on the roadside. Back then, he was just a school kid..."* [E1]. A2 emphasized LTDL 2023 impact on young athletes, *"...I think it can generate interest among young cyclists to become like Anuar Manan or Dato Azizul..."* [A2]. C4 added, *"...I think events like this make us come to support Malaysian cyclists, like Mohamad Izzat and Harif Salleh..."* [C4].

e. Cultural Integration

Cultural expression enriches LTDL 2023 uniqueness and enhances its global appeal. The inclusion of traditional dance and indigenous performances highlights Malaysia's multicultural identity. A2 observed, *"...I noticed earlier that there were indigenous people wearing traditional attire in front; I think they had a performance…"* [A2]. E3 emphasized LTDL 2023 cultural distinctiveness, *"...From watching the race up close to showcasing their cultural heritage, their involvement is what makes LTDL truly special…"* [E3]. This supports the Marketing Domain, where local narratives enhance destination branding (Mallen & Adams, 2023). C2 reflected, *"...I love the organizer concept of cultural dance before the race... it really shows us Malaysia has its own culture..."* [C2]. C1 also added, *"...The cultural show really lifts up the atmosphere..."* [C1]. Cultural participation also fosters intergenerational engagement. C5 noted, *"...Participation from the kids' cultural dancers really cheers me up..."* [C5].

4.4.3 Summary of Results for Research Question 2

The study reveals that the event management process of LTDL 2023 is central to achieving sustainability. This process unfolds through a structured sequence of initiation, planning, implementation, execution, and evaluation, ensuring effective

collaboration, resource management, and community engagement. Additionally, the event's long-term impact is supported by three sustainability pillars, namely economic, environmental, and social**.** The results are organized into two key themes, each supported by sub-themes and stakeholder insights. To improve clarity and facilitate interpretation, Table 6 summarizes the thematic structure of the findings discussed in this section.

Table 4.2
Summary of Results for Research Question 2

RQ2- What is the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event?	
	Themes
Event Process in LTDL 2023	**Sustainable Pillars**
Initiation Phase	**Economic**
Stakeholders Identification	Stakeholder Benefits
Event concept	Revenue Generation
Budget	Destination Promotion
Initial support	Branding Visibility
Event Planning	**Environment**
Event Safety	Green Event Initiative
Engagement	Waste Management
Logistic	Green Practice
Resource	**Social**
Staffing	Community Engagement
Implementation	Student Involvement
Coordination	Legacy Building
Marketing & Promotion	Wellness
Communication	Cultural
Oversight	
Execution	
Monitoring	
Operation	
Crisis Management	
Feedback	

Location Development
Evaluation
Communication
Disruption
Involvement

4.5 Results for Research Question 3

Establishing a sustainable sports event is a critical response to the challenges and opportunities identified in the analysis of stakeholder collaboration and event management processes through this research. Summary from Research Question 1: *How do stakeholders collaboration contribute to a sustainable sports event in Malaysia?* has shown the pivotal role of stakeholder collaboration in achieving sustainable outcomes. Stakeholders, including organizers, local authorities, communities, and merchants, contribute unique roles and resources.

The results from Research Question 2: *What is the sports event management process that contributes to a sustainable sports event?* reveal the sport event management process prominent theme including initiation, planning, implementation, execution, and assessment phases. Every phase underscored the need of stakeholder identification, resource allocation, logistical coordination, and effective communication techniques. Efficient collaboration among various stakeholders, including local officials and community members, was crucial for addressing issues and ensuring smooth implementation.

Building on the results from Research Question 1 and Research Question 2, this topic is designed to answer Research Question 3: *How can stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process contribute to establishing a sustainable sports event framework?* Thus, these questions aim to propose a sustainable sports event framework that integrates stakeholder collaboration with event management processes in which producing as sustainable outcome that aligned with economic, social, and environmental pillars.

4.5.1 Dimensions that Build the Sustainable Sport Event

The findings from Research Question 1 and Research Question 2 have revealed a crucial connection: sustainable outcomes in sports events are highly dependent on effective collaboration and structured planning. This study demonstrates that the establishment of a sustainable sports event framework is fundamentally grounded in two interdependent dimensions namely the stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process**.** When strategically integrated, these dimensions form the basis for achieving the three core pillars of sustainability, namely economic, environmental, and social.

As illustrated in Table 7, the framework is structured around specific themes, sub-themes, and codes, offering a detailed breakdown of the collaborative and managerial elements that underpin sustainable sports event delivery. This organization provides a clear pathway for understanding how each component contributes to sustainability outcomes, not only in isolation, but also through their interrelated and systemic functions.

4.5.1.1 Stakeholder Collaboration

Stakeholder collaboration emerged as a central mechanism in achieving sustainability outcomes. Key actors that involved the organizers, authorities, merchants, and community members each brought distinct but complementary contributions. This division of roles supported operational clarity and event responsiveness, consistent with event governance frameworks emphasizing on clear role delineation and mutual interdependence (Getz & Page, 2021; Bowdin et al., 2022). Collaboration was further supported by robust partnership structures. Trust-based relationships, inter-agency alliances, and formalized coordination mechanisms strengthened decision-making processes and resource mobilization. As Reid and Arcodia (2022) reiterated that partnerships grounded in mutual trust and shared vision are crucial for multi-stakeholder event governance. In LTDL 2023, such structures facilitated resource sharing, risk mitigation, and institutional alignment, particularly between federal and state authorities as essential components in multi-level event management (Mair & Weber, 2020).

4.5.1.2 Communication and Coordination

The success of LTDL 2023 was also underpinned by its communication and coordination strategies. Regular briefings, stakeholder meetings, and on-site coordination provided consistency in messaging and reduced misunderstandings which are key concerns in large-scale event contexts (Mallen & Adams, 2023). The dual use of digital platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook) and traditional media (radio, banners) ensured information reached diverse demographic groups, aligning with inclusive communication strategies advocated in event literature (Chalip, 2004; Getz & Page, 2021). Moreover, effective logistics coordination and safety communication ensured timely stakeholder responses, enhanced public confidence, and minimized disruptions during critical event phases. According to Bowdin et al. (2022), well-executed communication systems foster a sense of shared responsibility, enhance situational awareness, and increase compliance with safety measures and outcomes clearly observed in LTDL 2023.

4.5.1.3 Community Engagement and Involvement

This study found that through active participation, spectatorship, and volunteerism, communities contributed social vibrancy and emotional investment, supporting what Shilbury et al. (2020) termed "social legitimacy" in sports events. The inclusion of schools and youth created intergenerational connections, helping to develop future spectators, volunteers, and athletes by echoing principles from the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) literature (Schulenkorf, 2012). Community feedback also played a critical role in event improvement, with residents highlighting both successes and areas for development. This aligns with findings by Misener and Mason (2006) that reiterated on community insight strengthening local ownership and accountability, fostering stronger long-term relationships between organizers and host communities.

4.5.1.4 Economic Empowerment through Collaboration

This study has found that economic sustainability can be achieved through inclusive stakeholder engagement. Short-term economic impacts included increased revenues for merchants, expanded job opportunities, and higher demand in service

sectors. Long-term economic benefits were realized through destination branding, tourism growth, and investment in local infrastructure. These were consistent with event-induced economic development frameworks (Chalip, 2006; Higham, 2018). The role of stakeholders in economic development was evident in their co-financing of event infrastructure and logistics, a model supported by Bowdin et al. (2022). They suggested that cost-sharing mechanisms reduce financial risks and strengthen community investment. Informants in this study confirmed that involvement in LTDL 2023 provided visibility for small businesses and large sponsors alike, hence reinforcing the literature on brand activation and sports sponsorship (Mair & Weber, 2020).

4.5.1.5 Collaborative Environmental Stewardship

LTDL 2023 exemplified environmental sustainability through its multi-stakeholder approach to green event practices. Compliance with UCI's waste zone policies and the implementation of local waste management protocols demonstrated adherence to global environmental standards (Getz & Page, 2021). Collaborative actions such as MC announcements discouraging littering and enforcement by local authorities reflected a shared environmental ethic, reinforcing findings by Mallen and Adams (2023) on community-led sustainability. In addition, green initiatives like tree planting and the promotion of sustainable transportation showcased the event's commitment to long-term environmental stewardship. These initiatives aligned with Silvers' (2020) assertion that events must not only minimize harm, but also actively contribute to ecological regeneration. By involving athletes and community members in environmental activities, LTDL 2023 supported environmental education and modelled sustainable behaviour.

4.5.1.6 Sports Event Management Process

The integration of stakeholder collaboration into the formal sports event management process proved essential for embedding sustainability across all phases. During the initiation phase, stakeholders were identified and mobilized, and the event's goals were aligned with national priorities. The planning phase incorporated safety, logistics, engagement, and resource coordination, echoing the EMBOK domains of

Administration and Operations (Silvers, 2020; Reid & Arcodia, 2022). In the implementation and execution phases, real-time communication, marketing, monitoring, and security coordination were managed through inter-agency collaboration. These phases mirrored the findings of Getz and Page (2021), as they reiterated that adaptive implementation mechanisms allow for rapid responses and continuity under pressure. The evaluation phase offered insights into barriers and opportunities for future improvement. Issues such as delayed communication, limited stakeholder inclusion, and uneven information dissemination were identified as challenges frequently reported in the event management literature (Mallen & Adams, 2023). Addressing these issues is key to building institutional memory and improving event resilience over time.

4.5.1.7 Sustainable Pillars

The establishment of a sustainable sports event framework in LTDL 2023 was underpinned by the integration of economic, environmental, and social pillars. The economic pillar was supported by stakeholder benefits, revenue generation, destination promotion, and branding visibility (Chalip, 2006; Mair & Weber, 2020). The environmental pillar was anchored in green event initiatives, effective waste management, and community-led sustainability practices. The social pillar was reflected in the breadth of community engagement, student involvement, wellness programs, legacy building, and cultural representation. These pillars were not only standalone components, but also interconnected elements embedded throughout the event lifecycle and stakeholder ecosystem (Schulenkorf, 2012; Reid & Arcodia, 2022). By aligning stakeholder collaboration with structured event management processes, LTDL 2023 provided a replicable model for sustainable sports event delivery, offering valuable insights for practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in the field of sports event governance.

Table 4.3
Summary of Results for Research Question 3

RQ3- How can stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process contribute to establishing a sustainable sports event framework?

Themes						
Stakeholder Collaboration	**Communication and Coordination**	**Community Engagement and Involvement**	**Economic Empowerment Through Collaboration**	**Collaborative Environmental Stewardship**	**Event Process in LTDL**	**Sustainable Pillars**
Stakeholder Roles **Organizers** **Authorities** **Merchants** **Community** **Stakeholders Partnership** **Network** **Trust** **Agency Collaboration** **Alliance** **Engagement**	**Communication** Communication strategies Logistic Coordination Event Campaigns Safety Communication **Communication Platform** - Digital - Printed	**Facilitate Active Community Participation** Local Community Engagement Community Spectatorship Inclusion of Schools **Community Insights for Improvement** Community Response Community Awareness Volunteerism	**Driving Immediate Economic Impact** Income Businesses Activity Business Opportunities **Long-Term Economic Opportunities** Branding Visibility Job Creation Income Improvement Tourism Potential	**Collective Eco-Friendly Practices** Waste Management Promoting Green Practices Green event initiative	**Initiation Phase** Stakeholders Identification Event concept Budget Initial support **Event Planning** Event Safety Engagement Logistic Resource Staffing **Implementation** Coordination Marketing & promotion Communication Oversight **Execution** Monitoring Operation Crisis management Feedback Location development **Evaluation** Communication Disruption Involvement	**Economic** Stakeholder benefits Revenue generation Destination Promotion Branding Visibility **Environment** Green Event initiative Waste management Green Practice **Social** Community engagement Student involvement Legacy building Wellness Cultural

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

5.1 Preamble

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the research findings in relation to the research objectives and research questions. Building upon the data analysis presented in Chapter 4, it interprets the key results through the lens of the theoretical frameworks used in this study, namely the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Shulenkorf, 2012), and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) (Silvers, 2004). This study aims to bridge empirical insights with broader academic discourse and practical considerations in sustainable sports event management.

The primary objective of this chapter is to critically assess how stakeholder collaboration contributes to the event management process in achieving the sustainability of sports events, using Le Tour de Langkawi as a case study. The discussion is structured around the following three research questions:

a) How do stakeholder collaborations contribute to a sustainable sports event in Malaysia?
b) What aspects of the sports event management process contribute to sustainable sports events?
c) How can stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process be integrated to establish a Sustainable Sports Event Framework?

With these research questions as its focus, this study seeks to understand the nature and outcomes of stakeholder collaboration, identify the sports event management processes that support sustainability initiatives, as well as explore how both collaboration and management practices can be incorporated into a framework for organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia.

In addition to addressing the research questions, this chapter explores emerging themes that extend beyond the initial scope of inquiry, such as the challenges of community engagement and gaps in stakeholders' understanding of sustainability. It also examines the theoretical and practical implications of the findings, acknowledges

the study's limitations, and suggests directions for future research. In conclusion, this chapter synthesizes the study's core arguments and contributions, laying the groundwork for practical applications and further academic exploration in the field of sustainable sports event management.

5.2 The Current Study

The sports event industry in Malaysia is growing fast on the global stage, but it still faces big challenges when it comes to making sure the events it hosts have a lasting positive impact. This research focuses on how key players in the industry can work together and manage events in a way that supports long-term sustainability. It looks closely at LTDL 2023, Malaysia's top international sports event. While there have been useful research on sustainable sports event management, still there is still a lack of understanding about how these practices apply in Malaysia's unique social, political, and economic settings (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

5.2.1 Stakeholder Collaboration Issues in Sports Event

One major problem in Malaysia's sports event scene is the fragmented nature of collaboration among stakeholders. Although many parties are involved in organizing sports events, they often do not work together effectively. This results in poor planning, execution, and post-event sustainability. The lack of strong cooperation is especially noticeable in large events like LTDL 2023, where the interests of government bodies, local businesses, event organizers, and local communities often do not align (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020).

In Malaysia, many key players work in isolation and being driven by different interests. Such are found in examples of government agencies focussing on political goals, event organizers striving mainly after short-term financial returns, as well as local businesses and communities detaching from contribution towards the decision-making process. The failure to involve everyone early on, combined with poor communication, makes things worse. Research shows that without open discussions and clear roles for each player, the coordination suffers, leading to less involvement from local communities and businesses. This limits the potential for wider social and economic benefits from these events (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). Moreover, the top-down decision-making structure in Malaysia, where decisions are often made at

higher levels; limits the grassroots involvement needed for sustainable success. Indeed, there is a clear need for a shift to a more inclusive approach, involving local community being seen as active participants, not just passive beneficiaries, in planning and running sports events (Towner, 2018).

5.2.2 Shortcomings in Sustainable Event Management

This study identifies a significant gap in sustainable event management within Malaysia's sports tourism sector. While there have been some sustainability initiatives at events like LTDL 2023, these efforts are often fragmented and lack a comprehensive framework that integrates sustainability across all stages of event planning and execution (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020). As a result, the absence of a consistent sustainability framework for Malaysia's sports events limits their ability to drive lasting change. Event organizers often prioritize short-term gains, such as immediate financial returns, without considering the long-term environmental or social impacts. This narrow focus not only leads to inefficiencies, but also undermines the potential of these events to empower local communities, promote cultural exchange, and contribute to sustainable development (Getz & Page, 2020; Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

Meanwhile, a particularly concerning issue is the lack of robust environmental practices, including waste management, resource conservation, and efforts to reduce carbon footprints. While sports events play an important role in positioning Malaysia as a prime sports tourism destination, they fall short in fully incorporating sustainability into their operations. Environmental initiatives, such as tree planting or waste management, are often ad hoc and do not adequately address the full ecological impact of the event's logistics (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

5.2.3 Justification of Conducting this Current Study

This study is significant because it addresses a gap in the existing literature by focusing on stakeholder collaboration and sustainable event management in Malaysia. While global frameworks such as the Stakeholder Theory and the Sports for Development (S4D) Model have been instrumental in promoting sustainable practices in sports events worldwide, their application in Malaysia has been limited (Schulenkorf, 2012; Freeman, 1984). The core argument of this research is that despite Malaysia's

potential for global appeal and economic growth, its sports event industry faces challenges due to inadequate collaboration among stakeholders and a lack of comprehensive sustainability strategies.

The research highlights the importance of adopting a more integrated approach in Malaysia's sports events, where stakeholder collaboration is seen as a key driver of sustainability. By examining LTDL 2023 and the barriers to effective teamwork, this study offers insights on how Malaysia's sports event industry can meet both local and global sustainability goals (Wondirad, Tolkach, & King, 2020). Additionally, it emphasizes the need for a standardized sustainability framework that can guide the planning, execution, and legacy of sports events as these ensure that they generate not only short-term economic benefits, but also long-term social and environmental impacts (Jones & Smith, 2023; Schnitzer, Kronberger, & Wenger, 2020).

5.3 Discussion on Research Findings

This section presents the key findings from the investigation into the stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia. Using Le Tour de Langkawi as a case study, the findings are discussed in relation to each research question, supported by existing academic knowledge. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the current state of stakeholder collaboration and the sports event management process. In doing so, this chapter not only consolidates the empirical findings, but also situates them within broader theoretical and practical contexts, contributing to the academic discourse on sustainable sports events.

5.3.1 Research Question 1: How Do Stakeholders Collaborate to Contribute to Sustainable Sports Events in Malaysia?

The findings from this study highlight that multi-stakeholder collaboration is essential for ensuring the sustainability of LTDL 2023. Stakeholders including event organizers, government authorities, local businesses, and the community play distinct yet interdependent roles, ensuring the event's economic, environmental, and social impacts. This aligns with Freeman's (1984) Stakeholder Theory, which suggests that collaborative governance enhances the long-term sustainability of events by balancing the interests of all parties involved. While strong inter-agency coordination and

effective logistical execution were observed, the findings also reveal gaps in community participation and communication, which require strategic improvements.

5.3.1.1 Stakeholder Collaboration in Le Tour de Langkawi

a. The Roles of Stakeholders in Le Tour de Langkawi

i. Organizers' Role

Event organizers are pivotal in the planning, logistics, and execution of LTDL 2023, tasked with ensuring that the event meets both national and international standards. As noted by Informant E2 from the Malaysian National Sports Council (MSN), *"I am representing the MSN, the caretaker overseeing the whole event process, assumed the role of de facto organizer for the reestablishment of LTDL."* [E2], organizers take on a multifaceted role, acting as central figures responsible for the coordination of all parties involved, including government agencies, sponsors, and regulatory bodies. According to Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), organizers function as intermediaries, managing resources and ensuring that compliance with various regulations is maintained. This aligns with Getz and Page (2021), who assert that the role of organizers is essential in balancing stakeholder interests and ensuring the event's smooth operation.

The success of LTDL 2023 heavily relies on the ability of organizers to forge effective partnerships with key stakeholders. As Informant E1 emphasized, *"We work closely with local authorities to make sure the event runs smoothly. Without their support, it wouldn't be possible."* [E1]. This collaboration is critical, as it enhances operational efficiency and facilitates effective logistical management. The importance of such collaborative relationships is further underscored by the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012), which highlights the role of organizers in fostering partnerships that contribute not only to event success but also to sustainable development. As Mallen and Adams (2023) suggest, the quality of an event and its long-term sustainability are significantly influenced by improving planning and stakeholder engagement, further reinforcing the need for organizers to act as key facilitators in this process.

During LTDL 2023, the organizers' proactive engagement with local authorities and stakeholders was evident. They were seen actively coordinating logistics, ensuring

that race routes were clear, and making real-time adjustments to plans as necessary. This on-the-ground presence demonstrated the organizers' critical role in ensuring the event's seamless execution. At various stages of the race, organizers collaborated closely with local officials, overseeing traffic management and security measures. Their ability to monitor and adjust plans quickly ensured that national and international standards were adhered to, with proper logistical arrangements and safety protocols being implemented effectively.

The central role of organizers in LTDL 2023 highlights the importance of their ability to coordinate diverse stakeholders and manage the complex operational aspects of the event. This coordination not only contributes to the immediate success of the event but also enhances LTDL 2023 international visibility and sustainability, which are crucial for its long-term viability as a premier sports event. By continuously strengthening these relationships and maintaining effective partnerships, event organizers ensure that the event is both operationally efficient and strategically aligned with global best practices for sports event management.

ii. Authorities' Role

Government Government authorities, particularly law enforcement and municipal councils, are indispensable to the economic ecosystem and operational efficiency of LTDL 2023. Their roles extend beyond maintaining order, involving responsibilities related to security operations, risk mitigation, and stakeholder coordination. As Informant A2 explained, *"My main function during LTDL events is to ensure security and manage any issues that may arise, as part of the 'Ops Cantas' operation."* [A2], and A1 added, *"We are directed to assist in managing the event safety…"* [A1]. These roles are crucial to ensuring the safety of participants and spectators, while allowing event organizers to focus on the logistical and operational aspects.

From a Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), government agencies serve as critical stakeholders, balancing the competing interests of organizers, sponsors, participants, and the public. Getz and Page (2021) assert that government agencies play a key role in maintaining order and regulations during events. They ensure that the safety and security of the public are upheld while supporting the event's success through their regulatory authority. However, government involvement goes beyond

merely enforcing rules; it includes collaborating across agencies to achieve comprehensive event management and risk reduction.

The importance of inter-agency collaboration for effective risk management is emphasized by Informant A3, who noted, *"The relationship between RELA, the police, and the district office is described as strong and united. We have effective collaboration among stakeholders…"* [A3]. This coordinated effort is critical in handling crowd control, traffic management, and emergency responses, ensuring that all potential risks are proactively managed. Masterman (2021) contends that successful mega-events depend on synchronized efforts between government, private, and community stakeholders, which supports the notion that government authorities play an indispensable role in the smooth execution of the event. Schulenkorf's (2012) Sport for Development (S4D) Model further highlights the importance of such coordination, viewing it as crucial to the creation of a secure, well-regulated environment, which allows both athletes and spectators to engage with the event safely and without concern for security.

During LTDL 2023, the authorities effectively managed road closures, crowd control, and security at key junctures along the race route. Law enforcement and municipal staff worked in concert to ensure traffic flow and maintain a secure environment for all stakeholders involved. Their presence was crucial at strategic locations, where police officers, supported by RELA personnel, directed traffic and maintained order. This seamless coordination ensured that the logistical aspects of the event could proceed smoothly, while the safety of both athletes and spectators was prioritized.

The integration of law enforcement and municipal councils into the event management framework highlights their critical role in the success of LTDL 2023. Their collaboration with organizers allowed for efficient operations, giving event planners the assurance that security and public safety were under control. This collaborative approach is a model for how government bodies can contribute to the success of large-scale sporting events, ensuring that they are both secure and well-executed.

Thus, this study concur, government authorities are integral to the operational success of LTDL 2023, fulfilling vital roles in security, risk management, and stakeholder coordination. Their efforts ensure that the event operates smoothly, with a focus on the safety and security of both participants and spectators. By maintaining

effective coordination across agencies, they allow event organizers to focus on logistical tasks, contributing to the overall success and sustainability of the event. This analysis underscores the importance of viewing government authorities as key stakeholders in the event planning and execution process, as their involvement directly impacts the long-term viability of sports events such as LTDL 2023.

iii. Merchants' Role

Local businesses are essential to the economic ecosystem of LTDL 2023, enhancing both the commercial vibrancy and spectator experience. However, their involvement remains largely transactional, with limited integration into the event's broader strategic goals. As Informant M3 stated, *"…As merchants, our role here is solely focused on selling our food…"* [M3], which underscores the narrow scope of their contribution, centered on immediate sales rather than long-term event success.

From a Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), local businesses are treated as secondary stakeholders, crucial for the event's financial sustainability but largely peripheral in decision-making processes. This transactional approach contrasts with best practices in sustainable event management, which advocate for active partnerships. Getz and Page (2021) argue that local businesses should be more than service providers; they should be engaged as strategic partners to foster economic and social benefits. By failing to integrate businesses into the event's planning and governance, LTDL 2023 misses an opportunity to enhance long-term sustainability and community development.

Local businesses, such as Informant M2's comment *"…Today we are promoting and selling MyVita Lab..."* [M2] which highlight how vendors leverage the event's visibility to market their products. While this aligns with the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012), which emphasizes economic growth and brand visibility, it also advocates for broader community benefits. Local businesses should be incorporated into sponsorships, co-branding, and community outreach, as Chalip and Green (2020) suggest, to enhance both economic and social impacts, transforming them into key contributors to the event's legacy.

Despite their active engagement with spectators, food vendors and merchandise sellers remain largely transactional, focusing on short-term profits. This visibility, while contributing to the event's atmosphere, could be leveraged for deeper integration

with organizers. Vendors should be included in strategic roles like co-sponsorship or cultural programming, which would foster stronger community ties and enhance the event's long-term impact.

iv. Community's Role

Community participation is essential to the sustainable management of sports events, as it fosters social cohesion and ensures the long-term viability of such events. To achieve sustainability, it is critical that a sports event cultivates a sense of ownership and involvement among the local population, extending the event's benefits beyond immediate economic and social impacts. LTDL 2023, a prominent cycling event in Malaysia, generates considerable enthusiasm and public interest. However, the findings from this study indicate a significant disconnect between the event's popularity and the level of active community engagement. Despite the visible support, community participation in LTDL largely remains passive, with locals primarily engaging as spectators rather than as active contributors to the event.

The data reveals that, although the community contributes to the event's excitement, their role is limited to passive engagement. As Informants C4 and C5 noted: *"...I think the community is more like spectators, adding excitement to the event…"* [C4] and *"...My contribution is all about bringing enthusiasm and energy to the event…"* [C5]. These observations reflect a broader trend observed in many sports events, where residents take on the role of spectators, contributing to the atmosphere but not engaging meaningfully in the event's planning, execution, or long-term sustainability.

From the perspective of Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), such engagement falls short. Stakeholder Theory advocates for the active participation of all stakeholders is not only in the consumptive aspects of an event but also in its decision-making processes, planning, and organizational activities. Community members should be engaged as active contributors, with roles in volunteering, decision-making, and collaborative governance. By engaging in these tasks, community members would foster a stronger sense of ownership and investment in the event, which is crucial for its sustainability. Active participation would deepen their connection to the event, enhancing its long-term success and impact on the community.

Currently, LTDL 2023 positions the community primarily as consumers, inviting them to participate through their presence as spectators. This limited role contrasts with the principles of sustainable event management, which advocate for a more inclusive and participatory approach. Sustainable event management emphasizes community-driven involvement, which not only benefits the immediate success of the event but also aligns with long-term sustainability goals and sustainable development principles (Misener & Mason, 2021). Integrating the community into the planning, organization, and execution of the event could foster stronger social cohesion and result in long-lasting positive effects.

The Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) offers a valuable framework for understanding the potential impact of sports events on local communities. The S4D Model underscores the importance of empowering local communities through active participation, encouraging them to move beyond the role of spectators to active contributors to the event's success and legacy. However, this study's findings show a disconnect between the S4D model's ideals and the actual level of community engagement in LTDL 2023. While the event provides an opportunity for community involvement, most participation remains limited to enthusiastic spectatorship, as noted by Informant C2: *"...I come to meet the riders, it's exciting..."* [C2]. This suggests that the community's role is primarily observational, with limited contribution to the event's organization.

The lack of structured involvement, such as opportunities for volunteering, cultural participation, and vendor partnerships, leaves the community on the periphery of the event's operations. This represents a missed opportunity to enhance the event experience while fostering a deeper sense of ownership and long-term commitment from the community. Without meaningful participation, LTDL 2023 risks alienating residents, leading to a decline in investment and potentially diminishing sustained community support for future editions. Moreover, the absence of community input could result in decisions that fail to address local concerns, thereby hindering the event's ability to meet the sustainability needs of the local population.

b. Stakeholders Partnership in Le Tour de Langkawi

The success of LTDL 2023 is fundamentally driven by stakeholder partnerships, where collaborative networks, trust, agency collaboration, alliances, and stakeholder

engagement play a crucial role in ensuring effective event execution. Given the complexity of a large-scale international sporting event, multi-stakeholder coordination is essential for logistical management, regulatory compliance, and long-term event sustainability.

From a Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), stakeholders including government agencies, law enforcement, sports councils, and private sector partners are interconnected entities whose collaboration determines the overall efficiency and sustainability of the event. Meanwhile, the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) underscores that stakeholder partnerships enhance governance structures, build institutional trust, and foster long-term social and economic benefits for host communities. The findings suggest that stakeholder engagement in LTDL 2023 extends beyond formal collaboration and is embedded in inter-agency coordination, trust-building mechanisms, strategic alliances, and participatory decision-making.

i. Network

A strong and cohesive stakeholder network is critical for aligning the various logistical, safety, and administrative aspects of LTDL 2023. Informant E2 emphasized the significance of structured engagement, stating, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K…"* [E2]. This reflects the foundational role that networks of stakeholders play in the decision-making process and operational success of large-scale events. According to Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), such networks enable shared decision-making, resource optimization, and accountability, creating a collaborative environment where each stakeholder contributes to the collective goal. Inter-agency cooperation, as highlighted by Getz and Page (2021), is essential for improving both governance and operational efficiency, ensuring that all moving parts of the event are well coordinated and effectively managed.

The importance of collaboration within this stakeholder network is further reinforced by A3, who remarked, *"The relationship between RELA, the police, and the district office is described as strong and united. We have effective collaboration among agencies…"* [A3]. Such inter-agency collaboration directly impacts the governance of

the event and improves its operational efficiency. This view aligns with the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022), which suggests that effective stakeholder networks not only enhance the governance of sports events but also foster institutional learning, improving the capacity of organizations to adapt and refine their practices over time.

At the local level, engagement between central planning and municipal execution is essential for the successful delivery of the event. E4 provided an insightful perspective, stating, *"After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local authorities, particularly MBSA, the municipal council… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally…"* [E4]. This demonstrates that local authorities play a crucial role in providing logistical support and regulatory oversight, both of which are integral to ensuring the smooth operation of the event. Coordination between central planners and local authorities ensures that there is alignment in the implementation of policies, minimizing the risk of operational disruptions and fostering greater stakeholder cohesion. As Reid and Arcodia (2022) note, such coordination is key to operational success, ensuring that local stakeholders are fully aligned with the event's broader goals.

Furthermore, LTDL 2023 strategy also integrates law enforcement and emergency services into the overall framework, further enhancing the event's security and logistical management. A3 reiterated this integration, stating, *"The relationship between RELA, the police, and the district office is described as strong and united…"* [A3]. From the S4D perspective, these partnerships play a critical role in risk management, institutional capacity, and community trust (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020). By ensuring that security and logistics are coordinated effectively, these partnerships help to maintain the safety of participants and spectators, while fostering a sense of trust among the community. The smooth operation of these partnerships ensures that event stakeholders can focus on their primary responsibilities without concerns about security or logistical disruptions.

ii. Trust

Trust is essential for cohesive stakeholder collaboration and realising shared goals. A1 emphasized that trust enabled clear role definition and smooth coordination, stating, *"Cooperation among various agencies, including the police, has been effective,*

with clear instructions provided by the police chief, ensuring smooth coordination and management of the event…" [A1]. According to Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), trust reduces uncertainty, strengthens accountability, and supports effective crisis response through open communication.

Transparent communication further reinforced trust. E4 noted, *"…During the meetings, he (E1) would outline what was expected from us, and we'd work from there to ensure that all the logistics and local planning were in place…"* [E4]. From the S4D perspective (Schulenkorf, 2012), trust-based engagement fosters transparency, social cohesion, and event credibility. Events that prioritize trust through clear communication and inclusive decision-making build stronger foundations for future planning and execution.

iii. Agency Collaboration

LTDL 2023 depends on multi-agency collaboration to manage logistics and safety, enhancing risk mitigation and operational resilience. E2 stressed the need to identify key players, stating, *"Identifying key stakeholders is vital… While various ministries are involved, the State Sports Council has become particularly significant in our approach…"* [E2]. According to Stakeholder Theory (Getz & Page, 2021), successful event execution relies on engaging relevant agencies to coordinate security, transportation, emergency response, and logistics, thereby avoiding bottlenecks.

Informant E1 reinforced this by noting, *"…The stakeholders in LTDL play crucial roles in various aspects of organizing the event… it is important different stakeholders collaborate to ensure the success of the event…"* [E1]. The S4D Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) supports this approach, highlighting how cross-sector collaboration fosters knowledge-sharing and strengthens governance. LTDL 2023 exemplifies collective responsibility in resolving logistical and safety challenges through coordinated stakeholder efforts.

iv. Alliances

Stakeholder alliances are essential for securing financial support, strategic direction, and institutional backing, which underpin LTDL 2023 operational success. E2 emphasized, *"Strengthening partnerships with the State Sports Council has been crucial for effective coordination and successful execution…"* [E2], while E1 added,

"The stakeholders in LTDL play crucial roles in various aspects of organizing the event. It is important for different stakeholders to collaborate to ensure the success of the event…" [E1]. E4 highlighted the influence of key personnel in facilitating inter-agency efforts: *"The key person on the MSN side was Emir. He played an important role in guiding us on what Selangor could do to help make this event a success."* [E4]. According to Stakeholder Theory, such alliances among government agencies, private partners, and organizers form a resilient support network that strengthens financial and administrative capabilities. The S4D Model further underscores that these collaborations foster capacity-building and long-term structures for sustainable sports governance.

v. Engagement

Stakeholder engagement promotes transparency, accountability, and collective ownership (Freeman, 1984), while the S4D Model highlights its role in fostering institutional collaboration (Schulenkorf, 2012). Central planning meetings played a key role in aligning logistics, safety, and resource needs. As E2 shared, *"…Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K…"* [E2], reflecting best practices in stakeholder-driven governance (Getz & Page, 2021).

Ongoing communication with local authorities ensured regulatory alignment and community responsiveness. E4 explained, *"…After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local authorities, particularly MBSA… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally…"* [E4]. Regular engagement-built trust, strengthened coordination, and avoided operational silos, contribute to seamless execution (Reid & Arcodia, 2022). Strengthening these practices through structured meetings and continuous dialogues will further enhance LTDL 2023 efficiency, sustainability, and long-term stakeholder commitment.

5.3.1.2 Communication and Coordination in Le Tour de Langkawi

a. Stakeholder Communication in Le Tour de Langkawi

i. Communication Strategies

Effective communication between LTDL 2023 organizer and stakeholder was essential for aligning logistics, responsibilities, and strategic goals. E1 emphasized regular dialogue with key institutions, stating, *"We mainly communicate with main organizers like KBS and MSN through regular meetings to discuss event logistics and updates. With the state council, it's a mix of meetings and official mail for important decisions and updates."* [E1]. According to the Stakeholder Theory, consistent communication reduces ambiguity, promotes alignment, and fosters shared ownership (Getz & Page, 2021).

Structured meetings also helped clarify expectations, as E4 noted, *"...During the meetings, he (MSN) would outline what was expected from us, and we'd work from there to ensure that all the logistics and local planning were in place..."* [E4]. These multi-level communication frameworks reflect best practices in event management, enhancing coordination and operational synergy (Reid & Arcodia, 2022). E2 further emphasized the value of collaboration, stating, *"Strengthening partnerships with the State Sports Council has been crucial for effective coordination and successful execution."* [E2]. This aligns with the S4D Model (Schulenkorf, 2012), which views sports events as platforms for fostering institutional partnerships and long-term governance.

ii. Logistics Coordination

LTDL 2023 logistical coordination relied on a multifaceted communication strategy that brought together local authorities, law enforcement, and organizers to ensure safety, route planning, and infrastructure readiness. E2 highlighted the importance of joint efforts: *"...Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from entities like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K..."* From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, such multi-agency collaboration improves risk mitigation and promotes shared responsibility (Getz & Page, 2021). E4 underscored the value of sustained local coordination: *"...After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local*

authorities, particularly MBSA… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally…" This reflects Mallen and Adams's (2023) view that continuous communication enhances operational efficiency and flexibility in event management.

iii. Campaigns

Public engagement campaigns were essential in raising awareness for LTDL 2023, with multi-channel strategies ensuring broad community reach. C1 shared, *"…I get updates from the Sports Arena through various channels. Many of us tune in to channel 801 on Astro to stay informed… even Radio Tiga, Radio Perak has also broadcasted the information, ensuring widespread awareness within the community…"* From an S4D perspective, sports events serve as platforms for cultural and community engagement, not just logistical operations (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020).

A1 emphasized the role of digital tools, noting, *"…Communication efforts, including social media promotion and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents…"* This supports Stakeholder Theory's call for adaptive communication strategies that leverage both traditional and emerging media to reach diverse demographic groups effectively (Reid & Arcodia, 2022).

iv. Safety Communication

Effective communication between law enforcement, municipal authorities, and the public was critical to ensuring safety and reducing security concerns during LTDL 2023. A2 emphasized the impact of structured coordination, stating, *"...Cooperation among local residents, businesses, and authorities is described as excellent, with businesses setting up stalls, residents attending the event, and the local council informing everyone in advance…"* E4 further highlighted the planning involved, explaining, *"…After we received the instructions from MSN, we got in touch with the local authorities, particularly MBSA… The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally…"*. This approach reflects Schulenkorf's (2012) S4D framework, which emphasizes that effective communication builds stakeholder trust and reinforces public confidence in event

governance. Clear protocols and transparent messaging not only enhance safety, but also foster greater community participation and support.

b. Communication Platform in Le Tour de Langkawi

i. Digital Media

The findings highlight the growing reliance on digital platforms for event communication, particularly WhatsApp, Facebook, and email. Informant A2 described how social media facilitated real-time engagement, *"...They learned about the event through various channels. Firstly, the community was informed via Facebook posts and updates from the local council page. Additionally, many residents discussed it in WhatsApp groups…"* [A2]**.** Furthermore, this study also found that the digital platform as the current medium in distributing the event information. Informant A1 stated that *"...Communication efforts, including ..., social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents…" [A1]*

ii. Printed Media

Stakeholder Theory underscores that traditional communication channels remain crucial for inclusivity, particularly for older demographics. Informant C2 confirmed, *"...For older community members, they rely heavily on traditional media like radio and newspapers to get information about events like Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)..."* [C2]**.** This study has found dual-channel digital and printed media approach aligns with best practices in stakeholder engagement, ensuring that diverse audiences receive information through their preferred communication platforms (Getz & Page, 2021).

5.3.1.3 Community Engagement and Involvement in Le Tour de Langkawi

a. Facilitating Active Community Participation

Community engagement is crucial for sustainable sports event management, promoting inclusivity, local identity, and long-term success. In the case of LTDL 2023, active local participation greatly contributed to the event atmosphere and stakeholder collaboration. However, the findings show that while the community actively

participated, it was mainly as spectators, with more structured engagement opportunities still developing.

From the Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), communities are key stakeholders whose involvement should go beyond passive support to include active roles in planning, execution, and decision-making. The Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) highlights that sports events should promote social development, community cohesion, and local capacity-building. Strengthening community engagement can boost social sustainability, increase civic participation, and enhance the benefits of LTDL 2023.

i. Local Community Engagement

This study found that while community enthusiasm for LTDL 2023 was high, engagement remained mostly informal, with many residents involved only in supportive roles. As C5 noted, *"My contribution is all about bringing enthusiasm and energy to the event, even though I'm not officially involved in organizing it…"* This reflects a missed opportunity for deeper involvement, as the Stakeholder Theory advocates for meaningful integration of community perspectives in event governance (Getz & Page, 2021). Organizers acknowledged the community's importance, with E3 stating, *"...The local community is vital for us. We want them to feel connected to LTDL, so we provide opportunities for them to experience the excitement firsthand…"* The event's inclusive appeal also extended to indigenous groups, as A2 shared, *"Even the indigenous people… They come to the event themselves..."*. The S4D Model (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020) highlights that such inclusion fosters social cohesion, ownership, and national identity. By offering more structured roles for community participation, LTDL 2023 can evolve into a stronger platform for social development and active civic engagement.

ii. Community Spectatorship

Spectatorship plays a vital role in fostering community engagement during LTDL 2023, contributing to the event's atmosphere and strengthening social bonds. As C5 shared, *"I'm a local attending the event as a spectator and supporter, adding excitement to the atmosphere,"* emphasizing the value of public presence. From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, spectators are essential stakeholders who legitimize

the event's purpose and enhance its public image (Getz & Page, 2021). Organizers also recognize the importance of inclusion. E3 stated, *"The local community is vital for us. We want them to feel connected to LTDL, so we provide opportunities for them to experience the excitement firsthand,"* aligning with S4D principles that frame sport as a tool for social inclusion and belonging (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020). Additionally, local pride and national identity are reinforced through participation, with C5 adding, *"I'm here to witness professional team riders and support our national team…", a* reflection of the S4D model's focus on uniting communities through shared sporting experiences (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

iii. Inclusion of School

Youth participation, especially through schools, played a vital role in energizing LTDL 2023, sparking early interest in sports, and encouraging community engagement. A3 observed, *"Students have been present since earlier,"* highlighting their consistent involvement. From a Stakeholder Theory perspective, students and schools are essential stakeholders whose roles should extend beyond spectatorship. As Getz and Page (2021) suggested, involving youth in volunteering or event management fosters long-term sustainability by nurturing future sports advocates.

Organizers actively promoted student participation, with E1 stating, *"We also ask states to involve schools and their students in supporting Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)..."* Their involvement added vibrancy, as C2 and A1 noted, *"Engaging schools and students does bring more energy to the event,"* and *"The students chant and support really lift up the race."* This aligns with the S4D Model (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020), which highlights the role of sports in building community spirit and empowering youth. It also supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting experiential learning that strengthens youth leadership and social cohesion.

b. Community Insights for Event Improvement

i. Community Response

Community insights identify opportunity to enhance LTDL 2023 social and economic impacts through greater local involvement. Residents recommended pre-event activities to build anticipation and engagement. As C2 suggested, *"LTDL activities such as fun ride could foster economic support and national unity,"* while C4

added, *"Community groups can organize related activities or pre-event ceremonies which can build the event momentum."* From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, this reflects the underutilization of community-driven initiatives, which are key to fostering local ownership and long-term event sustainability (Misener & Mason, 2021). However, limited outreach by organizers remains a concern. C5 stated, *"...I feel that the organizer hasn't adequately coordinated or reached out for collaboration,"* highlighting a gap in inclusive engagement. This aligns with Wondirad, Tolkach, and King (2020) as they emphasized the need to incorporate community perspectives to maximize both social and economic outcomes. Establishing community advisory panels and conducting pre-event consultations could strengthen local participation and ensure more inclusive event planning.

ii. Community Awareness and Information Dissemination

Effective communication was essential for ensuring community awareness and participation in LTDL 2023. A2 emphasized proactive coordination, stating, *"...Cooperation among local residents, businesses, and authorities is described as excellent, with businesses setting up stalls, residents attending the event, and the local council informing everyone in advance."* Organizers implemented multi-channel strategies to maximize outreach. As A1 noted, *"...Communication efforts, including banners along roads, social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents."*. From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, clear and inclusive communication fosters transparency, trust, and long-term engagement (Getz & Page, 2021). The S4D Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) also stresses the importance of accessible messaging to involve diverse community groups. This approach was evident in logistical updates, with A1 adding, *"...We ensure that residents are informed in advance about the road closures and alternative routes,"* aligning with best practices outlined by the IOC Commission for Sport and Environment (2012), which advocates transparent communication to support social sustainability.

iii. Volunteerism

Youth volunteerism is a vital tool for integrating community resources and fostering civic responsibility. As C4 noted, *"The youth here can contribute as*

volunteers to help LTDL," emphasizing their potential role in event success. From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, involving youth as active participants strengthens sustainability by building a pipeline of future leaders and advocates (Freeman, 1984). Reid and Arcodia (2022) further argued that community-driven sustainability improves when youth are engaged in planning and execution rather than as passive spectators. C4 also pointed to untapped potential within local youth associations, *"In the villages around here, there are many youth associations. I believe the youth can contribute as volunteers to help LTDL."* This aligns with the S4D Model (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020), which highlights how youth involvement in sports fosters leadership, teamwork, and community cohesion. Promoting structured youth volunteer programs can enhance LTDL 2023 long-term social impact and build stronger community ties.

5.3.1.4 Economic Empowerment through Collaboration in Le Tour de Langkawi

Sporting events like LTDL 2023 drive economic activity, creating business opportunities in host regions through increased tourism, commerce, and services. LTDL 2023 has become a key economic driver, providing revenue for local merchants, creating jobs, and stimulating entrepreneurship, thus fostering long-term economic growth.

From the Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), local businesses, vendors, and service providers are essential to the event's financial ecosystem, benefiting from the surge in commercial activity. The Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) emphasizes that sports events should promote socio-economic development by fostering entrepreneurship and long-term financial stability in host regions. LTDL 2023 economic impact aligns with these frameworks, demonstrating how sporting events can drive economic progress and sustainable business opportunities.

a. Driving Immediate Economic Impact

i. Income

One immediate economic impact of LTDL 2023 is increased incomes for local merchants and service providers. M3 emphasized, *"Le Tour de Langkawi is a significant event for us local merchants. It brings in extra income and customers that*

we might not usually see," highlighting the event's value to key economic stakeholders. From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, local businesses play a central role by supplying essential goods and services to attendees. The surge in demand even prompted operational expansion, as M3 added, *"The customer demand for food and drink from this event has led me to ask my brother-in-law to assist me."* A1 echoed this sentiment: *"...Due to this sudden surge of people, it's really giving business to the locals..."*. These observations support Sharpley and Telfer's (2015) view that sports events offer temporary financial gains while improving long-term market visibility. The broader benefits to the local economy illustrate the economic multiplier effect, where increased spending from one sector stimulates growth across others.

ii. Business Activity

LTDL 2023 stimulates broad economic activity across hospitality, retail, and food services, creating a ripple effect beyond the event itself. C2 described the surge in demand, stating, *"Local businesses get the benefit from this event… today, us locals couldn't even find a place to eat because the owner said the food was sold out,"* reflecting the spillover effects typical of major sports events (Wallace & Michopoulou, 2021). Informal vendors also benefited, with A2 noting, *"...I've noticed that even food vendors from the night market are doing business now. I think they have been invited to do business during LTDL,"* illustrating how the event supports both formal and informal sectors.

From the S4D Model perspective, such inclusion promotes economic equity and community-wide benefit, offering income opportunities across diverse groups. LTDL 2023 also drives employment, particularly in the hospitality industry. As C2 shared, *"Yes, locals engage in various sectors—business, services, employment, especially in the hotel industry. LTDL has been an economic catalyst here."* These findings align with sport event economics, emphasizing the role of large-scale events in job creation, skill development, and long-term workforce sustainability (Mair & Weber, 2020).

iii. Business Opportunities

Beyond immediate financial gains, LTDL 2023 fosters long-term economic opportunities by encouraging entrepreneurship and business growth. As E1 noted, *"...Bike shops are opening...the bikes and accessories… after that, there's a restaurant*

with a bike concept," illustrating how the event has stimulated cycling-related business development. From the S4D Model perspective, sports events should drive sustainable business expansion rather than short-term surges (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020). The hospitality sector also experiences significant benefits, with high demand for accommodations. E2 stated, *"...With approximately 1.4 million ringgit allocated for just a two-week period, Malaysian hotels are fully booked,"* reflecting the event's impact on tourism and regional economic growth (Mallen & Adams, 2023). Additionally, allowing local traders to operate at LTDL 2023 venues supports small business expansion and community participation. A1 explained, *"Allowing local traders to operate during events would not only attract more people but also contribute to the overall atmosphere."* From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, recognizing local traders as key economic contributors ensures inclusive benefits and aligns with Wallace and Michopoulou's (2021) argument that major events stimulate entrepreneurial growth through broad-based participation.

b. Long-Term Economic Opportunities

Beyond its immediate economic benefits, LTDL 2023 drives long-term growth in branding, job creation, income improvement, and tourism in Malaysia. These sustained opportunities benefit local businesses and workers, while positioning Malaysia as a premier sports tourism destination, enhancing global competitiveness and economic resilience. From the Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), economic sustainability depends on collaboration between event organizers, businesses, and government agencies to ensure long-term benefits. The Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) emphasizes how sports events catalyze economic development, business innovation, and global branding. LTDL 2023 exemplifies how sports events foster economic resilience, positioning Malaysia as a key hub for sports tourism and event management.

i. Branding and Visibility

LTDL 2023 provides valuable branding opportunities for both local and international companies, enhancing visibility and commercial growth. Sponsors and businesses leverage the event's global platform to reach wider audiences, as E2 noted, *"...LTDL sponsors are not just our partners, it is also a way to promote our brand to*

the world." From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, brand partnerships are key economic stakeholders, using sports events to boost reputation, engagement, and sales (Getz & Page, 2021). Local merchants also benefit, with M2 sharing, *"...For me, it's not just about making money. I see these events as opportunities to introduce our products to a wider audience."*. The event's international appeal attracts major cycling brands, reinforcing Malaysia's role in the global sports arena. As C2 observed, *"...This event had shown some of the major brands in the cycling world."* From the S4D Model perspective, LTDL 2023 branding impact goes beyond immediate commercial benefits, positioning Malaysia as a leading sports tourism destination and enhancing its global competitiveness in the event industry (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020).

ii. Job Creation

LTDL 2023 plays a key role in job creation, generating both short-term and long-term employment across sectors such as event operations, hospitality, retail, and technical services. E3 emphasized the immediate demand, stating, *"This event has generated an instant need for a lot of event operatives."* From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, job creation is vital for the economic sustainability of sports events, benefiting individuals, businesses, and public agencies (Freeman, 1984). E1 described this impact as a *"domino effect – new jobs are opened up,"* highlighting the broader employment ripple across industries.

Beyond core event roles, LTDL 2023 supports specialized services like logistics, printing, and event management. As E1 noted, *"There's a need for event management services, printing, and various other logistical requirements,"* underscoring the event's contribution to local service industries. These outcomes align with Wondirad, Tolkach, and King (2020), who highlighted the role of sports events in workforce development. From the S4D perspective, LTDL 2023 not only creates jobs, but also enhances long-term employment prospects by building local skills in event management, tourism, and hospitality.

iii. Income Improvement

LTDL 2023 significantly boosts income across the hospitality, retail, and service industries by generating high consumer demand through the influx of athletes, spectators, and media. E2 emphasized the impact on accommodations, stating, *"With*

approximately 1.4 million ringgit allocated for just a two-week period, Malaysian hotels are fully booked…" Beyond hotels, other sectors also benefit, as C2 shared, *"...Business, services, employment, especially in the hotel industry. LTDL has been an economic catalyst for Langkawi…"* From the S4D Model perspective, such events drive sustainable economic development by strengthening local business ecosystems. This aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, which advocates for inclusive economic growth and long-term financial resilience.

iv. Tourism Potential

LTDL 2023 has positioned Malaysia as a leading sports tourism destination, boosting international visibility, attracting foreign investment, and supporting long-term tourism growth. C4 expressed national pride, stating, *"...An international competition such as LTDL, and it happens in my place. I feel proud because the whole world is watching Terengganu."* The event has elevated Malaysia's profile in the global cycling scene, as C2 noted, *"...This event had shown some of the major brands in the cycling world."* From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, tourism-related stakeholders, such as government bodies, hospitality providers, and international media; benefit directly from the global exposure that events like LTDL 2023 generate (Ahmad et al., 2017). Media coverage and visitor activity further contribute to tourism development, with E1 stating, *"...Throughout LTDL, many views come in, media, people contribute to local businesses..."* This aligns with the S4D perspective, where sports events promote sustainable tourism by enhancing economic resilience, strengthening global recognition, and encouraging continued foreign investment in Malaysia's sports tourism sector.

5.3.1.5 Collaborative Environmental Stewardship in Le Tour de Langkawi

Environmental sustainability in sports event management is essential for reducing ecological impact and fostering long-term environmental awareness. LTDL 2023 demonstrates how collaborative environmental stewardship ensures compliance with international sustainability standards and promotes eco-friendly initiatives. From the Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), effective environmental stewardship requires collective engagement from event organizers, governing bodies, local authorities, and the community. These stakeholders must implement green

practices, enforce sustainability policies, and drive behavioural change. The Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) highlights that sports events can promote environmental awareness and sustainable community practices. LTDL 2023 efforts in waste management, green event strategies, and community-driven programs align with these frameworks, showcasing how sports events can balance operational success with ecological responsibility.

a. Collective Eco-Friendly Practices

i. Waste Management

Waste management is essential for environmentally responsible sport events, preventing long-term ecological harm from large gatherings. At LTDL 2023, waste reduction is enforced through regulatory policies, organizer oversight, and public engagement. E2 highlighted the influence of UCI regulations: *"...UCI has introduced new regulations, the waste zone, meaning riders can't litter,"* reflecting Stakeholder Theory's view that governing bodies drive compliance with sustainability standards (Getz & Page, 2021). E3 reinforced the organizer's role, stating, *"...as organizer…the race guideline has to ensure that the race leaves minimal environmental concern."* Frontline personnel and the public also play key roles in implementation. A2 shared, *"...we also have been instructed to make sure the attendees do not litter,"* while C1 observed, *"...I can hear several times the MC's ask us not to litter,"* highlighting efforts to promote responsible behaviour. From the S4D perspective, such initiatives educate and engage communities, helping to build a culture of environmental responsibility. As Schulenkorf and Edwards (2020) noted, involving the public in waste management fosters long-term awareness and supports sustainable event practices.

ii. Promoting Green Practices

LTDL 2023 promotes eco-conscious behaviour through tree planting and community-based sustainability programs, aligning with global strategies on afforestation and carbon reduction. As E1 noted, *"...it sounds cliché, planting trees. But actually, if we plant trees, it directly cuts off carbon emissions,"* underscoring the environmental impact of such initiatives. Tree-planting is a core part of the event, with participation from both athletes and the community. E1 explained, *"They will plant trees outside, just beside the starting area. So, riders will join this program, and it will*

be broadcast live," reflecting Stakeholder Theory's view that visible and inclusive environmental efforts enhance engagement and align with CSR goals. Collaboration with government partners further expands outreach, as E1 shared, *"I have also asked the state secretary to organize an event for tree-planting for the locals."*

LTDL 2023 also fosters community involvement through initiatives like "fun rides," promoting participation beyond spectatorship. E3 stated, *"There is also a fun ride for LTDL... we aim for community as participants,"* while C5 added, *"Yes, I am happy the organizer organizes a fun ride for us... it creates a community activity."* These efforts reflect the S4D perspective (Schulenkorf, 2012), which emphasizes the role of sports in encouraging sustainable behaviours and strengthening community ties. By engaging locals in environmental programs, LTDL 2023 builds long-term awareness and promotes lasting eco-friendly habits (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

iii. Green Event Initiative

LTDL 2023 integrates sustainability into its branding, reinforcing its commitment to environmentally responsible event management. As E1 noted, *"...it's more on the environment. You can see our race tagline, 'beat the heat...'"*is a message that positions sustainability at the heart of the event's identity. From the Stakeholder Theory perspective, such branding influences perceptions and drives stakeholder engagement in green initiatives (Getz & Page, 2021). This aligns with the S4D Model, which emphasizes the role of sports in promoting behavioural change, with strong sustainability messaging shaping attitudes towards environmental conservation (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020). LTDL 2023 also partners with industry players to support green campaigns, as E1 shared, *"Collaborating with industry players for green campaigns is a step forward,"* highlighting the importance of corporate partnerships in funding and implementing environmental programs (Reid & Arcodia, 2022). The event's green strategy extends to route planning, particularly in sensitive areas. E2 explained, *"With a significant portion of the race route passing through forested areas, we take extra precautions to minimize our environmental impact,"* reflecting the need for collaboration with environmental agencies to safeguard ecosystems (Mallen & Adams, 2023). According to the S4D Model, sports events should actively contribute to conservation efforts through initiatives like reforestation and awareness campaigns (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). LTDL 2023 approach reflects best practices in

sustainable event management, ensuring environmental protection remains a core priority.

5.3.2 Research Question 1 Key Summary

The sustainability of large-scale sports events, particularly in emerging economies like Malaysia, critically depends on the efficacy of multi-stakeholder collaboration. This collaboration functions not merely as a logistical necessity, but also as a strategic framework for governance, legitimacy, and socio-economic transformation. In the case of LTDL 2023, empirical findings underscore the layered, interdependent roles of diverse stakeholders including organizers, government bodies, private entities, and local communities as co-architects of sustainable outcomes. This reflects a paradigmatic shift from unilateral event management to networked governance, wherein sustainability emerges not from a single entity's efforts, but from collective agency and aligned incentives.

Grounded in Freeman's Stakeholder Theory (1984), this analysis positions stakeholders as integral contributors to the value creation process, with sustainability achieved through the balancing of multiple, often competing, interests. The LTDL 2023 model exemplifies this through structured coordination mechanisms, including centralized planning meetings, inter-agency safety operations, and public communication strategies. The involvement of entities such as the Malaysian National Sports Council (MSN), local councils (State Sport Council), and security forces affirms Freeman's assertion that legitimacy and success derived from recognizing and engaging all actors affected by organizational actions. Furthermore, high levels of inter-agency trust evidenced through transparent communication and clear role delineation aligned with the normative dimension of Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes relational ethics and mutual accountability.

Nonetheless, asymmetries in stakeholder engagement particularly the passive involvement of local businesses and community members highlight a critical shortfall in achieving holistic sustainability. Misener and Mason (2021) cautioned that sustainability cannot be performative or confined to macro-level actors. Instead, it must be socially embedded through grassroots participation and bottom-up planning. LTDL 2023 current framework tends to instrumentalize communities primarily as spectators rather than collaborators, thereby missing opportunities for co-creation and local

empowerment. This limits not only the event's long-term legitimacy, but also its potential as a catalyst for civic engagement, identity formation, and social cohesion as core tenets of the Sport for Development (S4D) model (Schulenkorf, 2012).

From a governance perspective, Getz and Page (2021) emphasized that the sustainability of events depends on building resilient stakeholder networks characterized by trust, transparency, and adaptive capacity. While LTDL 2023 demonstrates effective logistical coordination among ministries, law enforcement, and municipal authorities, it suggests an emerging culture of networked governance. This top-down alignment must be complemented by horizontal stakeholder integration. Marginalized actors, such as informal vendors, youth groups, and rural communities, must be institutionally empowered through participatory platforms and shared decision-making structures. The absence of such mechanisms suggests that while procedural coordination exists, transformative engagement remains in its infancy.

Moreover, Schulenkorf and Edwards (2020) argued that sports events can function as "social laboratories" for cultivating long-term societal capacities. Viewed through this lens, LTDL 2023 should be reimagined not only as an episodic competition, but also as a developmental institution that integrates economic, social, and environmental sustainability goals. While the event's economic ripple effects such as increased merchant revenue, temporary employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities partially align with this vision; the lack of strategic integration for local merchants represents a missed opportunity for inclusive economic empowerment. This aligns with critiques by Wallace and Michopoulou (2021) regarding the commodification of local enterprise in mega-event contexts.

On the environmental front, LTDL 2023 has initiated practices like waste zones, tree-planting campaigns, and green branding efforts (Beat the Heat), reflecting an emerging environmental consciousness. According to Mallen and Adams (2023), such eco-centric initiatives are vital in aligning sports events with international sustainability norms. However, genuine environmental stewardship as envisioned in the S4D model requires systemic community engagement that transforms awareness into lasting behavioural change, underpinned by institutional continuity.

In summary, LTDL 2023 demonstrates notable progress in stakeholder coordination and strategic alignment, deeper engagement, especially with peripheral and community stakeholders remain limited. Therefore, sustainable sports event management in Malaysia calls for a reconceptualization of collaboration not only as

operational synergy, but also as an ethos of inclusion, shared governance, and long-term institutional commitment. Future iterations of LTDL 2023 must integrate participatory design, community-based feedback loops, and inclusive economic frameworks to fulfil its potential as a model for sustainable sports tourism and development in Southeast Asia.

5.3.3 Research Question 2: What Is the Sports Event Management Process That Contributes to A Sustainable Sports Event?

The organization management of LTDL 2023 is grounded in a structured and strategic event management process that integrates sustainability principles throughout the event lifecycle. The Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model provides a comprehensive framework to analyze LTDL 2023 management phases, specifically Initiation, Planning, Implementation, Execution, and Evaluation (Silvers, 2020). These phases collectively ensure that LTDL 2023 contributes to economic development, environmental responsibility, as well as social inclusivity; reinforcing its position as a premier cycling event in Malaysia and on the international stage. This reflection critically discusses how each sports event management process contributes to sustainability, integrating stakeholder perspectives and industry best practices to assess strengths and areas for improvement.

5.3.3.1 Event Process in Le Tour de Langkawi

a. Initiation Phase

The initiation phase lays the foundation for a successful and sustainable sports event by securing stakeholder engagement, defining the event concept, and ensuring financial sustainability.

i. Stakeholder Identification

Identifying and engaging key stakeholders is critical to effective event planning and execution, aligning with the EMBOK Model's emphasis on stakeholder management for collaboration, role clarity, and coordinated action (Shone & Parry, 2022). LTDL 2023 strategic engagement began with mapping key entities, as E2 noted, *"Identifying key stakeholders is vital… the State Sports Council has become*

particularly significant in our approach… strengthening ties with them has proven crucial," reflecting EMBOK's approach to building strategic relationships (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Clearly defined roles further supported execution, with E1 stating, *"The stakeholders in LTDL play crucial roles… it is important different stakeholders collaborate to ensure the success of the event,"* reinforcing the value of shared goals and responsibility (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Centralized coordination through stakeholder meetings ensured alignment, as E2 explained, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K,"* consistent with EMBOK's structured coordination practices (Shone & Parry, 2022). Additionally, individual leadership proved influential, as E4 shared, *"The key person on the MSN side was Yazid. He played an important role in guiding us,"* demonstrating how personal influence can enhance stakeholder alignment (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

ii. Event Concept

The event concept is central to positioning LTDL 2023 as an international cycling event that also advances national economic and cultural goals. E1 highlighted its broader purpose, stating, *"Nation profiling is crucial for all countries. They seek a unique platform to profile their nation, and LTDL serves this purpose,"* underscoring its role as a nation-branding tool. From an EMBOK marketing perspective, destination branding enhances economic sustainability by attracting global participants, sponsors, and tourists (Getz & Page, 2021). Additionally, LTDL 2023 integrates environmental messaging into its identity, as E1 noted, *"You can see my tagline, 'Beat the Heat.' This is climate change,"* reflecting a commitment to sustainability. This approach aligns with global best practices in sports event marketing by embedding climate awareness and environmental responsibility into the event's core brand (Mallen & Adams, 2023).

iii. Budget

This study found that effective budget management for LTDL 2023 relies on close collaboration to allocate resources efficiently and control costs. E2 emphasized, *"Obtaining budget approval from the state council and relevant authorities was crucial,"* aligning with the EMBOK Model's focus on clear communication and stakeholder teamwork for financial feasibility (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). A strategic

approach included leveraging government support, as E2 noted, *"When dealing with state governments, leveraging their authority to minimize event costs is a key strategy,"* reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on managing relationships with influential bodies (Shone & Parry, 2022). With projected costs reaching *"around 40 to 50 million"* [E1], the need for flexible financial planning and risk contingencies becomes clear (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Resource-sharing further supported cost management, with E2 stating, *"We want them to contribute to some of the organizing costs,"* demonstrating EMBOK's focus on collaboration and efficient resource use (Shone & Parry, 2022). Coordinating with local authorities for logistics such as tents and road maintenance can help reduce financial strain. Overall, LTDL 2023 budgeting reflects core EMBOK principles of stakeholder coordination, strategic planning, and resource optimization to maintain financial sustainability.

iv. Initial Support

Initial support is vital to the success of LTDL 2023, with strong stakeholder relationships playing a central role in aligning interests and securing resources. As E2 noted, *"Terengganu's sponsorship is influenced by Emir's positive relationship with the state government from previous events,"* highlighting the value of long-term partnerships is a key principle in the EMBOK model. Such relationships foster trust and ongoing support, hence enabling smoother coordination. Strengthening ties with key entities, like the State Sports Council, further enhances execution, as E2 stated, *"Strengthening partnerships with the State Sports Council has been crucial for effective coordination and successful execution."* According to EMBOK, this type of collaboration is essential for cohesive planning and delivery. Moreover, when stakeholders share a unified vision, financial cooperation improves. E1 explained, *"Stakeholders feel like part of the event. They don't charge us for trivial things because they see the bigger picture,"* reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on shared ownership and reduced financial friction. In sum, early stakeholder engagement and relationship-building, as outlined in the EMBOK framework, are key to minimizing costs and ensuring LTDL 2023 successful delivery.

b. Event Planning

The planning transforms conceptual strategies into actionable frameworks, ensuring that LTDL 2023 sustainability initiatives are effectively implemented. This includes planning for event safety, logistical coordination, managing resource, and stakeholder integration.

i. Event Safety

Safety planning is a core aspect of event management, aimed at minimizing risk and ensuring smooth operations. The EMBOK model highlights risk management, stakeholder coordination, and infrastructure planning as key components of an effective safety strategy (Shone & Parry, 2022). At LTDL 2023, inter-agency collaboration was essential, as A1 noted, *"Cooperation among various agencies, including the police, has been effective, with clear instructions provided by the police chief,"* reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on joint planning for safety logistics and communication (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Centralized coordination further strengthened alignment, with E2 stating, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K.,"* supporting EMBOK's focus on unified emergency protocols (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). On-ground support was also critical, as A3 shared, *"As a member of RELA, our duties during LTDL encompass various aspects, including security and parking management,"* aligning with EMBOK's call for clear roles and training of auxiliary units (Shone & Parry, 2022). Effective execution of safety measures depended on public compliance, reinforced by trusted authorities; E1 noted, *"UCI acknowledges our traffic members are respected... when they decide to close the road, everything is done correctly,"* underscoring the EMBOK Model's emphasis on stakeholder trust and protocol adherence (Fyall & Garrod, 2023)

ii. Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging stakeholders during the planning phase is vital to LTDL 2023 success, aligning with the EMBOK Model's focus on collaboration, inclusivity, and early stakeholder involvement (Shone & Parry, 2022). At the local level, strong relationships with authorities ensured smooth execution, as E4 noted, *"We handled everything at the local level in Selangor, liaising with local authorities to ensure the race could happen,"*

reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on local coordination (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Collaboration with key entities like the police and State Sports Council was also critical. E2 shared, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with key stakeholders and highlighted the need for support from ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K,"* supporting EMBOK's call for both internal and external stakeholder engagement (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Community and school involvement further strengthened the planning process. E1 stated, *"We also ask states to involve schools and their students in supporting LTDL,"* while A1 added, *"The students chant and support really lift up the race,"* highlighting inclusivity and community ownership (Shone & Parry, 2022). Ultimately, E1 emphasized the value of a unified vision: *"It's about bringing everyone together for the common goal,"* reinforcing the importance of stakeholder alignment for successful event delivery (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

iii. Logistic planning

Effective logistic planning is essential for events like LTDL 2023, relying on strong communication, coordination, and stakeholder collaboration, as emphasized in the EMBOK model (Shone & Parry, 2022). Regular meetings with key organizers such as KBS and MSN were central to aligning plans, with E1 stating, *"We mainly communicate with main organizers through regular meetings to discuss event logistics and updates."* Setting clear expectations further streamlined operations, as E4 explained, *"...During the meetings, he (MSN) would outline what was expected from us, and we'd work from there to ensure all the logistics and local planning were in place,"* reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on defined roles and structured planning (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Ongoing local coordination was equally important, with E4 adding, *"...The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally,"* aligning with EMBOK's focus on continuous monitoring and adaptability (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Additionally, close collaboration with contractors was maintained through scheduled check-ins. As E2 noted, *"...For contractors, we arrange dedicated meetings to discuss project progress and needs,"* reinforcing the EMBOK Model's call for consistent contractor coordination to ensure timely service delivery (Shone & Parry, 2022).

iv. Resource

The success of LTDL 2023 hinges on strategic resource allocation and strong stakeholder collaboration, in line with the EMBOK Model's focus on coordinated planning and resource management (Shone & Parry, 2022). Effective logistics required detailed oversight, as E1 noted, *"There's a need for event management services, printing, and various other logistical requirements,"* reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on thorough logistical coordination (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Collaboration with specialized agencies was also key in event success. E2 highlighted, *"...ATM specializes in trauma health,"* aligning with the EMBOK's guidance on involving expert stakeholders to ensure safety and efficiency (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Support from state authorities helped manage costs and logistics, with E2 stating, *"We want them to contribute to some of the organizing costs, like tents and equipment,"* reinforcing the importance of local partnerships (Shone & Parry, 2022). Infrastructure readiness, particularly road conditions, was managed through coordination with state agencies, as E2 added, *"Road conditions need to be optimal for the LTDL route, so they will coordinate with the state-level JKR,"* aligning with EMBOK's prioritization of infrastructure in event planning (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

v. Staffing

The organization of LTDL 2023 relied heavily on effective human resource management, emphasizing teamwork, internal staffing, and strategic use of existing personnel networks. The EMBOK model underscores the importance of mobilizing the right people to meet event demands (Shone & Parry, 2022). Clear communication supported coordination, as E2 noted, *"I communicate with the LTDL team through meetings, quick chats, and memos... We have regular staff meetings and briefings,"* reflecting the need for ongoing alignment. Rather than outsourcing, organizers utilized internal staff, with E2 explaining, *"We didn't hire a consultant; instead, we consider Emir and his team as MSN staff,"* aligning with EMBOK's guidance on optimizing internal resources to control costs (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Staff selection was also expertise-driven; E1 shared, *"Dato gave me the freedom to choose who I wanted… I need to use staff from my division to carry out the task,"* reinforcing the value of role-specific assignments (Shone & Parry, 2022). Enthusiasm from non-core staff further strengthened the team, as E2 noted, *"Some MSN staff not currently part of our division*

expressed eagerness to be involved in LTDL," supporting EMBOK's call for broad stakeholder engagement to foster commitment (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). External collaboration was also key, particularly in security, with A3 stating, *"The police reached out to our officers, seeking permission for our involvement in LTDL,"* illustrating the importance of inter-agency coordination for operational success (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

c. Implementation Phase

The implementation phase involves activating planned logistics, engaging workforce teams, and ensuring that stakeholder commitments are fulfilled. This phase plays a key role in ensuring that LTDL 2023 are operationalized effectively.

i. Coordination

Effective stakeholder coordination is essential during the implementation phase of events like LTDL 2023, aligning with the EMBOK Model's emphasis on consistent communication, collaboration, and joint action (Shone & Parry, 2022). Regular updates ensured alignment among key organizers, with E1 stating, *"We mainly communicate with KBS and MSN through regular meetings to discuss event logistics and updates."* Local coordination was equally critical, as E4 noted, *"The coordination involved a lot of meetings and ongoing communication to ensure everything was lined up locally,"* reflecting EMBOK's focus on structured communication and local readiness (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Central meetings facilitated collaboration with major agencies, as E2 shared, *"Attending the central meeting allowed collaboration with stakeholders like ATM, police, State Sports Council, and the S.U.K,"* highlighting the importance of cross-agency coordination for safety and logistics (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Proactive engagement further strengthened implementation as A3 noted, *"The police reached out to our officers, seeking permission for our involvement in LTDL,"* while E4 added, *"We got in touch with local authorities, particularly MBSA… The coordination involved a lot of meetings,"* reinforcing EMBOK's emphasis on initiative and timely collaboration (Shone & Parry, 2022).

ii. Marketing and Promotion

Effective marketing is crucial for building awareness and engagement in events like LTDL 2023, aligning with the EMBOK Model's emphasis on integrated, multi-channel strategies for impactful communication (Shone & Parry, 2022). LTDL 2023 effectively combined digital and traditional media to reach diverse audiences. A1 noted, *"Communication efforts, including banners, social media, and WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness,"* reflecting EMBOK's call for varied platforms to maximize reach (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Digital tools like Facebook were particularly effective for local engagement, as A2 shared, *"The community was informed via Facebook posts and updates from the local council page,"* supporting stakeholder-specific outreach (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Traditional media also played a role in reaching broader demographics, with C1 stating, *"Many of us tune in to channel 801 on Astro to stay informed,"* reinforcing EMBOK's view on inclusive communication (Shone & Parry, 2022). Beyond information sharing, LTDL 2023 messaging fostered emotional connection and national pride. As E1 expressed, *"When we enter a state, we say, 'We are doing this for you.' Live telecasts help us display Malaysia globally,"* aligning with EMBOK's focus on emotional branding and cultural identity (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

iii. Communication

Effective communication is essential to event success, enabling stakeholder alignment and community engagement, as highlighted in the EMBOK model (Shone & Parry, 2022). LTDL 2023 adopted a multi-channel strategy, combining digital and traditional platforms to ensure broad outreach. A1 noted, *"Communication efforts, including banners, social media, and WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness,"* reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on audience-specific messaging (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Internally, structured communication supported smooth operations, with E2 stating, *"I communicate with the LTDL team through meetings, quick chats, and memos for event updates,"* reinforcing the importance of organized internal coordination (Shone & Parry, 2022). Strong local collaboration further enhanced engagement, as A2 observed, *"Cooperation among residents, businesses, and authorities is excellent, with businesses setting up stalls,"* aligning with EMBOK's focus on communication as a driver of participation (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Traditional

media was used to reach older demographics, with C2 noting, *"They rely heavily on radio and newspapers,"* supporting a tailored outreach approach (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Additionally, timely updates through WhatsApp and municipal notices ensured clarity at the local level, as A3 shared, *"Locals are informed about LTDL and road closures through WhatsApp groups and municipal council notices,"* reflecting EMBOK's priority on accessible and effective communication (Shone & Parry, 2022).

iv. Oversight

Managing LTDL 2023 required close oversight of technical, logistical, and operational components, aligning with the EMBOK Model's emphasis on coordination, infrastructure, and leadership (Shone & Parry, 2022). A dedicated team handled race start lines and local logistics, as E4 explained, *"Our team was responsible for managing the start lines... liaising with local authorities and making sure the race could happen and ran smoothly in Selangor,"* reflecting EMBOK's focus on operational planning and stakeholder collaboration (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Oversight from the COO ensured cross-functional coordination, with E1 noting, *"As the COO, my primary responsibility is vast... overseeing logistics, race routes, and coordination with authorities,"* aligning with EMBOK's principle of centralized control to manage complexity (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). At a strategic level, leadership continuity and governance were also crucial. E2 shared, *"I am representing MSN, the caretaker... assumed the role of de facto organizer for the reestablishment of LTDL,"* reinforcing EMBOK's emphasis on long-term planning and effective event governance (Shone & Parry, 2022).

d. Execution Phase

Effective event execution relies on continuous monitoring, coordinated operations, proactive crisis management, and timely stakeholder communication. Incorporating feedback ensures ongoing improvement, while collaboration with local authorities supports location readiness and long-term development.

i. Monitoring

Effective event monitoring is vital for smooth execution and real-time issue management, aligning with the EMBOK Model's focus on continuous oversight, coordination, and risk mitigation throughout the event lifecycle (Shone & Parry, 2022).

LTDL 2023 applied these principles through strategic meetings, proactive communication, and spatial planning. Regular state-level meetings ensured alignment of strategies and resources, as E3 noted, *"State meetings are crucial. They provide an opportunity for us to align strategies and resources..."* reflecting EMBOK's emphasis on centralized monitoring and collaboration (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Proactive communication with residents helped reduce disruptions and build cooperation, with A1 stating, *"We ensure that residents are informed in advance about the road closures and alternative routes,"* supporting early stakeholder engagement (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Additionally, effective site layout minimized crowd-related risks, as A1 explained, *"The vast area allows for smoother crowd control, mitigating risks of overcrowding or chaos,"* reinforcing EMBOK's principle of spatial planning to prevent operational hazards.

ii. Operation

Event operations require precise coordination, stakeholder alignment, and technical accuracy, as emphasized by the EMBOK Model (Shone & Parry, 2022). LTDL 2023 reflected these principles through proactive communication and efficient logistical planning. Advance notice to residents helped minimize disruptions, with A1 stating, *"We ensure that residents are informed in advance about the road closures and alternative routes,"* supporting EMBOK's emphasis on early stakeholder engagement and risk mitigation (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Coordination with local authorities ensured smooth execution, as E4 noted, *"Our team managed the start lines... making sure the race could happen and ran smoothly in Selangor,"* aligning with EMBOK's focus on clear procedures and local collaboration (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). E1 further highlighted the importance of leadership in maintaining operational quality, stating, *"I prioritize working diligently to ensure that all technical aspects of LTDL are handled efficiently and effectively,"* reinforcing EMBOK's commitment to technical excellence.

iii. Crisis Management

Crisis management is essential to ensuring safety and continuity at events like LTDL 2023, with the EMBOK model emphasizing risk planning, real-time response, and stakeholder coordination (Shone & Parry, 2022). On-site safety was a key focus, as A2 shared, *"My main function during LTDL events is to ensure security and manage*

any issues that may arise, as part of the 'Ops Cantas' operation," reflecting EMBOK's focus on active monitoring and emergency preparedness (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Coordination among enforcement agencies further strengthened crisis response, with A3 noting, *"As a member of RELA, our duties include security and parking management... we respond accordingly,"* supporting EMBOK's emphasis on flexible, role-based systems (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). To manage large crowds, adaptive strategies such as plainclothes monitoring were used, aligning with EMBOK's layered security approach (Shone & Parry, 2022). However, E2 highlighted the added complexity from public-sector coordination, stating, *"The shift to government processes has added complexity,"* underscoring the need for robust planning and adaptive leadership to navigate bureaucratic challenges (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

iv. Feedback

Feedback from LTDL 2023 stakeholders underscores the importance of clear, timely communication for effective event execution. The EMBOK model stresses that structured communication and stakeholder management are key to operational success (Shone & Parry, 2022). A common issue was unclear or delayed information. As M1 noted, *"Yes, we merchants did receive information… but it lacked clarity... I don't feel fully coordinated by the organizer."* This highlights a gap in targeted messaging and planning (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). To improve coordination, stakeholders emphasized the need for earlier notice. M3 stated, *"Better communication is key. The local authority should disseminate information earlier so we can prepare adequately."* Timely updates help align expectations and readiness (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). However, overreliance on social media limited outreach. M1 added, *"The challenge arose from the lack of detailed information... especially only depending on Facebook."* This reflects the need for multi-channel strategies to ensure broader access (Shone & Parry, 2022). Beyond communication, stakeholders called for greater inclusion. M1 suggested, *"I hope the local authorities can invite local merchants to participate and provide information well in advance."* This aligns with EMBOK's focus on early engagement to strengthen coordination and event outcomes (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

v. Location Development

The positive impact of LTDL 2023 on local infrastructure underscores the event's legacy value, a key focus of the EMBOK Model's outcomes domain, which promotes long-term community benefits and sustainable development (Shone & Parry, 2022). LTDL 2023 led to noticeable road improvements that enhanced safety and usability, with C2 noting, *"Yes, roads get fixed, ensuring safety and smoother traffic,"* and C4 adding, *"Many roads from Kertih to Kuala Terengganu have been repaired. It's good."* These outcomes align with EMBOK's emphasis on infrastructure planning that supports both event delivery and local utility (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). The community also recognized these improvements as lasting benefits, as C1 shared, *"LTDL does impact the road resurface. It's good for us; communities can use it afterward,"* reflecting EMBOK's focus on event legacy (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Public perception reinforced this value, with A2 stating, *"I read from the social media about the positive comment about the road repaired,"* and A1 adding, *"The decision seems beneficial due to the tourism in this area. Events like LTDL thrive here..."* which demonstrate EMBOK's commitment to stakeholder satisfaction and social return on investment (Shone & Parry, 2022).

e. Evaluation Phase

Event evaluation serves as a critical phase in determining the successes and shortcomings of LTDL 2023. By gathering feedback from stakeholders, assessing communication effectiveness, and addressing operational challenges, this sub-theme focuses on identifying areas for improvement.

i. Communication Barrier

This study highlighted key communication gaps that affected stakeholder readiness, particularly among local merchants. According to the EMBOK model, the evaluation domain is essential for identifying areas of improvement, with a focus on stakeholder engagement and communication effectiveness (Shone & Parry, 2022). Merchants reported unclear messaging, as M1 noted, *"Yes, we merchants did receive information… however the information lacked clarity... I don't feel fully coordinated by the organizer,"* pointing to the need for more structured, audience-specific communication (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Insufficient updates from local authorities also

limited engagement, with M3 stating, *"It was more of a coincidence, to be honest… I knew about LTDL, but the information from the local authorities was limited,"* underscoring EMBOK's emphasis on timely, proactive dissemination (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). While one merchant acknowledged their own oversight, they still emphasized the importance of earlier communication: *"I admit there might be some fault on my end… It would be better if we could get more information and prepare well in advance"* [M3]. These insights reflect EMBOK's commitment to using evaluation findings to refine communication strategies and strengthen future stakeholder coordination (Shone & Parry, 2022).

ii. Disruption

The disruptions experienced during LTDL 2023 underscore how inadequate communication and planning can negatively affect local stakeholders, particularly businesses. The EMBOK model stresses that effective communication and stakeholder management are critical to minimizing disruptions and fostering community support (Shone & Parry, 2022). Local merchants struggled with last-minute, unclear updates, as M1 shared, *"The challenge arose from the lack of detailed information... especially only depending on social media like Facebook, leading to difficulties in adequately preparing and catering to the sudden increase in customers."* This highlights a shortfall in EMBOK's communication planning domain, which emphasizes multi-channel, audience-targeted messaging to ensure stakeholder preparedness (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Despite these issues, community sentiment remained generally positive. As M3 noted, *"Some locals have complained, but overall, there's understanding and support for the event,"* reflecting EMBOK's principle that managing expectations and maintaining transparent communication are key to sustaining public support (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023).

iii. Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder inclusion is essential for fostering community engagement and long-term support in event planning and delivery, as emphasized by the EMBOK model. Its focus is on inclusive stakeholder management throughout the event lifecycle (Shone & Parry, 2022). Feedback from LTDL 2023 revealed gaps in engagement, with many community members feeling their roles were limited. As C4 shared, *"I feel,*

directly, maybe not. I think the community is more like spectators, adding excitement to the event," reflecting a lack of active involvement, which contrasts with EMBOK's emphasis on moving stakeholders beyond passive roles (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). In some cases, participation was unplanned, stemming from insufficient communication. M3 noted, *"It was more of a coincidence, to be honest… I knew about LTDL, but the information from the local authorities was limited... I got involved almost by chance,"* highlighting the need for more deliberate outreach (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Others participated independently due to personal interest, as C5 remarked, *"I feel that the organizer hasn't adequately coordinated or reached out for collaboration... my presence today is fueled by passion,"* indicating a missed opportunity to formalize local partnerships which serve as a core principle of inclusive event planning in EMBOK (Shone & Parry, 2022).

5.3.4 Sustainable Pillars in Le Tour de Langkawi

5.3.4.1 Economic Pillars

The economic drivers of LTDL 2023 are anchored in the tangible benefits realized by a range of stakeholders, including local businesses, contractors, and service providers. Participants highlighted the significance of partnerships and collaborative initiatives in promoting economic growth and enhancing operational efficiency throughout the event.

a. Stakeholder Benefits

The economic benefits of LTDL 2023 span a broad range of stakeholders, including local businesses, contractors, and service providers, aligning with the EMBOK Model's focus on stakeholder management and financial outcomes (Shone & Parry, 2022). Dedicated meetings with contractors ensured alignment and efficiency, as E2 noted, *"For contractors, we arrange dedicated meetings to discuss project progress and needs…"* this is a practice that supports EMBOK's emphasis on coordinated engagement (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Financial collaboration further strengthened execution, with E2 stating, *"We seek their contribution to organizing costs, fostering a collaborative approach that facilitates the smooth execution of*

LTDL." This reflects EMBOK's financial domain, which encourages shared investment for sustainable resource use (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023).

Support for local business growth was also integrated, with E1 sharing, *"We're fostering partnerships with local businesses, encouraging them to adopt sustainable practices beyond the event's duration."* EMBOK highlights this approach as a catalyst for long-term community development (Shone & Parry, 2022). Economic stimulation was evident across sectors, as C2 explained, *"Locals engage in various sectors—business, services, employment, especially in the hotel industry. LTDL has been an economic catalyst."* This supports the outcomes domain, which prioritizes positive local impact (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Participants also gained brand visibility, with M2 stating, *"Supporting LTDL is a form of partnership… It's about introducing our products to people."* EMBOK recognizes such visibility as essential for fostering enduring stakeholder relationships (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023).

i. Revenue Generation

Revenue generation is a key economic outcome in event management, and LTDL 2023 demonstrates this through strategic sponsorships, tourism appeal, and regional economic stimulation. According to the EMBOK model, the financial and outcomes domains emphasize long-term value, economic impact, and sponsor engagement (Shone & Parry, 2022). Strategic partnerships, such as the one in Terengganu, were driven by long-standing relationships, as E2 shared, *"Terengganu's sponsorship is influenced by Emir's positive relationship with the state government from previous events."* This supports EMBOK's emphasis on leveraging stakeholder relationships for sustainable funding (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

Tourism promotion also played a critical role in boosting local economies. C4 noted, *"The promotion about Terengganu can indirectly attracting visitor which is good for local economy,"* aligning with EMBOK's advocacy for destination marketing and increased revenue through visitor spending (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Economic benefits were clearly seen across host regions, as C1 and C2 explained: *"It's good for local economy when people come to Meruraya"* and *"LTDL positively impacts Melaka economy through transportation and accommodation."* These insights reflect EMBOK's focus on measurable local impact, particularly in tourism, hospitality, and services, driving community-wide growth (Shone & Parry, 2022).

ii. Destination Promotion

Destination promotion served as a major economic driver in LTDL 2023, leveraging strategic communication to increase visibility and attract tourism. The EMBOK model underscores the marketing and outcomes domains as critical for maximizing exposure, boosting civic pride, and delivering long-term economic returns (Shone & Parry, 2022). Multi-channel outreach played a key role in promoting host locations, as A1 shared, *"Communication efforts, including banners along roads, social media promotion, and dissemination of information through WhatsApp, have been effective in spreading awareness about LTDL among residents."* This aligns with EMBOK's emphasis on integrated marketing to elevate both event and destination branding (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

The event was also seen as a catalyst for regional tourism and economic growth. A1 noted, *"The decision seems beneficial due to the tourism in this area. Events like LTDL thrive here, and last year's success is a testament."* This reflects EMBOK's focus on delivering reputational and financial benefits to host destinations (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Beyond economic gains, LTDL 2023 inspired civic pride and global recognition, as C4 stated, *"An international competition such as LTDL, and it happens in my place. I feel proud because the whole world is watching Terengganu."* EMBOK highlights the power of events to build emotional connections and enhance destination image, creating lasting value for both residents and stakeholders (Shone & Parry, 2022).

iii. Branding Visibility

LTDL 2023 plays a vital role in boosting brand visibility for sponsors and participants, leveraging its international platform to expand market reach and strengthen partnerships. The EMBOK model highlights the importance of the marketing and stakeholder domains in maximizing brand exposure and cultivating strategic alliances (Shone & Parry, 2022). Sponsors benefit from global visibility, as E2 noted, *"LTDL sponsors are not just our partners, it is also a way to promote our brand to the world."* This supports EMBOK's view of sponsorships as tools for both financial backing and brand amplification (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

Beyond profit, participants use LTDL 2023 to introduce their products and build relationships. As M2 shared, *"Supporting LTDL is a form of partnership... It's about introducing our products to people."* This reflects EMBOK's emphasis on stakeholder

value through visibility and networking (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). The event also highlights both international and local brands, showcasing its wide promotional impact. C2 remarked, *"This event had shown some of the major brands in the cycling world,"* while C3 added, *"Yes, I have seen several local big brands, for example, Petronas and Genting."* These insights affirm EMBOK's strategy of using events to elevate brand identities across global and domestic markets (Shone & Parry, 2022).

b. Environment Pillars

This section underscores the influence of environmental considerations in guiding the implementation of sustainable practices throughout the LTDL 2023 event.

i. Green Event Initiative

LTDL 2023 integrates environmental sustainability into its operations, aligning with the EMBOK Model's emphasis on sustainability within the outcomes domain to ensure events minimize ecological impact while delivering social and economic values (Shone & Parry, 2022). The race branding reflects this commitment, as E1 noted, *"It's more on the environment. You can see our race tagline, 'beat the heat'."* EMBOK encourages embedding sustainability into event identity to reinforce environmental values (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). LTDL 2023 also fosters green partnerships, with E1 stating, *"Collaborating with industry players for green campaigns is a step forward,"* demonstrating stakeholder engagement to promote sustainable practices (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Precautions are taken along environmentally sensitive routes, as E2 shared, *"With a significant portion of the race route passing through forested areas, we take extra precautions to minimize our environmental impact,"* aligning with EMBOK's support for ecological safeguards in event design (Shone & Parry, 2022). The event also explores low-impact transport, with E1 highlighting efforts to suggesting the electric vehicle potential in future. This is an approach that reflects EMBOK's focus on sustainable mobility (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Regulatory compliance ensures environmental integrity, as E2 noted, *"By enforcing these regulations, we ensure that the race leaves minimal environmental footprint,"* reinforcing EMBOK's call for proactive, rule-based sustainability strategies (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023).

ii. Waste Management

Waste management is a critical component of environmental sustainability in event planning. In fact, LTDL 2023 approach aligns with the EMBOK Model's outcomes and sustainability domains, which emphasize on impact reduction through planning, education, and compliance (Shone & Parry, 2022). LTDL 2023 adopted international waste management standards, as E2 noted, *"UCI has introduced new regulations, the waste zone, meaning riders can't litter,"* reflecting EMBOK's call for adherence to global guidelines to enhance environmental accountability (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Organizers were responsible for enforcing these measures, with E3 stating, *"As organizer…the race guideline has to ensure that the race leaves minimal environmental concern,"* supporting EMBOK's focus on integrating sustainability throughout the event lifecycle (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Waste management also involved direct engagement with staff and attendees. A2 shared, *"We also have been instructed to make sure the attendees do not litter,"* and C1 added, *"I can hear several times the MC's ask us not to litter,"* aligning with EMBOK's emphasis on stakeholder communication and behaviour reinforcement to ensure environmentally responsible practices (Shone & Parry, 2022).

iii. Green Practice

LTDL 2023 green initiatives demonstrate a strong commitment to environmental conservation and community engagement, aligning with the EMBOK Model's sustainability and stakeholder domains (Shone & Parry, 2022). Tree-planting efforts were both symbolic and impactful, as E1 noted, *"It sounds cliché, planting trees. But actually, if we plant trees, it directly cuts off carbon emissions,"* reflecting EMBOK's outcomes domain, which promotes environmental contributions (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Sustainability was woven into the event itself, with E1 adding, *"They will plant trees outside... riders will join this program, and it will be broadcast live,"* supporting EMBOK's emphasis on integrating green practices into event programming for greater visibility and impact (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023).

Local authorities were also involved in environmental actions, as E1 explained, *"I have also asked the state secretary to organize an event for tree-planting for the locals,"* aligning with EMBOK's focus on collaborative stakeholder engagement (Shone & Parry, 2022). Additionally, fun rides encouraged public participation and local ownership. E3 shared, *"There is also a fun ride for LTDL... we aim for community*

as participants," and C5 affirmed, *"Yes, I am happy the organizer organizes a fun ride for us... it creates a community activity."* These initiatives reflect EMBOK's guidance on inclusive and socially sustainable event design (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

c. Social Pillars

This section examines the social dimensions that support the sustainability of LTDL 2023, with a focus on community engagement, student participation, legacy building, wellness promotion, and cultural enrichment fostered by the event.

i. Community Engagement

LTDL 2023 community engagement fosters excitement, unity, and shared ownership, aligning with the EMBOK Model's stakeholder engagement and outcomes domains, which emphasize inclusivity, cultural participation, and long-term value for host communities (Shone & Parry, 2022). The event draws diverse audiences, enhancing its festive atmosphere, as noted by C4: *"Adding excitement to the event… many people come here to watch, some bring their children too."* This supports EMBOK's view that community participation enriches event experience and stakeholder satisfaction (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

LTDL 2023 also includes underrepresented groups, with A2 observing, *"Especially the indigenous people; this is the time they come out in groups… They come to the event themselves,"* reflecting EMBOK's inclusivity principle (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Visitors from outside the area boost local morale and cohesion, as A3 shared: *"It's uplifting to have people from the town and city visit, boosting the community spirit."* Such outcomes reflect EMBOK's emphasis on social cohesion through events (Shone & Parry, 2022).

Organizers promote direct engagement, offering locals firsthand experiences, as E3 stated: *"We provide opportunities for them (the locals) to experience the excitement firsthand,"* aligning with EMBOK's strategy for meaningful stakeholder involvement (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Long-term community interest further underscores the event's cultural relevance, with C1 and C5 sharing their enduring connection: *"I've been following since 1997…"* and *"My love for cycling led me to the LTDL each year..."* hence, this illustrated the emotional resonance EMBOK encourages for sustainable community loyalty (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023).

ii. Student Involvement

Student participation in LTDL 2023 significantly enhances the event's vibrancy and social impact, aligning with the EMBOK Model's emphasis on stakeholder engagement and outcomes to foster inclusivity, community spirit, and memorable experiences (Shone & Parry, 2022). Students are engaged early and meaningfully, as noted by A3, *"Students have been present since earlier…"* and E1, *"We also ask states to involve schools and their students in supporting Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL)."* This reflects EMBOK's call for purposeful stakeholder inclusion to build local ownership (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Their presence adds energy and excitement, with E3 stating, *"We appreciate the inclusion of students in LTDL. Their involvement generates excitement,"* and C2 adding, *"Engaging schools and students do bring more energy to the event."* These contributions support EMBOK's outcomes domain, which values emotional and social engagement (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023).

Students also play a visible role in cheering and support, as C1 observed, *"I saw earlier the student come here to cheer up for the rider,"* and A1 noted, *"The students chant and support really lift up the race."* These examples highlight EMBOK's focus on participatory roles that strengthen atmosphere and community celebration (Shone & Parry, 2022).

iii. Legacy Building

LTDL 2023 contributes significantly to legacy building by inspiring future generations, fostering national pride, and cultivating long-term interest in cycling. According to the EMBOK Model, legacy falls under the outcome domain, which emphasizes on the enduring cultural and developmental impacts of events (Shone & Parry, 2022). LTDL 2023 sparks youth interest, as C5 shared: *"LTDL able to ignite an interest in cycling among the younger generation."* This reflects EMBOK's goal of generating meaningful outcomes beyond the event itself (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Personal stories further underscore LTDL 2023 influence, with E1 recalling, *"Dato' Azizul... was a spectator at LTDL every year on the roadside... just a school kid."* Such narratives illustrate how visibility and access to events can cultivate future talent, aligning with EMBOK's focus on inspiration and capacity building (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). By highlighting role models like Anuar Manan and Dato Azizul, LTDL 2023 fosters aspiration and identity, as A2 noted: *"I think it can generate interest among*

young cyclists to become like Anuar Manan or Dato Azizul." This supports EMBOK's emphasis on cultural reinforcement and personal growth (Shone & Parry, 2022).

Spectators' expressions of pride reflect the emotional legacy of the event. C1 stated, *"It's not just about the race; it's about inspiring the next generation of cyclists,"* while C4 added, *"Events like this make us come to support Malaysian cyclists, like Mohamad Izzat and Harif Salleh."* These sentiments align with EMBOK's vision of deepening emotional bonds and national identity through strategic event planning (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

iv. Wellness

LTDL 2023 promotes wellness by encouraging active lifestyles and community participation in cycling, aligning with the EMBOK Model's outcomes and stakeholder engagement domains, which emphasize on public health, cohesion, and social well-being (Shone & Parry, 2022). The LTDL 2023 fun ride exemplifies inclusive engagement, with E3 stating, *"There is also a fun ride for LTDL... we aim for community as participants, it's an annual ride just for LTDL."* This reflects EMBOK's focus on health-oriented initiatives that foster community spirit (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

Public interest in cycling has grown, with E1 noting, *"In 2012... it is hard even to get 100 people to participate... but now… to get 1000 people… easy,"* illustrating LTDL 2023 long-term lifestyle impact (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). The event also promotes social interaction and physical activity, as C5 shared, *"Yes, I am happy the organizer organizes a fun ride for us... it creates a community activity,"* and C2 added, *"A group of 5–6 individuals initially, connected through our mutual interest in cycling."* These examples align with EMBOK's goal of enhancing wellness and social inclusion through event activities (Shone & Parry, 2022).

LTDL 2023 is also shifting youth culture, with A2 observing, *"The LTDL suddenly changed the youngster's interest in cycling,"* and A1 noting, *"I notice a lot of people cycling to this event, maybe because of their support."* This reflects EMBOK's emphasis on events as catalysts for behavioural and cultural changes that support long-term public health goals (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

v. Cultural Integration

Cultural integration in LTDL 2023 enriches the event's identity by celebrating Malaysia's heritage and enhancing the experience for participants and spectators. The EMBOK Model highlights cultural inclusion within the outcomes and stakeholder engagement domains as essential for community value and event uniqueness (Shone & Parry, 2022). Traditional elements such as performances and attires reflect local identity, with A2 noting, *"I noticed earlier that there were indigenous people wearing traditional attire in front; I think they had a performance."* This supports EMBOK's focus on cultural expression to strengthen event legacy (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

Community participation through cultural showcases adds to the atmosphere and emotional appeal. E3 emphasized, *"From watching the race up close to showcasing their cultural heritage, their involvement is what makes LTDL truly special,"* aligning with EMBOK's call for active engagement that promotes local pride and identity (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). Spectators also valued the cultural elements, with C2 stating, *"I love the organizer concept of cultural dance before the race... it really shows us Malaysia has its own culture,"* and C1 adding, *"The cultural show really lifts up the atmosphere."* These immersive experiences align with EMBOK's emphasis on emotional connection and audience engagement (Shone & Parry, 2022).

Youth involvement further enhances vibrancy, as C5 noted, *"Participation from the kids' cultural dancers really cheers me up."* EMBOK encourages intergenerational inclusion to promote cultural continuity and deepen community engagement (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

5.3.5 Research Question 2 Key Summary

A sustainable sports event management process is best conceptualized as a strategically structured system. In such a situation, sustainability is not the result of isolated initiatives but an emergent property of coordinated planning, inclusive governance, and embedded stakeholder engagement throughout the event lifecycle. Utilizing the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) model as an analytical framework, the case of LTDL 2023 illustrates how each phase namely Initiation, Planning, Implementation, Execution, and Evaluation contribute to embedding sustainability through economic, environmental, and social integration (Silvers, 2020; Shone & Parry, 2022).

In the Initiation phase, early stakeholder identification and strategic coalition-building with government bodies, sponsors, and local councils established the foundation for financial stability, resource pooling, and a shared vision for sustainability. This approach aligns with Freeman's (1984) Stakeholder Theory, emphasizing mutual interests and co-created value as the ethical and operational bedrock for long-term collaboration.

The Planning phase translates conceptual goals into actionable frameworks. In LTDL 2023, this involved inter-agency safety coordination, precise logistical planning with local authorities, resource mapping with state actors, and inclusive engagement with stakeholders, particularly schools and community groups (Kerr & Gursoy, 2023). These processes not only ensured operational readiness, but also cultivated social legitimacy and risk mitigation which are the key pillars of sustainable event delivery (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). Planning meetings played a crucial role in clarifying roles and responsibilities, managing budget allocation, and optimizing venue infrastructure, demonstrating that foresight, coordination, and inclusivity are prerequisites for sustainable implementation (Shone & Parry, 2022).

The Implementation phase focusses on operationalizing plans through systematic coordination and targeted stakeholder communication. Regular briefings among core organizing bodies (KBS, MSN, State Sport Council) ensured task clarity and adaptability to emerging demands. Stakeholder-specific engagements such as contractor updates and mobilizing school participation which translated strategic plans into logistical realities (Getz & Page, 2021). Digital and traditional communication platforms, including Whatsapp, Facebook, and municipal bulletins, broadened information dissemination, reinforcing EMBOK's principles of inclusive and responsive implementation (Silvers, 2020).

In the Execution phase, sustainability was enacted in real time through monitoring, safety enforcement, and community coordination. Besides, environmental responsibility was evident through the application of UCI waste regulations, tree-planting campaigns, and ecologically sensitive route planning; showing the initiatives aligned with the international green event standards (Mallen & Adams, 2023). Law enforcement coordination with RELA and police enabled effective crowd management and safety assurance, reducing environmental and social disruption. Execution in LTDL 2023 extended beyond logistics; it became a platform for reinforcing behavioural

norms, civic responsibility, and public trust that are all intangible assets essential to social sustainability (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020).

The Evaluation phase involved collecting stakeholder feedback to assess successes, shortcomings, and opportunities for growth. While community enthusiasm was high, gaps in merchant coordination and communication emerged; pointing to areas where deeper co-design is needed. Merchants cited unclear information flows and missed engagement opportunities, underscoring the importance of early outreach and structured involvement (Fyall & Garrod, 2023). As such, evaluation evolved from a retrospective tool into a feedback-driven mechanism for adaptive learning consistent with EMBOK's outcome-focused, iterative improvement principles (Shone & Parry, 2022).

Ultimately, LTDL 2023 sustainability lies not only in efficient event delivery, but also in its systemic integration of the three pillars of sustainability. Economically, the event stimulated local entrepreneurship, boosted tourism, and balanced financial responsibility through sponsorship and governmental support (Wallace & Michopoulou, 2021). Environmentally, it demonstrated responsible resource management through waste protocols, green initiatives, and ecological route awareness (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022). Socially, it fostered civic engagement by involving students, local communities, cultural performers, and indigenous groups, This effort cultivated collective pride and a lasting emotional legacy (Misener & Mason, 2021). Thus, LTDL 2023 exemplifies that a sustainable sports event management process is not an abstract ideal but a practical as well as achievable reality. As this is structured, the processes via EMBOK and sustainability values are aligned both systemically and operationally. In this context, sustainability is not a finite outcome but an ongoing, collaborative governance process.

5.3.6 Research Question 3: How Can Stakeholder Collaboration and the Sports Event Management Process Contribute to Establishing a Sustainable Sports Event Framework?

5.3.6.1 Sustainable sport event framework

This sub-topic introduces the Integrated Framework for Sustainable Sports Event Development as shown in Figure 8. The components were derived from the thematic result of Research Questions 1 and 2. This study suggested the collaborative

efforts of stakeholders as systematically mapped onto the structured phases of event management, such an effort can contribute to achieving long-term sustainability in sports events. Drawing upon the empirical data from LTDL 2023, this framework illustrates a clear progression of dynamic interaction between stakeholder input in sport event process, strategic execution, and multidimensional sustainability outcomes.

a. Framework Structure and Logic

The proposed framework is organized into three interdependent tiers that collectively represent the transformation of collaborative inputs into sustainable outputs through strategically integrated processes. These tiers include:

1. Input Zone - establish the foundational components necessary for stakeholder collaboration and the process in organizing a sport event.
2. Integration Zone – the zone where stakeholder collaboration is operationalized within the event management lifecycle.
3. Sustainability Zone - reflect the sustainability outcomes of successful interaction between planning and practice.

This structure enables a comprehensive understanding of how diverse actors and event processes intersect to produce sustainability-driven events, making the model both theoretically robust and practically applicable.

b. Tier 1: Input Zone

Tier 1 of the Sustainable Sports Event Framework represents the foundational input zone, composed of two primary dimensions: Stakeholder Collaboration and the Sports Event Management Process. These two dimensions form the essential groundwork upon which all subsequent planning, execution, and sustainability outcomes are built. They define how an event is initiated, structured, supported, and ultimately aligned with sustainability objectives.

c. Stakeholder Collaboration

Derived from the findings of Research Question 1, the Stakeholder Collaboration Dimension highlights the necessity of cross-sectoral partnerships and coordinated efforts to ensure event relevance, responsiveness, and success. This dimension encompasses six interrelated components:

i. Roles and Partnerships

This component refers to the clear delineation of responsibilities among diverse stakeholder groups including event organizers, public authorities, local merchants, and community members. It also encapsulates the strategic alliances formed to support both operational needs and broader event goals. These partnerships promote shared accountability, minimize duplication of efforts, and ensure a unified vision across planning and implementation stages (Getz & Page, 2021).

ii. Communication and Coordination

Effective collaboration is underpinned by formal and informal communication platforms such as regular stakeholder meetings, digital tools (WhatsApp), email correspondence, and printed materials. These channels facilitate the alignment of actions, information flow, and real-time decision-making, which are especially critical in dynamic event environments (Bowdin et al., 2022).

iii. Community Engagement and Involvement

Community participation is central to the social legitimacy of an event. This component reflects efforts to mobilize the public through school involvement, volunteerism, and local festivities, thereby fostering a sense of ownership, enhancing cultural identity, and promoting social sustainability (Reid & Arcodia, 2022).

iv. Economic Empowerment

This element captures the ways in which the event drives local economic activity. Through inclusive business opportunities for merchants, there are job creation and income generation, while stakeholders from local and small-scale sectors are empowered to benefit from the event's presence. Such initiatives support Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth (Mallen & Adams, 2023).

v. Environmental Stewardship

Environmental sustainability is addressed through shared practices among stakeholders such as co-developed waste management protocols, tree planting initiatives, and the promotion of green mobility options like electric vehicles. These actions represent a shift towards environmentally conscious event culture and align with international best practices in sustainable event design (Silvers, 2020; Getz & Page, 2021).

d. Event Management Process

The second major dimension, drawn from the findings of Research Question 2 is the Event Management Process. This dimension offers a procedural roadmap of how a sports event process unfolds, detailing the technical and strategic activities that occur from initiation to evaluation. The process is structured into five key sequential phases, namely the Initiation phase, Planning phase, Implementation phase, Execution phase and Evaluation phase.

i. Initiation Phase

This phase involves identifying key stakeholders, formulating the event concept, establishing an initial budget, and mobilizing early institutional and financial support. It sets the tone for inclusive planning and cross-agency commitment.

ii. Planning Phase

The planning stage entails the development of logistical strategies, safety protocols, stakeholder coordination mechanisms, resource distribution, and staffing frameworks. It forms the operational backbone of the event.

iii. Implementation Phase

In this phase, the focus shifts to oversight functions, the execution of marketing and promotional activities, real-time communication strategies, and monitoring systems. These elements ensure operational readiness and stakeholder alignment in the lead-up to the event.

iv. Execution Phase

Execution involves the actual delivery of the event, including crowd management, security deployment, crisis response systems, and continuous feedback loops to address issues as they arise. It demands high levels of coordination and adaptability.

v. Evaluation Phase

Finally, the evaluation phase includes post-event assessments, identification of disruptions or gaps, stakeholder feedback collection, and reporting mechanisms aimed at continuous improvement and knowledge transfer for future events.

Combining the Stakeholder Collaboration Dimension and the Event Management Process form a comprehensive set of inputs necessary for strategic interaction. This tier sets the conditions under which collaboration is possible, inclusive, and strategically focused.

e. Tier 2: Integration Zone

The second tier of the Sustainable Sports Event Framework is the Integration Zone, which functions as the core operational engine of the model. This tier represents the strategic convergence of stakeholder collaboration and the event management process which transforming the foundational inputs into coordinated and real-time execution. It is in this phase that theoretical planning and collaborative intentions are converted into practical action, ensuring the seamless delivery of the event while reinforcing its sustainability dimensions.

The Integration Zone is the dynamic alignment between stakeholder collaboration and the sequential phases of event planning and delivery. This relationship is not static; it is fluid and adaptable, shifting based on the evolving demands and challenges at each stage of the event cycle. As the event progresses from Initiation through to Evaluation, stakeholder roles change in emphasis, intensity, and function; often blending and overlapping. These evolving roles reinforce the central belief that sustainable events rely on interaction, responsiveness, and shared purpose in each individual phase as following example:

i. Initiation Phase

During the Initiation Phase, collaboration is focused on building a foundation for the event. For LTDL 2023, this means identifying key stakeholders such as the National Sports Council, state governments, police, local councils, and business representatives. Together, they defined roles, built initial trust, and secured commitments. For example, Terengganu early sponsorship and state-level support were not just financial contributions, but also expressions of confidence, setting the tone for wider collaboration. Individual actors, such as experienced coordinators or state sports officers, became catalysts in shaping early direction and ensuring that planning responsibilities were clearly distributed. These early alignments allowed for the event's goals, particularly around national promotion and youth engagement, to be shared and endorsed across institutions.

ii. Planning Phase

As the process entered the Planning Phase, collaboration deepened. This phase required the coordination of logistical planning, safety strategies, and stakeholder responsibilities. Multiple meetings were held involving district offices, municipal councils, police, and contractors to ensure that the race routes were properly managed, road repairs completed, and emergency services planned. Communication strategies were central at this point. WhatsApp groups, email chains, and formal meetings ensured that instructions and updates were consistent and timely. Environmental goals also began to take shape here, with plans for tree-planting initiatives, green transportation options, and waste management zones being embedded into the planning structure. Collaboration was not just functional as it was strategic, with stakeholders working together to pre-empt risks and maximize opportunities for visibility and engagement.

iii. Implementation Phase

In the Implementation Phase, the focus shifted towards turning plans into actions. Marketing and promotion efforts were rolled out in close collaboration with local councils and media outlets. Community engagement activities, such as school participation and merchant involvement, became more visible. Vendors were given designated spaces, while school students prepared cheering teams to energize the event. Government departments ensured initially, that banners were up along the race routes;

that announcements were aired about road closures and that event schedules were made through radio and social media. At this stage, partnerships were being tested and refined in real-time. Contractors delivered tents and signage, municipal workers coordinated cleaning and waste zones, and public health services positioned ambulances and first-aid teams along the route. These efforts were seamlessly integrated through central coordination led by the main organizer, supported by constant feedback loops with on-the-ground teams.

iv. Execution Phase

The Execution Phase marked the peak of collaborative activity. Stakeholder involvement was at its most intense, with authorities like police and RELA officers managing crowd control, road safety, and emergency access. Community members became active participants as spectators, cheerleaders, and cultural performers adding emotional depth and energy to the event. Race organizers worked closely with timing teams, media broadcasters, and logistics managers to ensure that cyclists followed the proper routes, and that real-time data was captured and shared. Issues such as last-minute crowd surges, weather changes, or delays were addressed swiftly through the network of communication platforms and decision-makers already in place. This phase showed how earlier investment in coordination, trust, and planning could be relied upon to deliver under pressure.

v. Evaluation Phase

Once the event concluded, the Evaluation Phase began. This stage reactivated stakeholder collaboration, but then with a focus on reflection and learning. Community members shared feedback, for example the excitement and the economic boost, while others noted challenges like traffic congestion or late communication. Vendors discussed difficulties with coordination or inconsistent updates. Event leaders gathered these insights through meetings, informal chats, and digital communication; hence identifying areas for improvement in future editions. Rather than being a closing activity, evaluation acted as a bridge back to initiation, reinforcing the cyclical nature of sustainable event management.

f. Tier 3: Output Zone

The third tier of the Sustainable Sports Event Framework is the output zone, which articulates the tangible outcomes produced through the interplay of stakeholder collaboration and structured event management. It is in this zone that the intended impacts of a sustainable sports event become visible and measurable, represented through three interconnected sustainability pillars: economic, environmental, and social. These pillars do not emerge in isolation. Rather, they are the cumulative result of decisions, practices, and relationships developed throughout the earlier phases of the event lifecycle. As stakeholder collaboration deepens and management processes unfold, sustainability begins to take shape.

i. Economic

The Economic Sustainability Pillar reflects the immediate and long-term financial impacts generated by the event. In the context of LTDL 2023, this includes income generation for local merchants who benefitted from increased foot traffic, particularly food vendors and service providers along the race route. It also involves broader economic stimulation through tourism promotion, where cities and towns hosting stages of the race gained exposure to domestic and international visitors. Additionally, the event created employment opportunities across various sectors ranging from logistics and hospitality to media and technical services. Destination branding also plays a crucial role as LTDL 2023 helps position Malaysia as a premier sports tourism destination, capable of hosting large-scale international events. These outcomes are not incidental; they are fostered through inclusive business strategies, strategic partnerships, and collaborative marketing efforts established during planning and implementation phases.

ii. Environmental

The Environmental Sustainability Pillar captures the ways in which LTDL 2023 integrated eco-conscious practices into its planning and operations. This includes the enforcement of waste management protocols such as the introduction of designated “waste zones” along the race route, which prohibited littering by athletes and attendees. Environmental stewardship was further reflected in initiatives like tree-planting ceremonies involving both riders and local communities, aimed at promoting carbon

offsetting and reinforcing climate awareness. Sustainable transport practices, such as the proposed use of electric vehicles and cycling-friendly infrastructure, also underscored the event's commitment to reducing its ecological footprint. Importantly, these practices were not imposed top-down but emerged from shared responsibility among stakeholders including municipal councils, law enforcement, and community groups who were briefed, trained, and actively involved in delivering green outcomes.

iii. Social Sustainability Pillar

The Social Sustainability Pillar represents the social and cultural dimensions of the event, emphasizing inclusivity, cohesion, and legacy. Community engagement was evident through widespread local participation such as spectators, volunteers, and contributors to cultural performances. Schools were actively involved, with students forming cheering squads and attending race events, fostering early interest in sports and cycling. Cultural integration was also prominent, with traditional dances and indigenous representation enriching the event's atmosphere and deepening its connection to local identity. These interactions not only elevated the emotional resonance of LTDL 2023, but also built intergenerational connections, civic pride, and shared ownership. The event served as a platform for youth inspiration, as seen in the stories of prominent Malaysian cyclists whose early exposure to LTDL 2023 motivated their professional careers. Wellness promotion, through initiatives like the LTDL 2023 community fun ride, further extended the event's social impact by encouraging healthier lifestyles and wider public participation.

What is most critical to understand in this output zone is that these pillars are not standalone objectives. Each reflects what has occurred in the Input and Integration Zones from the roles played by stakeholders to the effectiveness of communication, to the precision of logistics planning and the inclusivity of engagement strategies. For example, the trust built during early stakeholder meetings translates into stronger community participation, reinforcing social sustainability. Similarly, well-executed marketing campaigns paired with vendor coordination contribute directly to economic gains. Environmental outcomes, too, are closely tied to decisions made during the planning phase, such as where to place waste zones or how to design green messaging for public consumption.

5.3.6.2 Significance of the Framework

This integrated framework offers a comprehensive and process-driven model for the development of sustainable sports events. It demonstrates that sustainability is not only a standalone objective, but also an emergent outcome of inclusive stakeholder collaboration and strategically phased event management. By establishing a clear linkage between stakeholder roles, management processes, and sustainability outputs, the framework effectively bridges theoretical insight with practical application.

For practitioners, this framework serves as a pragmatic guide for designing and executing sports events that are not only operationally effective, but also socially inclusive, economically viable, and environmentally responsible. It provides a structured approach to integrating diverse stakeholder contributions into coherent and sustainable outcomes. For scholars, the framework advances the discourse on stakeholder governance and sustainable event management by offering a replicable model that can be tested and adapted across varying national and international contexts.

In the Malaysian setting, the framework developed in this study is able to provide a timely and policy-relevant blueprint for ministries, local governments, and community organizations seeking to embed sustainability into the country's expanding sports tourism agenda. It reaffirms the principle that sustainable outcomes are best achieved not through isolated efforts, but through integrated, coordinated, and participatory approaches to event planning and delivery. As demonstrated through the case of Le Tour de Langkawi, strategic alignment between stakeholder engagement and event processes is essential in shaping sports events that are impactful, enduring, and truly sustainable.

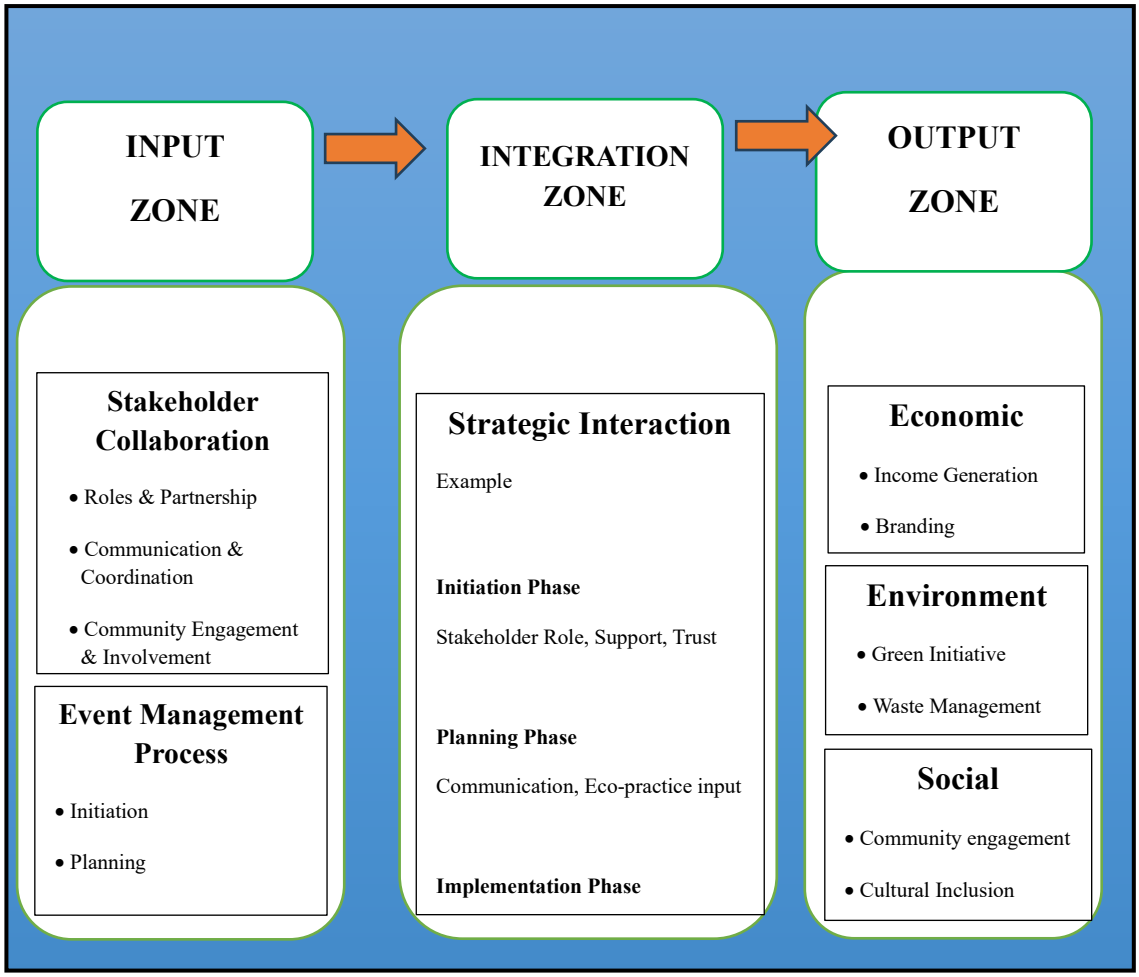


Figure 5.1 The Integrated Sustainable Sport Event Framework

5.3.7 Research Question 3 key summary

The development of a Sustainable Sports Event Framework in this study is intrinsically linked to the synergistic integration of stakeholder collaboration and a structured event management process. The case of LTDL 2023 exemplifies how these two dimensions converge to generate sustainable outcomes across economic, environmental, and social pillars.

Stakeholder collaboration acts as a foundational input, encompassing the clear delineation of roles, effective communication channels, community engagement, economic empowerment, and environmental stewardship. These collaborative efforts align diverse stakeholder interests towards shared sustainability objectives, fostering collective ownership and mutual accountability (Getz & Page, 2021). Simultaneously, the sports event management process offers a procedural roadmap structured into sequential phases, namely Initiation, Planning, Implementation, Execution, and

Evaluation. Each phase presents opportunities to embed sustainability, from early stakeholder identification and resource mobilization to post-event assessment and knowledge transfer (Silvers, 2020).

Integrating stakeholder collaboration within each phase of the event management process generates a dynamic interaction that transforms collaborative inputs into coordinated, real-time execution. This alignment ensures that sustainability is not treated as an isolated objective but emerges as a product of inclusive and strategically phased event planning and delivery (Bowdin et al., 2022). Thus, the interplay between stakeholder collaboration and a structured event management process is pivotal to constructing a Sustainable Sports Event Framework. This integrated approach not only enhances operational efficiency, but also ensures sustainability is embedded throughout the event lifecycle, resulting in lasting positive impacts across economic, environmental, and social domains.

5.4 Emergence of New Themes

With the application of the Stakeholder Theory, the S4D Model, and the EMBOK Model, this study identifies emerging themes related to stakeholder engagement, community involvement, communication strategies, and the overall event management process. By critically analyzing these themes, the study highlights areas for improvement and suggests strategies to enhance the sustainability of LTDL 2023 in future organization.

5.4.1 Emerging Theme 1: Gap of Sustainability Understanding

The findings from this study reveal significant gaps in understanding sustainability among stakeholders involved in LTDL 2023. While there is general awareness of environmental actions such as recycling, many stakeholders struggle to grasp the broader concept of sustainability, which encompasses social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Informant M1 expressed confusion, stating, *"I'm not sure what they mean by sustainable... perhaps it's about being careful with the environment?"* [M1]. Similarly, C4 commented, *"I've heard about the importance of recycling, but I'm not sure how it contributes to sustainability..."* [C4]. This reflects a narrow understanding of sustainability, often limited to green practices, which may hinder the engagement of stakeholders in broader sustainability goals. This limited view

is problematic, as sustainable event management requires a more holistic approach that includes environmental, economic, and social dimensions (Mallen & Adams, 2023). C1 further echoed this gap, stating, *"Sustainable? I've read it somewhere... but I don't fully understand its meaning. Perhaps it's about taking care of the environment..."* [C1]. This suggests that stakeholders, in general, need more clarity on how sustainability applies beyond environmental factors to include social and economic aspects.

To bridge this gap, it is crucial for LTDL 2023 organizers to redefine sustainability in a way that encompasses all these three pillars, namely environmental, economic, and social. This aligns with the Sport for Development (S4D) Model, which emphasizes that sports events should not only focus on environmental responsibility, but also on creating broader social impacts and economic opportunities for local communities (Schulenkorf, 2012). Effective communication in terms of sustainability will be key in fostering stakeholder engagement and ensuring that their efforts align with the event's long-term goals. Providing clear, accessible information about the broader definition of sustainability can help stakeholders move beyond a limited understanding of environmental stewardship and better integrate sustainability into their roles within the event (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

Additionally, a clearer understanding of sustainability will strengthen stakeholder engagement. For instance, M3 noted that local merchants primarily view their role as transactional, stating, *"As merchants, our role here is solely focused on selling our food..."* [M3]. This transactional approach suggests a gap in understanding sustainability as something beyond immediate financial gain. Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984) emphasizes on the importance of inclusive participation from all stakeholders, with a focus on co-creating value. When local businesses comprehend sustainability beyond short-term financial interests, they are more likely to engage in long-term community projects, green initiatives, and local development efforts, thus enhancing the event's social and economic sustainability (Misener & Mason, 2021). This suggests that integrating sustainability education into the communication strategy can foster a sense of collective responsibility among all involved parties. Moreover, structured sustainability communication is essential to shifting stakeholder perspectives. C2 noted, *"Sustainable? I understand the basics of recycling and going green, but when we talk about sustainability, it's like a whole new concept..."* [C2]. This highlights the need for event organizers to deliver clear, practical explanation of sustainability and its relevance to all stakeholders. By doing so, organizers can enhance

participants' commitment to the event's sustainability goals, ensuring that all parties are actively involved in the process. This broader understanding can significantly strengthen the event's impact on its economic, environmental, and social dimensions (Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2022).

5.4.2 Emerging Theme 2: Participations Challenge in the Event

The findings from this study reveal significant challenges regarding stakeholder participation in LTDL 2023, particularly concerning local businesses and community engagement. While the event succeeds in attracting widespread attention and engagement, participation levels remain constrained by gaps in stakeholder involvement and communication. This section critically examines the barriers to active participation, focusing on local businesses and community engagement, and explores strategies to overcome these challenges to ensure the event's long-term social sustainability.

One of the key findings is that local businesses and community members play peripheral roles in LTDL 2023. They contribute primarily in transactional capacities rather than actively participating in the decision-making process. Informant M3 stated, *"We have not been appointed by the organizer; rather, it is simply our business nature to participate in this capacity…"* [M3]. Similarly, Informant C4 noted that their involvement was largely coincidental, stating, *"It was more of a coincidence, to be honest... I got involved almost by chance…"* [C4]. These quotes suggest that the engagement of stakeholders like local merchants is reactive rather than proactive, and their roles in the event are not clearly defined from the outset. This lack of proactive involvement is a barrier to building a more robust and sustainable relationship between the event and local businesses. According to the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), it is crucial for all stakeholders to be actively involved in the planning and execution of an event to ensure long-term sustainability. When stakeholders are only marginally engaged, their contributions to the event's success are limited, thus reducing its overall impact. This aligns with Getz and Page (2021), who argued that local businesses should be integrated into the governance of the event to foster mutual benefits. Therefore, LTDL 2023 can enhance its economic sustainability by fostering deeper collaboration with local stakeholders, allowing them to participate fully in the event's broader goals.

In addition to local businesses, early community engagement is another area where LTDL 2023 faces challenges. Early involvement of community members is essential for creating a sense of ownership and investment in the event. Informant C2 emphasized the importance of early engagement, saying, *"If LTDL organizers sought local input, the community would likely cooperate. Early engagement and pre-LTDL activities could foster economic support and national unity."* [C2]. This statement suggests that early outreach to the community can encourage greater support for the event and facilitate stronger social bonds. Despite the community's enthusiasm for the event, their role in the planning and execution remains limited. As Informant C4 pointed out, *"Creating awareness about the benefits of community involvement is crucial. Organizers should actively engage with the community through workshops, town hall meetings, or online platforms to gather ideas and address concerns."* [C4]. This reflects a gap in the current approach to community engagement, where local voices are not sufficiently included in shaping the event's direction. According to the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012), early community engagement is critical to ensure that the event has a lasting social impact. Sports events should act as catalysts for local empowerment, but this can only be achieved if the community is actively involved from the start. Therefore, to strengthen social sustainability, LTDL 2023 must adopt inclusive planning practices that involve local communities in decision-making and event design.

A major challenge in fostering active participation is the ineffective communication between event organizers and local stakeholders. Clear and timely communication is essential to ensure that stakeholders are well-informed and prepared. Informant M3 highlighted the importance of early and effective communication, stating, *"Better communication is key. The local authority should disseminate information earlier so we can prepare adequately. Many other merchants are supportive, but they are unsure whether they are invited or not."* [M3]. This indicates that the lack of clarity and timely information leaves many local businesses uncertain about their roles and responsibilities in the event. Informant M1 also stressed the importance of early communication, stating, *"I hope the local authorities can invite local merchants to participate and provide information well in advance."* [M1]. This highlights the necessity for a structured and multi-channel communication strategy to ensure that all stakeholders are aligned and can make informed decisions about their participation. From a Stakeholder Theory perspective (Freeman, 1984), communication

is vital for trust-building and ensuring that stakeholders feel valued and included. When stakeholders do not receive clear information, they may feel excluded from the event, reducing their willingness to actively contribute. The EMBOK Model's Administration domain emphasizes that efficient communication systems are essential to successful event management (Silvers, 2020). Therefore, LTDL 2023 must adopt a more inclusive communication strategy, utilizing multiple channels to ensure that all stakeholders, especially local businesses, are well-prepared for the event.

The study also reveals that community participation in LTDL 2023 remains largely passive, with most community members acting as spectators rather than active participants. Informant C5 described the community's role as providing enthusiasm but little more on engagement, stating, *"I think the community is more like spectators, adding excitement to the event…"* [C5]. While spectatorship contributes to the event's atmosphere, active community involvement is key to ensuring long-term sustainability. According to Schulenkorf and Frawley (2022), sports events should provide platforms for community participation, enabling stakeholders to engage in decision-making, event operations, and local cultural programming. The S4D Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) stresses that sports events should empower local communities, encouraging them to contribute beyond passive roles. Community members can take on more meaningful roles by participating in volunteer programs, local vendor partnerships, and community outreach initiatives. For example, schools and youth could be integrated into event activities, enhancing intergenerational engagement and community development. As Informant C2 stated, *"Engaging schools and students does bring more energy to the event…"* [C2]. This reflects how youth participation can energize the event and provide lasting benefits for both the community and the event's legacy.

5.4.3 Emerging Theme 3: Event Enrichment and Social Development

The findings from this study emphasize on the importance of event enrichment and social development in ensuring long-term sustainability of LTDL 2023. These elements are crucial for enhancing the social impact of the event and promoting community well-being. This section examines the role of educational partnerships, health and wellness integration, and community-based activities, exploring how these elements contribute to social sustainability through inclusive practices.

A key finding from this study is that LTDL 2023 partnership with educational institutions plays a pivotal role in enriching the event's social value. Informant E2 highlighted the value of collaboration with schools and universities, stating, *"I think partnerships with educational institutions provided valuable educational content and resources, enriching the event."* [E2]. This reflects the significant role that educational institutions can play in enhancing the cultural and educational components of sporting events. Educational partnerships serve as platforms for learning and community development, particularly for youth, students, and local schools. Informant C4 noted that involving schools and community groups could make the event more inclusive: *"I think involving local schools and community groups can organize related activities or pre-event ceremonies, which can build the event momentum..."* [C4]. This highlights the potential for youth engagement and educational enrichment through the integration of schools in event-related activities, which can stimulate local empowerment and provide students with opportunities to participate in organizing and managing the event. From the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012) perspective, sports events act as platforms for social development. By involving educational institutions, LTDL 2023 can achieve long-term social impact, create pathways for youth empowerment, and foster community cohesion. Engaging students in the organizational process not only enriches the event experience, but also contributes to personal development, ensuring broader community involvement in LTDL 2023 success.

In addition to educational partnerships, the integration of health and wellness initiatives within LTDL 2023 is another significant element of event enrichment that contributes to both community development and public engagement. Informant A1 emphasized how local health agencies collaborated to provide healthcare services and wellness activities, stating, *"Collaborations with local health agencies provided comprehensive healthcare and wellness services during the event."* [A1]. These health services prioritize the physical well-being of participants and spectators, enhancing their overall experience. Beyond healthcare services, community-driven health activities also play an important role in engaging residents. Informant C4 noted, *"Community groups might take charge in organizing health and wellness activities to complement the sporting event."* [C4]. This suggests that engaging community organizations in health-related initiatives can enhance social sustainability by providing locals with opportunities to contribute to event-related activities and promote public health. According to the S4D Model (Schulenkorf & Edwards, 2020), the inclusion of

health and wellness initiatives in LTDL 2023 aligns with the objective of empowering local communities and building social capital. By incorporating these elements, LTDL 2023 not only delivers a high-profile cycling event, but also promotes well-being and health education among the broader community. This contributes to both the immediate success of the event and the long-term health outcomes for the region, fostering a culture of wellness that extends beyond the event.

Beyond educational and health-related partnerships, community-based activities contribute to the social development of the region. Community groups involved in organizing cultural events or pre-event activities create an environment where locals feel more connected and engaged with the event. Informant C4 emphasized, *"I think involving local schools and community groups can organize related activities or pre-event ceremonies which can build the event momentum…"* [C4]. This illustrates how community participation through cultural and educational activities can provide social enrichment while also promoting community pride and identity. Such activities foster social sustainability by ensuring that the event's benefits are distributed widely across the community, rather than remaining limited to a few stakeholders. As Schulenkorf and Frawley (2022) reiterated that sports events involving community-based initiatives create lasting relationships, civic engagement, and local pride, which continue to benefit the community long after the event concludes. Therefore, organizing community events, such as cultural showcases, health drives, or local markets, can strengthen the long-term impact of LTDL 2023, making it a key driver for local development and community cohesion.

5.5 Theoretical and Conceptual Contributions

5.5.1 Theoretical Contributions

This study presents significant contributions to the development of three key theoretical frameworks in sustainable sports event management, namely Stakeholder Theory, Sports for Development (S4D) Model, and Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK). By exploring the interplay between these theories and their practical application in the LTDL 2023, this research deepens our understanding of stakeholder collaboration, community engagement, and event management throughout the event lifecycle. Table 8 is also designed to illustrate the theoretical contribution.

5.5.1.1 Stakeholder Theory Development

A core contribution to the Stakeholder Theory is the study's focus on the dynamic and evolving nature of stakeholder collaboration. Traditional representations, as outlined by Freeman (1984), often treat stakeholder roles as fixed and static during event planning. This study challenges that model by showing that stakeholder relationships evolve throughout the event lifecycle, requiring a more adaptable and phase-specific approach. This notion is supported by Parent and Chappelet (2015), who reiterated the evolving nature of stakeholder relationships in sports events, suggesting that stakeholder engagement must be ongoing and adaptable to ensure successful event outcomes (Parent & Chappelet, 2015). By extending Freeman's (1984) framework, this study introduces the concept of time-sensitive collaboration, where stakeholder engagement adapts to the needs and challenges of each event phase, mainly initiation, planning, execution, and closure. This phase-specific collaboration requires continuous management, ensuring stakeholders remain aligned with the event's sustainability goals over time. This contribution provides a more fluid, ongoing model of stakeholder interaction, rather than a linear, static one, which is vital for managing complex events like LTDL 2023. This aligns with findings from Zhou et al. (2021), who emphasized that collaboration must adapt to the specific goals and capacities of each partner to meet sustainability objectives across the event lifecycle (Zhou et al., 2021).

This study also introduces a critical element to Stakeholder Theory: the role of change agents. While previous literature (Schulenkorf, 2012) has emphasized on collaboration, the specific function of change agents is those who facilitate cooperation, mediate conflicts, and align stakeholder interests which have received less attention. This study highlights the essential role of these individuals or groups in ensuring the success of sustainability strategies. Kim (2017) supported this by demonstrating that stakeholder collaboration in sports events requires continuous management and adaptation to achieve long-term sustainability (Kim, 2017). Change agents contribute to both stakeholder engagement and sustainability outcomes by acting as decision-makers and communicators who bridge gaps between diverse stakeholders. By incorporating leadership into the stakeholder collaboration process, this study enhances Freeman's theory by emphasizing the importance of leadership in maintaining collaboration across various event phases. This concept links directly to event success,

as demonstrated by LTDL 2023, where strong leadership facilitated sustainable practices across multiple stakeholders.

5.5.1.2 Sport for Development (S4D) Model Development

This study has introduced a deeper understanding of community engagement, extending beyond economic impacts to include emotional and cultural values. Prior research often focused on economic contributions such as local business revenue, but this study highlights how emotional connections, mainly local pride, school participation, and spectator enthusiasm foster long-term social sustainability. This emotional and cultural engagement within communities enriches the S4D model by demonstrating that the sense of ownership and community pride from local involvement in sports events contribute significantly to social cohesion and sustainable development. This study suggests that fostering local pride and ownership through emotional investment creates a foundation for long-term social sustainability, offering a more holistic view of how sports events can contribute to development. Menon et al. (2017) further highlighted that such community-driven initiatives help create lasting sustainable outcomes, as they build relationships that extend beyond the event itself (Menon, Edward, & George, 2017).

This study also extends the S4D model by recognizing the importance of community-driven green practices, such as tree planting and organizing local environmental activities, which go beyond traditional environmental sustainability efforts. It integrates social sustainability by highlighting how local community participation in such initiatives creates lasting social capital. By broadening sustainability from solely environmental concerns to include social impacts, this study aligns with Li and Connell's (2020) view that sustainability in sports events should incorporate both environmental and social dimensions. This finding emphasizes that sustainability efforts are most effective when they involve local communities, providing practical insights on how to build inclusive, sustainable sports events.

5.5.1.3 Contribution to the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK)

This study significantly enhances the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) by identifying how stakeholder collaboration must occur at specific phases

of event management. While existing EMBOK models (Silvers et al., 2006; Getz & Page, 2020) emphasize on collaboration during the planning phase, this study demonstrates that collaboration is an ongoing, phase-specific process that is required throughout the event lifecycle. This aligns with Thomson et al. (2021), who pointed out that coordinated stakeholder efforts must be maintained across different stages of the event to secure long-term legacy outcomes (Thomson, Toohey, & Darcy, 2021). The framework of this study includes the five phases of event organization namely Initiation, Planning, Implementation, Execution, and Evaluation. Besides, it also suggests that each phase requires tailored approaches to collaboration. For example, during the Initiation phase, stakeholders must be identified and engaged, while in the Execution phase, collaboration focuses on real-time problem-solving and logistical coordination. This phase-specific collaboration model enriches the EMBOK by highlighting the need for continuous stakeholder engagement and coordination to achieve sustainability goals.

This study also adds a critical dimension to the EMBOK Model by emphasizing the need for real-time monitoring and adjustments during event execution. Traditional event management models focus on planning and evaluation before and after the event, but this study identifies a gap in the literature with regard to the continual assessment of sustainability objectives during the event itself. By proposing the integration of real-time monitoring and adjustments, this study enhances EMBOK's ability to handle the unpredictable nature of large-scale sports events. It suggests that stakeholder collaboration and sustainability efforts cannot be static, but must adapt continuously during the event. Barnett et al. (2018) reiterated that for sustainability to be achieved in complex event environments, stakeholder pressures must be balanced with cooperation across parties over time (Barnett, Henriques, & Husted, 2018). This adaptation is crucial for maintaining alignment with sustainability goals and ensuring successful event execution, offering a dynamic view of event management.

Table 5.1
Theoretical Contributions and Implication for Theory Development

New Findings in this Study	Findings Not Covered in Literature	Implication for Theory Development
Stakeholder Collaboration Dynamic	Traditional representations (Freeman, 1984) treat stakeholder roles as fixed and static. This study shows that stakeholder relationships evolve across the event lifecycle.	Extends Freeman's framework by introducing phase-specific, time-sensitive collaboration, emphasizing the adaptability of stakeholder engagement. This contributes to a more fluid model of stakeholder interaction.
Role of Change Agents in Stakeholder Collaboration	Previous literature (Schulenkorf, 2012) emphasized collaboration but lacked focus on the role of change agents in facilitating cooperation, mediating conflicts, and aligning stakeholder interests.	Introduces the role of change agents as a critical component of successful stakeholder collaboration, highlighting leadership's importance in maintaining engagement and achieving sustainability outcomes throughout the event lifecycle.

Table 5.2
Theoretical Contributions and Implication for Sport for Development (S4D) Model

New Findings in this Study	Findings Not Covered in Literature	Implication for Theory Development
Community Engagement for Emotional and Cultural Value	Prior research focused mainly on economic impacts, but this study emphasizes emotional connections such as local pride, school participation, and spectator enthusiasm as key drivers of social sustainability.	Extends the S4D model by recognizing the emotional and cultural value of community engagement, emphasizing how local pride and ownership foster long-term social sustainability beyond economic gains.
Sustainability Driver beyond Environment Impact	Existing literature on sustainability focuses primarily on environmental concerns. This study highlights community-driven initiatives such as tree planting and local environmental activities, adding social sustainability.	Broadens sustainability to include social impacts, demonstrating that community participation in environmental actions creates lasting social capital and contributes to a more inclusive, sustainable event model.

Table 5.3
Theoretical Contributions and Implication for Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK)

New Findings in this Study	Findings Not Covered in Literature	Implication for Theory Development
Phase-Specific for Collaboration	While existing EMBOK models (Silvers et al., 2006; Getz & Page, 2020) emphasize collaboration mainly during the planning phase, this study shows that collaboration is needed throughout the event lifecycle.	Enhances the EMBOK model by proposing a phase-specific collaboration framework, which aligns stakeholder efforts with sustainability goals at each event phase (Initiation, Planning, Implementation, Execution, and Evaluation).
Real-time Monitoring and Adjustments	Traditional event management models focus on planning and evaluation but overlook the need for continuous monitoring and adjustments during event execution.	Introduces the concept of real-time monitoring and adjustments, addressing the gap in the EMBOK Model regarding ongoing assessment during the event itself. This helps adapt stakeholder collaboration and sustainability strategies to unforeseen challenges.

5.6 Practical and Policy Implications

The findings from this study offer essential insights into enhancing the sustainability and long-term success of LTDL 2023. By focusing on key areas such as stakeholder engagement, communication strategies, and community development, these actions are critical not only for ensuring LTDL 2023 continued success, but also for contributing to Malaysia's broader sustainable development goals. Practical strategies and policy interventions must be implemented to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). The following sections outline actionable steps and policy recommendations designed to achieve these objectives and ensure the lasting impact of the event.

5.6.1 Practical Implications

5.6.1.1 Strengthening Stakeholder Engagement

A central takeaway from this study is the need for deeper engagement with local businesses and communities. While LTDL 2023 has successfully engaged key stakeholders such as government authorities and sponsors, local businesses and community members have often been under-engaged or relegated to peripheral roles. Small businesses in Langkawi and Melaka, which host significant portions of the event, could greatly benefit from early involvement in the planning process. By engaging them from the outset, event organizers can better prepare these businesses to capitalize on the event's commercial opportunities. Furthermore, involving local stakeholders in decisions about route planning, marketing, and event programming would foster a greater sense of ownership and investment in the event's success. This approach aligns with Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes inclusive participation (Freeman, 1984). By encouraging local businesses to adopt sustainable practices, LTDL 2023 would also contribute to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), reducing environmental impacts through responsible business operations (Misener & Mason, 2021). Strengthening stakeholder engagement in these ways will not only enhance the event's success, but also ensure that its benefits are distributed equitably across the local community.

5.6.1.2 Enhancing Communication Strategies

Building upon strengthened stakeholder engagement, effective communication is crucial for ensuring that all parties are well-informed and aligned in their efforts. LTDL 2023 can address current communication challenges by adopting a multi-channel strategy that includes social media, traditional media (radio, television), and face-to-face meetings. This approach ensures that information reaches stakeholders in a timely and clear manner, allowing local businesses to prepare for the surge in demand during the event. A dedicated liaison officer for local businesses would help clarify roles and responsibilities, ensuring that every stakeholder understands their part in the event's success. Effective communication aligns with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), fostering collaboration between event organizers, local businesses, and community groups while enhancing trust and engagement. Additionally, creating feedback loops where stakeholders can share concerns and receive timely responses suggested by informants such as M3 will further strengthen trust and participation, ensuring that stakeholders are well-prepared for future events. Research by Getz & Page (2021) underscores that using diverse communication channels improves stakeholder relationships and leads to better outcomes for events, further supporting the importance of clear and inclusive communication.

5.6.1.3 Incorporating Community Development Initiatives

Beyond the economic benefits, LTDL 2023 has the potential to contribute significantly to community development. Engaging local communities through structured initiatives such as volunteer programs, community-led workshops, and youth involvement can ensure that the event leaves a lasting impact on social sustainability. As C4 suggested, "Creating awareness about the benefits of community involvement is crucial. Organizers should actively engage with the community through workshops, town hall meetings, or online platforms to gather ideas and address concerns." These programs align with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), offering opportunities for skills development and empowering marginalized groups. Involving youth in event logistics or cultural programs not only nurtures a generation committed to sustainability and community welfare but also reinforces intergenerational engagement. This approach resonates with the work of Schulenkorf &

Frawley (2022), who advocate for youth involvement in Sport for Development (S4D) initiatives to foster future leaders. By integrating community development initiatives into LTDL 2023, the event will not only contribute to economic growth but also strengthen social sustainability for future generations.

5.6.2 Policy Implications

5.6.2.1 Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement Policies

This study suggests the policymakers should implement a regulation that mandate inclusive engagement with local stakeholders. This includes requiring early consultations with local businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders before the event. Such policies will not only foster deeper community involvement, but also guarantee that local businesses are better prepared for the economic opportunities the event provides. Financial incentives, such as tax relief or promotional opportunities for businesses that actively contribute to the event's success, could further encourage their participation. Community-driven event management policies would also ensure that local stakeholders have a voice in event organization, promoting a sense of ownership and ensuring the equitable distribution of the event's benefits. Research by Mallen and Adams (2023) highlighted that financial and logistical support for local stakeholders is essential for fostering long-term sustainable event practices, supporting the importance of these policy interventions.

5.6.2.2 Supporting Green and Sustainable Event Practices

Given the environmental challenges posed by large-scale events, policies should prioritize the integration of sustainable practices throughout the event lifecycle. By embedding sustainability into every aspect of LTDL 2023, event organizers can minimize their environmental impact while setting a strong example for eco-friendly events in Malaysia. Policies should require event organizers to integrate sustainable practices such as waste reduction, carbon offsetting, and the use of green transportation options. These measures will help LTDL 2023 align with international sustainability standards, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition to regulatory requirements, financial incentives should be introduced to encourage event organizers to adopt green initiatives. These could include subsidies,

tax rebates, or grants for implementing solutions like renewable energy usage, waste minimization, and carbon footprint reduction. Such financial support would make sustainable practices more accessible for event organizers. Moreover, the introduction of green event certification programs would formally recognize and reward events that meet sustainability standards, further incentivizing event organizers to prioritize environmental responsibility. This recognition would also enhance the event's credibility, making it a model for other large-scale events. Research by Getz and Page (2021) supported the importance of environmental policies for large-scale events, underscoring the need for sustainable practices to become a standard in the industry.

5.6.2.3 Enhancing Policy for Community Engagement and Legacy Building

This study suggests that a policy must focus on fostering long-term engagement and legacy-building strategies. A key element of this is implementing post-event evaluations to assess the impact on local communities, the environment, and the economy. Policies should require organizers to collect feedback from local businesses, residents, and community groups to identify areas for improvement and ensure that each subsequent event builds on the lessons learned. This evaluation process is in line with legacy-building principles, as outlined in the EMBOK Model and by Schulenkorf and Edwards (2020), focusing on long-term community-driven benefits. Additionally, policies should encourage long-term community involvement through initiatives such as youth leadership programs, volunteer opportunities, and educational workshops. These programs will not only help maintain community engagement long after the event, but also support broader SDGs such as SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work), offering skills and professional development opportunities for residents. By fostering continued community participation, these policies will ensure that LTDL 2023 legacy is one of social sustainability, empowering future generations to take an active role in the event’s success and in community development.

Incorporating these practical strategies and policy interventions enable LTDL 2023 to better align with the SDGs, enhance stakeholder participation, and promote sustainable event practices. By prioritizing stakeholder engagement, effective communication, and long-term community development, LTDL 2023 can continue to create significant positive impacts in terms of environmental sustainability, economic benefits, and social well-being. These actions will not only help LTDL 2023 maintain

its status as a premier sporting event, but also ensure that its legacy contributes to sustainable development in Malaysia, setting a lasting example for other events to follow.

5.7 Strength of the Study

This study offers a nuanced exploration of sustainability within large-scale sports events, with a particular focus on LTDL 2023. By addressing the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability, it moves beyond traditional models that focus solely on environmental concerns, offering a holistic view of sustainable event management (Getz & Page, 2021; Mallen & Adams, 2023). The application of the EMBOK Model enhances this study by offering a structured framework to guide sustainable practices across event planning, execution, and evaluation.

A key strength of this study is its integration of theoretical frameworks namely the Stakeholder Theory and the Sport for Development (S4D) model. Stakeholder Theory provides insights into the evolving dynamics of stakeholder engagement throughout the event lifecycle, challenging static models by advocating for a more adaptive approach (Freeman, 1984; Parent & Chappelet, 2015). The S4D model further enriches the analysis by exploring the broader social impact of LTDL 2023, focusing on community development, youth engagement, and social sustainability (Schulenkorf, 2012). Together, these frameworks offer a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability in sports events.

The EMBOK Model strengthens this study by offering a domain-based approach to event management that integrates environmental, social, and economic factors across all stages. Its focus on stakeholder management, risk management, and outcomes is particularly relevant to LTDL 2023, ensuring sustainability is embedded throughout the event's lifecycle (Shone & Parry, 2022).

This study also highlights the critical role of stakeholder collaboration, identifying communication gaps that hinder the adoption of sustainability practices. It advocates for early and continuous engagement, clear communication, and inclusive decision-making, aligning with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) (Mallen & Adams, 2023). Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of youth engagement and community-driven initiatives, resonating with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

Methodologically, this study's qualitative approach, particularly through in-depth interviews with stakeholders; provides rich, context-specific insights that quantitative methods alone may overlook. The thematic analysis of interview data, integrated with the EMBOK Model's domain structure, enhances the practical relevance of the findings and offers actionable recommendations for future event organizers (Akoh, 2020; Zach, 2006).

Practical implications include recommendations such as multi-channel communication strategies, community engagement programs, and stakeholder education initiatives. These suggestions go beyond superficial sustainability efforts, addressing the social and economic dimensions of sustainability and ensuring long-term community benefits. Such initiatives, including volunteer programs and cultural showcases, ensure that LTDL 2023 generates both immediate economic gains and lasting social impact. This aligns with the outcome's domain of the EMBOK Model, which emphasizes on creating long-term, positive impacts for the host community (Fyall & Garrod, 2023).

In conclusion, this study bridges theoretical insights and practical applications, offering a comprehensive framework for improving the sustainability of sports events like LTDL 2023. By emphasizing on stakeholder collaboration, effective communication, and community engagement, this study provides actionable solutions for enhancing the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of LTDL 2023 and similar events. Its integration of theoretical frameworks and practical recommendations offers valuable guidance for event organizers, policymakers, and stakeholders aiming to advance sustainability in the event industry.

5.8 Limitations of the Study

This study in presenting its valuable insights into the sustainability of LTDL 2023, does not fall short of its limitations. Several of them must be acknowledged when evaluating its findings. These limitations primarily stem from the scope of the case study, the unit of analysis, and the specificity of the findings in relation to other types of sports events. First, the case study was limited to LTDL 2023, which restricts the generalizability of its results. Sustainable practices in sports events vary widely depending on the type, scale, and scope of the event. Large-scale events like the Olympics or FIFA World Cup have distinct logistical, environmental, and economic

challenges, which may require different sustainability strategies. Another limitation in this study includes the unit of analysis being restricted to stakeholders directly involved in LTDL 2023, such as local businesses, community members, and event organizers. Due to time and cost constraints, other key stakeholders such as international sponsors, media partners, and government authorities were not included. These stakeholders play a crucial role in shaping the sustainability policies and practices of large-scale events. Expanding the scope to include these additional groups would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing sustainability and capture a fuller range of perspectives involved in event management.

Finally, the findings of this study are specific to LTDL 2023 and may not fully translate to other types of sports events, which often have distinct environmental, social, and economic challenges. For example, events like Formula 1 and major football leagues focus more on carbon footprint reduction and energy management, while smaller-scale events such as LTDL 2023 emphasize on community engagement, local business impact, and waste management. Given these differences, the applicability of the findings across a variety of sports events remains limited.

5.9 Recommendations for Future Research

This study suggests several key areas for future research to enhance our understanding of sustainability in sports events. First, comparative case studies across diverse global events, such as the Olympics, Formula 1, or the World Cup, could broaden our understanding of sustainability practices. These comparisons would reveal common sustainability challenges and strategies across different event types, helping researchers assess the scalability of sustainability initiatives. McCullough et al. (2022) highlighted the value of such comparisons to understand context-specific sustainability approaches.

Second, expanding the unit of analysis to include global stakeholders such as sponsors, media partners, and government bodies would provide a more comprehensive view of sustainability in LTDL 2023. While local businesses and community members are key, global stakeholders shape sustainability practices through financial support and regulatory influence. Ding et al. (2023) noted that these stakeholders significantly impact sustainability efforts through strategic alliances and funding.

Third, integrating quantitative data with qualitative insights would strengthen future research by providing measurable evidence of sustainability impacts. Data on carbon emissions, waste reduction, and economic benefits to local businesses could validate the effectiveness of sustainability practices. Jones and Mulcahy (2021) reiterated that quantitative methods are essential for assessing event sustainability outcomes, including waste reduction and energy consumption.

Finally, exploring the role of technology in event management could optimize sustainability efforts. Digital tools like smart waste management systems, carbon tracking apps, and sustainability monitoring software could streamline resource management, improve data collection, and facilitate real-time monitoring of environmental impacts. González-González et al. (2023) suggested that such technologies can significantly reduce event organizers' environmental footprints. With regard to its recommendation, this research seems to assure that future study is able to provide a more comprehensive framework for managing sustainability in sports events, advancing both practical and theoretical understanding in the field.

5.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter critically examines how stakeholder collaboration and structured event management contribute to the sustainability of sports events, with LTDL 2023 as the central case study. Framed around three key research questions, this study explored how the event process spanned from initiation, planning, implementation, execution, and evaluation, all of which affected sustainability outcomes. This study is underpinned by theoretical frameworks, including the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012), and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model (Silvers, 2020). These frameworks provided a foundation for understanding how stakeholder engagement throughout the event lifecycle can drive economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

This study has led to the development of the Integrated Sustainable Sports Event Framework, which operationalizes stakeholder collaboration across all five phases of the EMBOK Model. This framework provides a process-oriented approach, demonstrating how effective collaboration at each event phase contributes to sustainability outcomes aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11

(Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). The model serves as a practical tool for event organizers aiming to integrate sustainability into the event management process.

In addition, this study also uncovered critical gaps in stakeholder engagement, including inconsistent community involvement, limited understanding of sustainability among stakeholders, and communication breakdowns. These issues provide new theoretical insights, particularly extending Stakeholder Theory by highlighting the time-sensitive nature of collaboration and the importance of change agents in fostering effective partnerships. Moreover, the S4D Model was expanded to include emotional, cultural, and environmentally driven community engagement, thus broadening its application. This study also underscored the need for real-time monitoring and feedback, particularly in phase-specific collaboration, to address gaps and improve the event's sustainability.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes on the need for integrated, inclusive, and participatory approaches in organizing sustainable sports events. By aligning collaborative governance with structured event management, this study offers both theoretical advancements and practical recommendations. These insights are vital not only for policymakers and event organizers in Malaysia, but also for global scholars seeking to develop sustainable sports tourism frameworks. The findings contribute significantly to the development of comprehensive models for sustainable event management, ensuring long-term positive impacts in the realms of economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

5.11 Conclusion of the Study

This study explored the pivotal role of stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events, with Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL 2023) serving as a case study. The primary aim was to address gaps in integrating sustainability principles into sports event management in Malaysia, focusing on how stakeholder collaboration spanned from local businesses, government bodies, event organizers, and the community could contribute to sustainability outcomes. This study was grounded on three theoretical frameworks, mainly the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), the Sport for Development (S4D) Model (Schulenkorf, 2012), and the Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) Model (Silvers, 2020). These frameworks provided

valuable insights into aligning diverse stakeholder interests and embedding sustainability into event management practices.

This study examined the role of stakeholder collaboration in achieving sustainability in sports events, particularly focusing on the economic, environmental, and social dimensions. It introduced the Integrated Sustainable Sports Event Framework, developed to operationalize stakeholder collaboration across various phases of event management based on the EMBOK Model. By investigating LTDL 2023, this study revealed how multi-stakeholder collaboration contributed to sustainability, while also highlighting challenges within Malaysia's sports event industry, such as power imbalances and communication barriers. The framework emphasized the critical need for coordination and collective engagement across all phases of event management to ensure sustainability outcomes.

The major findings of this study revealed that, despite notable efforts in engaging stakeholders, significant gaps remained in achieving full stakeholder involvement, particularly with local businesses and communities. Effective collaboration was found to be essential across all phases of event management namely initiation, planning, implementation, execution, and evaluation to drive sustainability outcomes. Key challenges identified included inconsistent community involvement, a limited understanding of sustainability among stakeholders, and communication breakdowns. The study also underscored the importance of real-time monitoring, phase-specific collaboration, and the role of change agents in ensuring sustainability. The Integrated Sustainable Sports Event Framework provided a comprehensive model to guide event organizers in embedding sustainability into the event lifecycle.

This study made significant academic contributions by extending the Stakeholder Theory, the S4D Model, and the EMBOK Model. It provided new theoretical insights into the dynamics of stakeholder collaboration, particularly emphasizing the need for adaptive, time-sensitive strategies. The S4D Model was expanded to incorporate emotional, cultural, and environmentally driven community engagement, while the EMBOK Model was extended to underscore the importance of continuous stakeholder collaboration throughout the event lifecycle. Furthermore, this study was original in its integration of the Stakeholder Theory, the S4D Model, and the EMBOK Model within the context of sustainable sports event management in Malaysia. The development of the Integrated Sustainable Sports Event Framework was a novel contribution to the academic literature, offering both theoretical insights and a practical

tool for future sports event organizers. This framework addressed theoretical gaps in stakeholder collaboration and provided a practical guide for embedding sustainability into sports event management.

On a practical level, this study offered actionable recommendations for policymakers, event organizers, and community leaders in Malaysia to enhance stakeholder engagement, improve communication strategies, and better integrate sustainability into event planning and execution. The Integrated Sustainable Sports Event Framework could guide future event organizers in aligning their practices with global sustainability initiatives, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring the long-term sustainability of sports tourism (Mallen & Adams, 2023).

Several limitations were identified in this study. The research was confined to a single case study of LTDL 2023, which limited the ability to generalize the findings to other sports events, particularly those of different scales or in different regions. The study's short-term focus and the limited involvement of stakeholders further restricted the ability to assess long-term sustainability outcomes. Additionally, the research relied on a small sample of stakeholders, which may not have fully captured the perspectives of other critical groups, such as international sponsors or policymakers. Future research should adopt a longitudinal approach and expand the scope to include a more diverse range of stakeholders, including those outside the immediate event context, to offer a more holistic view of sustainability practices.

This study suggested future research should explore several key areas to build on the findings of this study. First, comparative case studies could be conducted to examine the sustainability practices of Le Tour de Langkawi (LTDL 2023) alongside other global sports events, such as the Olympics, Formula 1, or the World Cup. These comparisons would help identify common sustainability challenges and strategies across different event types, thus providing insights into the scalability of sustainability initiatives in various contexts (Mallen & Adams, 2023). Additionally, expanding the unit of analysis to include a broader range of stakeholders such as international sponsors, media partners, and government bodies would offer a more comprehensive view of sustainability in sports events. By including these global stakeholders, future research could capture a fuller understanding of the impact of large-scale partnerships on sustainability outcomes. Furthermore, integrating quantitative data with qualitative insights would enhance future studies by providing measurable evidence of

sustainability outcomes, such as tracking waste reduction, carbon emissions, and economic impacts on local businesses (Liu et al., 2021). This data could help validate or challenge the effectiveness of sustainability strategies implemented in sports events. Finally, exploring the role of technology in optimizing sustainability practices should be a focus of future research. Investigating tools such as smart waste management systems and carbon tracking apps would offer new insights into how technology can reduce environmental impacts and streamline sustainability efforts in the event management process.

In conclusion, this study emphasized on the critical role of stakeholder collaboration in achieving sustainable sports events. By integrating theoretical frameworks with practical recommendations, this study provided a comprehensive roadmap for event organizers, policymakers, and scholars to align sports events with global sustainability goals. The Integrated Sustainable Sports Event Framework from this study offered a structured approach to ensuring sustainability in sports events, helping to create positive impacts in the economic, environmental, and social dimensions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

UiTM Research Ethic Approval

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA
Pejabat
Timbalan Naib Canselor
(Penyelidikan dan Inovasi)

Reference : 600-TNCPI (5/1/6)
Our reference : REC/09/2023 (PG/MR/362)
Date : 20 September 2023

Assoc. Prof. Dr Norol Hamiza binti Zamzuri
(Kalam Azad bin Isa – 2021753043)
Faculty of Business and Management
Universiti Teknologi MARA
40450 Shah Alam
SELANGOR

Dear Assoc. Prof. Dr Norol Hamiza,

APPROVAL LETTER - UiTM RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Research Ethics Committee (REC). After considering your application, the Committee approved your proposal titled "Exploring the Stakeholders Collaboration in The Process of Organizing a Sustainable Sporting Event in Malaysia" in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Ref. number:	REC/09/2023 (PG/MR/362)
Approval Period:	20 September 2023 until 16 September 2024
Authorised personnel:	1. Assoc. Prof. Dr Norol Hamiza binti Zamzuri 2. Kalam Azad bin Isa 3. Assoc. Prof. Dr Herwina binti Rosnan

The UiTM Research Ethics Committee operates in accordance to the ICH Good Clinical Practice Guidelines, Malaysian Good Clinical Practice Guidelines and the Declaration of Helsinki. The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with these guidelines and declaration.

We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research, must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on the completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed. Amendments, if any, to the study documents are to be submitted to the REC for approval.

If you require further information, please contact the REC Secretariat at 03-55448069/03-55442794 or email at recsecretariat@uitm.edu.my.

Yours sincerely,

EMERITUS PROFESSOR DATO' DR RAYMOND AZMAN ALI
Chairman
UiTM Research Ethics Committee

c.c.: Dean, Faculty of Business and Management, UiTM

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ISO 9001:2015 No. 5181 1812056
UiTM di hatiku

APPENDIX 2

Gatekeeper Approval

MAJLIS SUKAN NEGARA MALAYSIA
Kompleks Sukan Negara, Bukit Jalil
57000 KUALA LUMPUR
MALAYSIA

Tel : 03-89929000/9600/9800
Laman Web : www.nsc.gov.my

Rujukan : MSN.500-5/1/7 Jld.2 (13)
Tarikh : 18 September 2023

En. Kalam Azad Isa
Pensyarah
Fakulti Sains Sukan Dan Rekreasi
Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Pahang
26400 Bandar Tun Abdul Razak Jengka
Pahang Darul Makmur

Tuan,

KELULUSAN PERMOHONAN PENGUMPULAN DATA KAJIAN LTDL 2023

Dengan hormatnya saya merujuk kepada perkara di atas.

2. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa Majlis telah bersetuju untuk memberi kebenaran kepada pihak tuan untuk melaksanakan pengumpulan data kajian LTDL 2023. Walau bagaimanapun, tiada peruntukan kewangan yang diberikan untuk kajian ini dan segala perbelanjaan adalah ditampung oleh pihak tuan.

3. Sehubungan dengan itu, Majlis ingin merakamkan ucapan terima kasih di atas perhatian tuan terhadap kemajuan sukan negara melalui kajian yang dilaksanakan.

Sekian.

"MALAYSIA MADANI"

"KE ARAH KECEMERLANGAN SUKAN"

Saya yang menjalankan amanah,

(MOHD YAZID BIN SHOIB)
Pemangku Pengarah
Bahagian Pengurusan Acara Dan Sukan
b.p Ketua Pengarah
Majlis Sukan Negara Malaysia

APPENDIX 3

Informant Consent Form

Research Title

Exploring the Role of Stakeholders Collaboration in the Process of Organizing a Sustainable Sport Event in Malaysia

Researcher Information

Student Name: Kalam Azad bin Isa
Student ID: 2021723043
Supervisors

1. Associate Prof Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri
2. Associate Prof Dr. Herwina Rosnan

Institutions

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)

About the Researcher

I am Kalam Azad bin Isa, a PhD student at the Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). I am currently conducting interviews to fulfill the research objectives of my study titled *"Exploring the Role of Stakeholders Collaboration in the Process of Organizing a Sustainable Sport Event in Malaysia."* This research aims to understand the contributions of different stakeholders and how their collaboration influences the sustainability of sports events in terms of economic, social, and environmental factors.

Purpose of the Research

The primary aim of this study is to explore the role of stakeholder collaboration in organizing sustainable sports events in Malaysia, with a focus on balancing the economic, social, and environmental pillars of sustainability. The specific objectives are:

1. To investigate the roles of key stakeholder collaborations in shaping the sustainability of sports events.
2. To explore the process of organizing a sustainable event by balancing economic, social, and environmental aspects.
3. To develop a sustainable sport event framework based on stakeholder collaboration and sports event management process

Participant Involvement

You have been purposefully selected to participate in this study due to your valuable insights and expertise related to the organization of sustainable sports events. Your participation is highly appreciated as it will significantly contribute to achieving the research objectives. You will be asked to take part in an interview, which is expected to last approximately 40 to 60 minutes and will explore your experiences and perspectives on stakeholder collaboration.

Confidentiality

Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and will be used solely for the purposes of this research. The data collected from the interview will be anonymized to protect your identity and will not be published or shared without your explicit consent. All data will be securely stored and only accessible to the researcher and supervisors. The data will be retained for 2 years, after which it will be securely deleted.

Risks and Benefits
There are no significant risks anticipated from your participation in this study. The benefits of participating include contributing to the understanding of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable sports event management, which may influence future practices in Malaysia.

Voluntary Participation and Rights
Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits. If you choose to withdraw, your data will be removed from the study records and will not be included in the analysis. You may also decline to answer any specific questions during the interview without providing a reason.

Audio Recording Consent
The interview may be audio-recorded to ensure the accuracy of the information collected. You can choose whether you consent to the audio recording.

[ ] ***I consent to the interview being audio-recorded.***
[ ] ***I do not consent to the interview being audio-recorded.***

Use of Data in Publications
Anonymized data from this research may be used in academic publications or presentations. However, no identifying information will be included in any published materials.

Consent
By signing this form, you acknowledge that:

- ***You have read and understood the information provided above.***
- ***You have had the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the study.***
- ***You voluntarily agree to participate in this research.***
- ***You understand that you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.***

Participant's Signature: _____
Participant's Name: _____
Phone Number: _____
Date: _____
Researcher's Signature: _____
Date: _____

For any questions or concerns, please contact:

Kalam Azad bin Isa
Email: 2021753043@student.uitm.edu.my
Phone:

Supervisors:
Associate Prof Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri (email: norol@uitm.edu.my)
Associate Prof Dr. Herwina Rosnan (email: herwina@uitm.edu.my)

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX 4

Members Checking Appointment Letter 1

www.uitm.edu.my

Fakulti Pengurusan dan Perniagaan
UiTM Cawangan Selangor
Kampus Puncak Alam
Faculty of Business and Management

Universiti Teknologi MARA
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42300 Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia
Tel: (+603) 3258 7042/7045/5028
Faks: (+603) 3258 7000/7111

Ref. Rujukan. : 500-FPP (25/1/5)
Tarikh: 14 Januari 2025

Dr. M. Adli Mohd Sidi
Pensyarah Kanan
Fakulti Sains Sukan dan Rekreasi
Universiti Teknologi MARA
Kampus Jengka, Cawangan Pahang

YBrs Dr.,

PELANTIKAN SEBAGAI PANEL PAKAR UNTUK PENGESAHAN DATA CALON Ph.D.

Dengan segala hormatnya perkara di atas adalah dirujuk.

2. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa pelajar berikut merupakan calon Ijazah Doktor Falsafah dari Fakulti Pengurusan dan Perniagaan, Universiti Teknologi MARA:

Nama : Kalam Azad Isa
Tajuk Penyelidikan: The role of stakeholder collaboration in the process of organizing a sustainable sport event in Malaysia: A case study of Le Tour De Langkawi 2023
Penyelia : Prof. Madya Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri
Penyelia Bersama : Prof. Madya Dr. Herwina Rosnan

3. Calon kini berada di fasa analisis data setelah menjalankan beberapa siri temu bual mendalam dengan peserta kajian dan berjaya menyediakan transkrip penuh temu bual berkenaan.

4. Bagi memastikan ketepatan dan kesahan dapatan kajian, calon memerlukan pengesahan kod dan tema yang dikenal pasti daripada transkrip tersebut. Sehubungan itu, penglibatan pihak Dr. sebagai panel pakar amat dialu-alukan dan penting bagi menjamin ketelitian serta kebolehpercayaan hasil kajian ini.

5. Sebarang pertanyaan lanjut boleh dikemukakan terus kepada calon melalui e-mel di **kalam_azad@uitm.edu.my** atau menerusi telefon bimbit di talian

Segala sokongan dan kerjasama yang diberikan amat dihargai dan didahului dengan ucapan terima kasih.

"MALAYSIA MADANI"
"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Yang benar,

Prof. Madya Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri
Pensyarah Kanan
Fakulti Pengurusan dan Perniagaan
Universiti Teknologi MARA

Dekan	03 3258 7001	KPP Ekonomi & Kewangan	03 3258 7006	Koordinator Kursus BA224 & BA247	03 3258 7012
Setiausaha Pejabat	03 3258 7011	KPP Peng. Tek & Rantaian Bekalan	03 3258 7007	Koordinator Kursus BA243 & BA246	03 3258 7013
Timbalan Dekan (Akademik)	03 3258 7002	KPP Pemasaran & Keusahawanan	03 3258 7008	Koordinator Kursus BA232	03 3258 7014
Timbalan Dekan (Hal Ehwal Pelajar)	03 3258 7003	KPP Pasca-Siswazah & Profesional	03 5544 4678	Koordinator Kursus BA235 & BA236	03 3258 7015
Timbalan Dekan (Penyelidikan & Inovasi)	03 3258 7004	Koordinator Pra-Diploma & Diploma	03 3258 7018	Koordinator Kursus BA242 & BA249	03 3258 7016
Timbalan Dekan (ICAEN)	03 3258 7010	Koordinator Peperiksaan	03 3258 7019	Koordinator Kursus BA241 & BA250	03 3258 7017
Timbalan Pendaftar	03 3258 7070	Koordinator Latihan Industri	03 3258 5012	Koordinator Kursus BA240 & BA245	03 3258 7021
Penolong Pendaftar (Pentadbiran)	03 3258 7171	Penolong Pendaftar (Akademik)	03 3258 7272	Koordinator Kursus BA231 & BA234	03 3258 7022

APPENDIX 5

Members Checking Appointment Letter 2

www.uitm.edu.my

Fakulti Pengurusan dan Perniagaan
UiTM Cawangan Selangor
Kampus Puncak Alam
Faculty of Business and Management

Universiti Teknologi MARA
Aras 2, PejabatDekan, FPP 1 (Blok PFI 2)
UiTM Cawangan Selangor Kampus Puncak Alam
42300 Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia
Tel: (+603) 3258 7042/7045/5028
Faks: (+603) 3258 7000/7111

Ref. Rujukan. : 500-FPP (25/1/5)
Tarikh: 14 Januari 2025

Dr. Mohd Amli bin Abdullah @ Baharum
Pensyarah Kanan
Pusat Pengajian Pengurusan Teknologi
Fakulti Pengurusan Perniagaan
Universiti Teknologi MARA
Kampus Jengka, Cawangan Pahang

YBrs Dr.,

PELANTIKAN SEBAGAI PANEL PAKAR UNTUK PENGESAHAN DATA CALON Ph.D.

Dengan segala hormatnya perkara di atas adalah dirujuk.

2. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa pelajar berikut merupakan calon Ijazah Doktor Falsafah dari Fakulti Pengurusan dan Perniagaan, Universiti Teknologi MARA:

Nama : Kalam Azad Isa
Tajuk Penyelidikan: The role of stakeholder collaboration in the process of organizing a sustainable sport event in Malaysia: A case study of Le Tour De Langkawi 2023
Penyelia : Prof. Madya Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri
Penyelia Bersama : Prof. Madya Dr. Herwina Rosnan

3. Calon kini berada di fasa analisis data setelah menjalankan beberapa siri temu bual mendalam dengan peserta kajian dan berjaya menyediakan transkrip penuh temu bual berkenaan.

4. Bagi memastikan ketepatan dan kesahan dapatan kajian, calon memerlukan pengesahan kod dan tema yang dikenal pasti daripada transkrip tersebut. Sehubungan itu, penglibatan pihak Dr. sebagai panel pakar amat dialu-alukan dan penting bagi menjamin ketelitian serta kebolehpercayaan hasil kajian ini.

5. Sebarang pertanyaan lanjut boleh dikemukakan terus kepada calon melalui e-mel di **kalam_azad@uitm.edu.my** atau menerusi telefon bimbit di talian

Segala sokongan dan kerjasama yang diberikan amat dihargai dan didahului dengan ucapan terima kasih.

"MALAYSIA MADANI"
"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Yang benar,

Prof. Madya Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri
Pensyarah Kanan
Fakulti Pengurusan dan Perniagaan
Universiti Teknologi MARA

Dekan	03 3258 7001	KPP Ekonomi & Kewangan	03 3258 7006	Koordinator Kursus BA224 & BA247	03 3258 7012
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Timbalan Dekan (Hal Ehwal Pelajar)	03 3258 7003	KPP Pasca-Siswazah & Profesional	03 5544 4678	Koordinator Kursus BA235 & BA236	03 3258 7015
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Penolong Pendaftar (Pentadbiran)	03 3258 7171	Penolong Pendaftar (Akademik)	03 3258 7272	Koordinator Kursus BA231 & BA234	03 3258 7022

APPENDIX 6

Verification Form from Panel 1

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

BORANG PENGESAHAN PAKAR BAGI PEMBENTUKAN TEMA DATA KUALITATIF

Tajuk Kajian (Project Title)
The role of stakeholder collaboration in the process of organizing a sustainable sport event in Malaysia: A case study of Le Tour De Langkawi 2023

Nama Penyelidik (Researcher's Name)
Kalam Azad bin Isa
Fakulti Pengurusan & Perniagaan
Universiti Teknologi MARA
E-mail: kalam_azad@uitm.edu.my
No Telefon:
Penyelia Utama: Prof. Madya Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri
Penyelia Bersama: Prof. Madya Dr. Herwina Rosnan

ULASAN KESELURUHAN

Pembentukan tema di dalam kajian ini adalah memadai dan bersesuaian dengan objektif penyelidikan yang meneliti peranan kolaborasi pihak berkepentingan di dalam penganjuran acara sukan di Malaysia. Tema-tema yang telah dikenalpasti menunjukkan kefahaman mendalam terhadap data temu bual dan disokong oleh petikan transkrip yang relevan. Struktur tema dan subtema juga disusun secara logik dan menggambarkan hubungan yang jelas dengan persoalan kajian yang telah dibentuk. Walau bagaimanapun, terdapat ruang penambahbaikan yang boleh dipertimbangkan seperti berikut:

1. Gabungkan tema yang bertindih – Ada beberapa tema yang boleh digabungkan bagi tidak membawa makna yang sama atau berpotensi untuk mengaburi tema utama.
2. Beberapa tema boleh diperincikan agar lebih konsisten.
3. Selaraskan tema dengan kerangka teori yang sesuai seperti model kolaborasi atau sustainability.

Secara keseluruhan, saya mengesahkan tema yang dibentuk adalah sah dan boleh diterima selaras dengan kaedah kajian kualitatif.

Nama	M. Adli Mohd Sidi (Dr.)
Jawatan	Pensyarah Kanan
Kepakaran	Pengurusan Sukan
Institusi	Universiti Teknologi Mara
Pengalaman Kerja	8 tahun

Tandatangan & :
Cop rasmi

DR. M. ADLI MOHD SIDI
PENSYARAH KANAN
FAKULTI SAINS SUKAN DAN REKREASI
UiTM CAWANGAN PAHANG

Tarikh: 20 Januari 2025

APPENDIX 7

Verification Form from Panel 2

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

BORANG PENGESAHAN PAKAR BAGI PEMBENTUKAN TEMA DATA KUALITATIF

Tajuk Kajian (Project Title)
The role of stakeholder collaboration in the process of organizing a sustainable sport event in Malaysia: A case study of Le Tour De Langkawi 2023

Nama Penyelidik (Researcher's Name)
Kalam Azad bin Isa
Fakulti Pengurusan & Perniagaan
Universiti Teknologi MARA
E-mail: kalam_azad@uitm.edu.my
No Telefon:
Penyelia Utama: Prof. Madya Dr. Norol Hamiza Zamzuri
Penyelia Bersama: Prof. Madya Dr. Herwina Rosnan

ULASAN KESELURUHAN

Based on the transcription and the themes that were developed, several suggestions can be made to improve the findings. First, the themes were not presented using appropriate managerial terminology; the terms used were too lengthy and lacked specificity. There was also redundancy between themes and sub-themes, making the analysis difficult to follow and the concepts misaligned with a clear conceptual framework. Secondly, some quotes were not assigned to the correct themes, as the themes were pre-set, which made the findings overly narrow and restricted their natural development. Nevertheless, the transcriptions contain rich data that have not been fully utilized.

Nama	Dr. Mohd Amli bin Abdullah @ Baharum
Jawatan	Senior Lecturer
Kepakaran	Qualitative Analysis using Atlas.ti, Business & Management Research
Institusi	Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Pahang (Jengka Campus)
Pengalaman Kerja	17 years in teaching and 2.0 H. Index in WOS and published several publication in Q1 WOS (Impact Factor Journals)

Tandatangan & :
Cop rasmi

MOHD AMLI ABDULLAH @ BAHARUM
Koordinator Pra Siswazah (Pengurusan Sistem Pejabat)
Fakulti Pengurusan & Perniagaan
Universiti Teknologi MARA
Cawangan Pahang Kampus Jengka
26400 Bandar Pusat Jengka, Pahang

Tarikh: 21 January 2025

APPENDIX 8

Verification of Translation and Proofreading Services

Dr. Hjh. Siti Akmar Abu Samah
Associate Professor (Honorary)
Institute of Business Excellence
Faculty of Business Management
Universiti Teknologi MARA
40450 Shah Alam
Selangor
Malaysia

10 Jun 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

VERIFICATION OF TRANSLATION AND PROOFREADING SERVICES RENDERED

This is to verify that the above has been rendered.

I, Associate Professor (Honorary) Dr. Hajah Siti Akmar Abu Samah, confirm that I have received the invitation to conduct translation and proofreading services from:

Name of Author(s): Kalam Azad bin Isa

Author's ID: 2021753043

Institution/Affiliation: Faculty of Business & Management, Universiti Teknologi Mara

Paper/Thesis/Research Title: The role of stakeholder collaboration in the process of organizing a sustainable sport event in Malaysia: a case study of Le Tour De Langkawi 2023

Your consideration and cooperation on this matter is greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



Dr. Hajah Siti Akmar Abu Samah
Associate Professor (Honorary)
016 639 6407 sitiakmar.uitm@gmail.com

AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Kalam Azad Bin Isa is a highly qualified academic professional currently serving as a Lecturer (DM45) in the Faculty of Sport Science and Recreation at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Pahang. He holds a Master of Sport Science (2011) and a Bachelor of Sport Science with Honors (2007), both from UiTM, as well as a Diploma in Health and Fitness (2004). With extensive experience in both national sports administration and academia, Kalam Azad has been with UiTM Cawangan Pahang since 2017. In his current role, he teaches various specialized subjects, including Competitive Sports Event, and has successfully supervised a significant number of undergraduate students. Prior to his academic career, he served a decade-long tenure (2007–2017) as a Youth and Sports Officer at the National Sport Council of Malaysia. During this period, he gained high-level industry expertise working within both the Event Management Department and the Elite Athlete Program Department. Furthermore, he is a Certified Trainer for the National Sports Management Certification, reflecting his mastery of sports governance and institutional development. His current role also involves various administrative duties and serving on university committees, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to the advancement of sports science education in Malaysia.

LIST OF PUBLICATION:

Isa, K. A., Zamzuri, N. H., & Rosnan, H. (2024). Strategies for sustainable sports events: Understanding the stakeholders challenge for collaboration. *Information Management and Business Review*, *16*(3), 1–6.

Isa, K. A., Mohamad Ishak, M. A., Mohamed Kassim, N. A., Ab Razak, R., & Razak, F. (2024). Spending behaviour among sports event attendees during the 2023 Men's Hockey Junior World Cup, Kuala Lumpur. *Gading Journal for Social Sciences*, *27*(2), 152–158.