



**SPORT EVENTS AS CATALYSTS FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY  
DEVELOPMENT IN LIBREVILLE, GABON**

by

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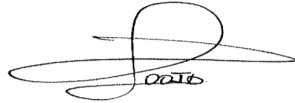
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## DECLARATION

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## **ABSTRACT**

In contemporary times, countries around the world have progressively adopted the hosting of sport events as a catalyst for the promotion of economic growth, a tendency which is reflected in consensus within extant studies highlighting the economic value of sport events. The hosting of the 2012 African Cup of Nations was heralded as an opportunity for the development of the tourism and hospitality sector. The aim of this study was to undertake an examination of the value of major sporting events hosted in Libreville, Gabon, as catalysts for the development of the tourism and hospitality sector. Adopting a qualitative approach, a purposive sampling technique was implemented in the data collection process. In total, eighteen structured interviews were conducted with key informants from relevant stakeholder organisations within the sport, tourism and hospitality cluster in Libreville. So as to succinctly elaborate on the key patterns emerging from the empirical data, a thematic analysis of the findings was conducted, whereby significant themes were identified, grouped into conceptual categories, and analysed. The findings revealed that sport events are a valuable instrument that can be used in promoting the growth of the tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville, as well as in the rest of Gabon more broadly. Additionally, the findings also enunciate the ability of sport events to attract positive outcomes in promoting the economic growth of Libreville, and in enhancing the image of Gabon. However, the findings also indicate nuanced concerns and challenges that might hinder such growth potential. Furthermore, recommendations were proposed, highlighting the need for a more broad-based approach to stakeholder collaboration, at all levels of the sport event life cycle, so as to leverage the opportunities provided by such events for promoting the economic growth of Libreville, and of the rest of Gabon, as an even more competitive destination within the sport event tourism sector than it has been in the past.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents, Pierre and Josephine Odounga for affording me the opportunity to be educated.

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## GLOSSARY

AEO	African Economic Outlook
AFCON	Africa Cup of Nations
AGATOUR	Agence Gabonaise de Développement et de la Promotion du Tourisme et de l'Hôtellerie
ANAGEISC	Agence Nationale de Gestion et d'Exploitation des Infrastructures Sportives et Culturelles
ANINF	Agence National des Infrastructures Numériques et des Fréquences
ANPN	Agence National des Grands Travaux et Infrastructures
CAF	Confederation of African Football
CSF	critical success factor
CGE	computable general equilibrium
Cocan	Organising Committee of the Africa Cup of Nations
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
COPICAN	Inter-ministerial Organising Committee for Strategic Planning of the Africa Cup of Nations
CSR	corporate social responsibility
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DGSEE	Direction générale de la statistique et des études économiques
EIA	environmental impact analysis
FCFA	Franc de la coopération financière en Afrique centrale
FGIS	Fonds Gabonais d'Investissements Stratégiques
FIFA	Federation International of Football Association
GDP	gross domestic product
GICS	Gabon Investment Climate Statement
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
LOC	local organising committee
MICE	meetings, incentives, conventions and events/exhibitions
NAMC	non-accredited media centres
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NYFA	New York Forum Africa
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ORCE	Operations Department Centre Region
PIP	Public Investment Programme
PNDS	Plan National de Développement Sanitaire
PPP	private-public partnership

PSGE	Plan Stratégique Gabon Emergent
PWC	Price Waterhouse Coopers
QOF	quality of life
RBM	Roll Back Malaria
RMF	recommended methodological framework
ROI	return on Investment
SEZ	special economic zone
SGHT	Société Gabonaise d'Hôtellerie et du Tourisme
SIA	social impact analysis
SME	small to medium enterprise
SRG	Sustainability Reporting Guidelines
TBL	triple bottom-line
TOK	transfer of knowledge
TSA	Tourism Satellite Account
TTCI	Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
ULI	Urban Land Institute
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDAF	Plan Cadre des Nations Unies pour l'Aide au Développement
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WCED	Commission on Environment and Development
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council
XAF	Central African Franc

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Preamble**

Sport events are increasingly used in both developing and developed environments to promote development, particularly in relation to economic growth (Bob & Swart, 2010:72). Sport events are an important and growing part of the event industry, encompassing the full variety of such individual sports and multisport events as the Olympic Games and the Federation International of Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, as well as other similar events (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell, 2011:24). Hosting major sport events can cause positive modifications in tourism demand long term (Solberg & Preuss, 2007:213). Indeed, the demand from tourists can subsidise the production of goods and services that is characterised by the advantages of economies of scale. Consequently, it provides residents with goods and services that they otherwise could only have consumed outside the region. Many of the benefits from sport events fall into the category of public goods (Solberg & Preuss, 2007:213).

The hosting of mega events is generally reserved for developed countries, with an already advanced infrastructure (Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2008:383). The two major sporting events that excite Africans are the FIFA World Cup and the African Cup of Nations (AFCON). The first hosting of the FIFA World Cup took place in the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo in 1930 (FIFA.com, 2013), with the tournament being played for the first time on the African continent in 2010, in South Africa, some 80 years after its creation. The AFCON tournament, which is a world-renowned regional competition, is handled at an organisational level by the Confederation of African Football (CAF) (Foimoukom, 2006). Such sporting events are part of the wider and growing analysis of major events within the diverse fields of urban regeneration, economic development, politics, and tourism (Baum & Lockstone, 2007:29).

As a whole, the tourism industry, in many regards, is a hospitality and service industry, according to Hritz and Ross (2010:119). Indeed, the hospitality of the local community is vital to the tourism industry, with the destination requiring development according to the host community needs. That is, the two concepts of tourism and hospitality go hand in hand, since the hospitality industry offers such services as accommodation, transportation, food and beverage, and recreation and leisure to tourists. The hospitality industry is, therefore, the supplier of services to tourism (Ariffin, Maghzi & Aziz, 2011:340).

The AFCON was co-organised, on its twenty-eighth hosting, by Gabon and Equatorial Guinea in 2012, with, more recently, the thirty-first hosting being held in 2017 by Gabon alone. In August 2008, after winning the bid to host the AFCON, a Council of Ministers of the Gabonese

Republic approved the creation of the Inter-ministerial Organising Committee for Strategic Planning of the Africa Cup of Nations (Copican). The mission of the Copican was to design a list of projects of infrastructure to build and rehabilitate, and to determine the cost of the related infrastructure. On the proposal of the minister responsible for sports, the Copican also had to set up an organising committee for the 2012 AFCON (Gabonews, 2008). In November 2009, the Organising Committee of the Africa Cup of Nations (Cocan) came into existence, with its two main missions namely being to organise a successful event, and to promote the tourism destination of Gabon (Cocan Gabon, 2012:16).

Gabon, which is a country that is rich in natural resources, has exported manganese, oil, gas, iron, wood and other products of the soil for a protracted period of time. According to the Gabonese Ministry of Economy, Trade, Industry and Tourism (2011:281), such hydrocarbons as oil and gas represented about 47% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2010. Due to the high contribution made by hydrocarbons to the GDP of the country, and to the fact that the source has served as the principal source of revenue for the government, risks like hydrocarbon fluctuation, within the world trade environment, were likely to happen. Consequently, to avoid such threats, Gabon took the initiative to diversify and boost its economy through tourism (Gabon, 2012:37).

To host the AFCON in excellent conditions, and to provide the country with a modern infrastructure of sport facilities, CAF required the provision of four stadiums for the competition. For this purpose, the Stade de l'Amitié Sino-Gabonaise de Libreville (Stadium of Amitié Sino-Gabonese of Libreville) was built. In addition, three other stadiums for training in Libreville were renovated, namely the Stade de l'Institut National de la Jeunesse et des Sports (Stadium of the National Institute of Youth and Sports), the Stade Augustin Monédang de Sibang (Stadium Augustin Monédan of Sibang), and the Stade Omnisport Omar Bongo (Stadium Omnisports Omar Bongo). According to the government of Gabon (2012:37), the 2012 AFCON boosted the hospitality industry, in terms of the occupancy rates of hotels between January and September 2012, which grew by 23%, compared to the same period in 2010. In addition, in anticipation of the organisation of the African Cup of Nations, the Gabonese government built three hotels in Libreville, namely the Onomo, the Héliconia d'Agondjé (Héliconia of Angondjé), and the Héliconia de Nzeng-Ayong (Héliconia of Nzeng-Ayong), in anticipation of meeting all the accommodation requirements of the event. The Cocan further relied on such existing hotel facilities as the Méridien Ré-Ndama, the Okoumé Palace, and The Nomad (Cocan Gabon, 2012:79-80).

Apart from the AFCON, Gabon hosts several such major sporting events as the La Tropicale Amissa Bongo, an international road cycling race that is held in Gabon once a year. The race consists of a men's competition, pitting Africans amateurs against professional European

riders. Furthermore, the Gabon International Marathon, which was hosted from 30 November 2013 to 1 December 2013 (Mombo, 2012:12; Class 1, 2013), attracted 5000 participants, and more than 20000 spectators (Safou, 2013). Moreover, the tenth hosting of Gabon's Cup of Taekwondo, which was held on 29 June 2013, attracted about 582 spectators (Ndong, 2013:13). Additionally, according to Nze-Bekale (2013:12), Libreville recently hosted a two-day motocross event, the Libreville International Moto Show (LIMS), on 28 June 2013, as well as an International Powerboat Race that took place from 12 to 13 July 2012 in Libreville. The competition had previously been hosted in many other countries, such as Qatar, Italy, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Norway.

Every modern mega sporting event has several objectives and long-term benefits that the host countries want to achieve through its hosting. The benefits, as stated by Song (2010:93), include specially constructed event facilities and infrastructure, urban revival, enhanced international reputation, increased tourism, improved public welfare, additional employment, local business opportunities, and corporate relocation. Moreover, Getz (1997) says that sport events contribute significantly towards increasing tourist flow and driving economic development in a region. Bob and Swart (2010:74) concur that sport events have become increasingly important in an effort to achieve growth in the tourism industry.

## **1.2 Clarification of basic terms and concepts used in the study**

### **1.2.1 Sport events**

Sport events are planned events that revolve around a sporting activity (Bob & Swart, 2010:74). The pursuit of hosting major (or mega) sports events has become increasingly popular among governments, corporations, and civic 'boosters' worldwide. Horne and Manzenreiter (2005:30) argue that major economic, developmental, political, and sociocultural benefits generally flow from sport events. '

### **1.2.2 Catalyst**

A catalyst is an element, process or strategy that serves as an inhibitor to an already conceived idea, without which the realisation would either be slow, or impossible. It is the stimulating factor in the attainment, or transformation, of certain aspects that can be translated in terms of cause and effect. In the context of the current study, it is the role played so as to realise shared benefits for all involved. According to Chalip (2006:110), the catalytic aspect of sport in relation to the occurrence of an event is that it is a motivator and a vehicle by means of which an association can transform aspects of a particular process or perception. For a city, region or country to realise a vision, mission and long-term goals, sport and the hosting of events (especially mega events) are used to support related growth and benefits, with them serving to fast track planning and developmental transformation opportunities (Essex & Chalkley, 1998:195). Their role is reflected in the significant changes occurring to aspects of socio-

economic importance that derive from the investment in sports facilities, transport and telecommunications infrastructure (Chen & Spaans, 2009:102), serving to create job and entrepreneurial opportunities, including the transfer of skills. In terms of the social context, sporting events evidently serve as catalysts by means of which a community can negotiate and promote its identity (Wiggan, 2010:13), although the core social implications involved might tend to be overshadowed or marginalised.

According to Waitt (2003), the hosting of a major event tends to create a sense of national prestige, with it being likely to contribute to a sense of cohesion in the community. Moreover, initiatives that promote social inclusion are nowadays receiving more attention, as community buy-in is sought through engaging public interest in hosted on-and-off event-related activities (Essex & Chalkley, 2002:17), including expert contributions to an event's technical and operational aspects. The catalytic properties of hosting an event of the magnitude of the Olympic Games and the World Cups can also be perceived in relation to the development of non-sport-related infrastructure, and to a political appetite for new strategies leading to urban rejuvenation (Essex & Chalkley, 2002:3). As pointed out by Chen and Spaans (2009:101), the success of host cities necessitates the provision of adequate hotel accommodation and attractive public spaces that reflect the city as a destination for future tourist activities. Hence, sport events have the capability to act as catalysts by means of enhancing the host's appeal to attract additional tourism revenue (Hall, 2001; Berlin, 2003; Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules, 2010:282; Smith, 2010:263). The increased media exposure is credited with providing an enlarged platform for place marketing, and with a host re-imaging strategy to assert a spirit of global competitiveness through the event, as well as through related activities (Chen & Spaans, 2009:99). As such, it serves to enhance the destination's ability to pursue tourism-related benefits long after an event has ended (Brown, 2001:15). Organisational and structural modernisation is attributed to sport tourism, as planning processes tend to foster close partnerships between the public and private sectors, for the sharing of related benefits and risks (Owen, 2002:323). Finally, as expanded on in the current context, the overall aspect of sport tourism and events as catalysts entails the incorporation of policies that foster environments that are suitable for the staging of various competitions, and for the creation of financial viability to stimulate regional development (Essex & Chalkley, 2002:17).

### **1.2.3 Tourism industry**

According to Camilleri (2018:4), the tourism industry comprises all establishments of which the principal activity is tourism-related. Furthermore, the tourism industry is also referred to as consisting of tourism activities that typically produce tourism-related products. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Muhanna, 2006:15). As a service industry, it consists of several different sectors that, by themselves, form the different components of a service industry dependent on the human factor (Camilleri,2018:17). The tourism sector is



made up of organisations, associations, government agencies and companies that seek to serve and address the industry's sense of well-being as an inclusive product, while other sectors within it (e.g. accommodation, gastronomy, travel agencies, travel writers, and publishers) are only concerned with the needs of specific individuals (Camilleri, 2018:23). The related industries are viewed in the sense that they provide specific services, such as restaurants being tasked with the supply of food-/drink-related entertainment, or hotels being required to offer accommodation to people who are away from home, as explained by Mackenzie and Chen (2001:1). Moreover, the researchers concerned view the relationship between hosts and guests in the contemporary sense of the hospitality industry, complete with the role played by companies or organisations within it. Another aspect of the tourism industry is the different environments in which it takes place. As Muhanna (2006:16) explains, the landscape and the activities that are associated with it are some of the many elements that contribute to the related anticipated experience. Moreover, the tourism industry does not fall within a defined boundary. According to go2HR (2014), the industry is formed by all businesses in the sectors providing varied products and services to visitors. The tourism industry includes those who work at all levels on it, ranging from the cleaners who tidy the hotel rooms to the individuals who manage tourism resorts, and to those promoting the tourism product. As a service industry, people who research tourism trends, and who advertise and market tourism products, or who educate or inform others about tourism, also form part of the tourism industry. The scope of the industry is significant in terms of how it affects the environment. Equally so, the actors within the tourism industry have been sensitised into providing a concerted response that addresses the issue of sustainability.

#### **1.2.4 Hospitality industry**

The hospitality industry is a phenomenon that is quite difficult to describe (Sloan, Legrand & Chen, 2013). A diversity of hospitality products and services exists, ranging from luxury hotels to cruise ships, casinos, and catering firms, as well as even the hot-dog stands positioned outside sport stadiums. The industry defies the conventional definition of being a set of firms all making the same product. In fact, the provision of hotels falls within the general context of hospitality as an aspect of human activity with important social dimensions, as well as being tasked with meeting the physiological needs of shelter and comfort. Moreover, as referred to by Lashley and Morrison (2000:15), hospitality requires the guest to feel that the host is being hospitable through feelings of generosity, a desire to please, and a genuine regard for the guest as an individual.

### **1.2.5 Development**

According to Boateng, Heeks, Molla and Hinson (2008:569), development, in its simplest definition, implies beneficial change. Such a definition of development tends to denote a process that is undertaken towards creating a desirable state in society. The term 'tourism development' has been subjected to much contention among most tourism academics. The term is, however, generally recognised as concerning all the stages that are involved in the planning, managing, and organising of all tourism activities that take place at a destination (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill, 2008). In the developing context, tourism development is regarded by many governments as being a key driver of both economic expansion and employment creation, with it continuing to form an integral part of local economic development (LED) strategies (Viljoen & Tlabelela, 2007).

Swarbrooke (2005) sheds light on the direction that tourism development has taken, especially in recent years. Of note is the fact that most destinations, in response to the expressed needs of the market and environmental activists, have tended to emphasise the promotion of a type of development that is sustainable for both the environment and local communities. Due to the above-mentioned dynamics in tourism development, such new forms of tourism as pro-poor tourism and responsible tourism have been born, which aim to harness the benefits of tourism, while simultaneously causing less harm to the environment than other types of tourism have done in the past. Unlike any other form of development, Cooper et al. (2008) caution that tourism development tends to be relatively fragile, as it cuts across multiple sectors of the economy, bringing with it environmental, social, and economic impacts. In this regard, the subject of tourism development is sensitive, especially in the context of mega-sporting events that are known to attract attendees, and which, therefore, require careful consideration by tourism stakeholders (Keyser, 2009).

### **1.2.6 Economic impact**

Economic impact is defined by the Cambridge dictionary (2021) as a financial effect that something, especially something new, has on a situation or person. An example would be that increased tourism has had a significant economic impact on the resort community. Tourism is often regarded (and used by regional developers and funding institutions) as an economic development path for structurally weak, peripheral areas, as a cure-all providing jobs and income, capital inflow and finally stopping outmigration by creating a positive socio-economic perspective for the future (Mayer & Vogt, 2016:170). Larry, Jago and Forsyth (2016) state that sports events have the ability to create regional economic benefits by stimulating business activity and creating jobs in the region and induces upfront operational expenditure through, for example, investments, staff salaries, marketing, facilities, and equipment.

### **1.2.7 Economic growth**

Economic growth is a macro-economic concept which refers to a rise in real national income (Economics Online, 2021). Developing countries use the tourism and travel sector to boost the country's economic development and growth (Wei, Asif, Haq and Rehman, 2019:2). In the context of this study, sport tourism is viewed as a mechanism through which economic growth can be promoted and sustained in the long term.

### **1.3 Statement of the research problem**

Baade and Matheson (2016) indicate that hosting major sport events (and mega events in particular) could become an even worse investment for developing countries than it has been for developed countries. Extant research indicates that there is currently a dearth of information and understanding regarding how major sporting events could act as catalysts and turbocharge the tourism and hospitality industry in Gabon. As such the current research endeavour is intended, to explore this gap and, to contribute to the body of knowledge on major sporting events and how they could catalyse tourism and hospitality in Gabon, specifically in Libreville.

### **1.4 Specific aims and objectives**

The specific research aim and objectives of this study were:

- to establish the motivating factors encouraging the city of Libreville to organise sporting events;
- to analyse the challenges and opportunities related to organising sport events in Libreville;
- to explore the lessons learnt from hosting sport events for the tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville; and
- to consider aspects that can support tourism and hospitality development in Libreville in line with the hosting of sport events.

### **1.5 Research question and sub questions**

The main research question that the present study sought to answer pertains to how the major sporting events hosted in Libreville act as catalysts for the development of the Gabonese tourism and hospitality sector.

The following research sub questions guided the current research:

- What motivating factors encouraged the city of Libreville to organise sport events?
- What are the challenges and opportunities relating to organising sport events in Libreville?
- What were the lessons learnt from some of the sport events hosted in Libreville for the tourism and hospitality industry?
- How can the sport event industry be strengthened to support tourism and hospitality development in Libreville?

## **1.6 Overview of methodology**

The current study adopted the use of qualitative methods of data collection. Struwig and Stead (2001:12-13) refer to qualitative research as being an inquiry process of coming to an understanding, in terms of which a researcher develops a complex holistic picture, by means of analysing words, reporting the detailed views of informants, and conducting the study involved in a natural setting. Moreover, Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:44) outline qualitative research as consisting of some kinds of information that can be effectively recorded, in many cases through language, with the procedure concerned providing a deeply sensitive and meaningful way of recording human experience.

### **1.6.1 Survey population**

The research population in this study targeted representatives of the sport and tourism departments of the local, regional and national government, sport organisations, and sponsors (in the form of rights-holders of the major events hosted in the capital). Also, the study targeted the relevant stakeholders in the private sector, such as hotels, car rental companies, tour operators, and restaurants.

### **1.6.2 Methods and tools for collecting data**

The data collected was of both a primary and a secondary nature. Primary data was collected by employing an interview schedule for face-to-face interviews with participants.

#### **1.6.2.1 Primary data sources**

In the current study, the primary data sources included key informant interviews and semi-structured questionnaires that were personally administered to the interviewees. The researcher had one-on-one interaction with the respondents, who were the representatives of the sport, tourism and hospitality sectors in Libreville.

### **1.6.2.2 Secondary data sources**

Secondary data regarding sport events tourism and hospitality were sourced from books, academic journal articles, the internet, magazines, government publications, brochures, and unpublished reports.

### **1.6.2.3 Interviews**

An interview involves having direct personal contact with the participant, who is asked to answer questions relating to the research problem concerned (Bless et al., 2006:116). In the current study, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the participants at the strategic level of operations within the sport, tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville. According to Creswell (2009:181), interviews comprise unstructured, and mostly open-ended, questions that, despite being relatively few in number, are intended to elicit the views and opinions of the participants involved.

## **1.7 Method of analysing data**

Braun and Clarke (2006:79) indicate that thematic analysis is an independent qualitative descriptive approach that is described as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes within data”. The present researcher used thematic analysis to analyse the data derived from interviews with sport, tourism and hospitality representatives. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) note that thematic analysis recognises patterns within data, with emerging themes becoming the set categories for analysis. As a flexible and useful research tool, thematic analysis involves the search for, and the identification of, common threads that extend across an entire interview (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013). Thematic analysis is considered a purely qualitative method (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008) that is often applied in the process of data analysis. The process consists of reading through textual data, identifying themes in the data, coding the themes, and interpreting their structure and content (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012).

## **1.8 Identification of the study area**

The current research was conducted in Libreville, the capital of Gabon. Set in the province of Estuaire, Libreville is a cosmopolitan city whose people are of a range of ethnicities, including immigrants from Central and West Africa, Europeans, Lebanese, Moroccans, and a growing Asian population. The city and its surrounding area are known for their fine sand beaches, which attract tourists, and for other events, like business conferences and economic forums on oil and gas, sport and cultural events (Aupoix, 2013).

### **1.9 Ethical considerations**

Due to the nature of the study, the confidentiality of all participants was considered. The researcher, consequently, obtained the permission of each participant to conduct the study with them. Their further input to the research was voluntary, with all the participants being informed about the nature of the study. Ethical clearance was also sought and received from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences, Cape peninsula University of Technology

### **1.10 Delineation of the study**

The present study focused on major sport tourism events held in Gabon. The data that were collected represent the views of the stakeholders who are involved in the sport, tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville only. The study was limited to determining, in terms of the respondents' perceptions, to which extent sport events serve to catalyse the boosting of the tourism and hospitality sector in Libreville.

### **1.11 Significance and contribution of the study**

The current study should serve to provide useful information regarding sport events that are used as a catalyst for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon. Moreover, the study should assist the relevant stakeholders in sport event organisations to improve their understanding of the impact of sport events on tourism and hospitality development.

Gabon is blessed with a vast array of sporting, natural, and cultural attractions that tend to remain hidden from the average tourist. As a means of improving the image of the area, the development of sport tourism events has been targeted as a key means of achieving the set objective (Oxford Business Group, 2014:113). The findings of the study could, therefore, trigger the development of sport tourism events in Libreville, Gabon that have the potential to attract both domestic and foreign visitors. The findings could also specifically be used by the relevant tourism and hospitality stakeholders and event organisers in the planning, organising, and management of both current and future events to be hosted in the area.

According to Nyikana (2016:3), the goal of research is to gain an enhanced understanding of how to use, or leverage, sport tourism events as a tool in terms of the place marketing strategy, so as to develop the local tourism economy. The current research could, therefore, provide new insights into the ways in which the region can develop strategies and tactics to leverage future sport activities, so as to maximise the impact of sport on the region. From the perspective of policy analysts, the study could also be regarded as showing how sport tourism events can influence policy processes undertaken in a destination.

As postulated by Getz (2013), the hosting of sport tourism events brings with it both positive and negative impacts for a destination. In any instance, a favourable situation is when the positive impacts outweigh the negative impacts involved. Therefore, the pursuit of the current study has major significance in relation to contributing to the understanding of sport events impacts among local tourism destinations. Apart from understanding the event impacts involved, the research is intended to assist destination planners, event organisers, and marketers in identifying ways of mitigating the negative impacts concerned, as well as to be a means of maximising the positive impacts that accrue from event hosting.

Gibson (2013) advocates that local community involvement, when hosting an event, is a critical tool for helping secure the success of an event. However, consideration of the stakeholders' perceptions of how they accept the view of using sporting events as a tool for developing tourism has been neglected by most researchers, despite the fact that such stakeholders tend to be significantly affected by the impacts of such events (Bull & Lovell, 2007). Building on the above statement, the outcome of the present study could help sport event organisers in Gabon devise effective ways of involving the local stakeholders in sport tourism events. It could also help ensure that the benefits from such events are filtered through to all the individuals within the community, rather than being restricted to only a few elites. In addition, the results of the current study could facilitate the local government devising additional sustainable measures with regards to the sport event offerings made in Libreville, Gabon.

With the sudden growth in sport tourism events, as was previously mentioned, interest has been triggered among researchers with regards to trying to gain an understanding of the actual contributions that they make to host destinations. Therefore, the current study could serve to enhance the existing body of knowledge about sport tourism events, as well as lead to researchers becoming better informed than in the past regarding the significance of sport tourism events in developing tourism in peripheral areas.

#### **1.12 Format and style of the thesis**

The document contains six chapters, which are outlined below.

##### **Chapter One: Introduction and background to the study**

The current chapter, in addition to presenting an introduction and background to the study, has provided a statement of the research problem, the research question, and the research objectives. Furthermore, the chapter has also detailed the significance and contribution of the study, with it having also clearly clarified the key terms and concepts used in the research. Ethical considerations were presented, and the research study's structure was delineated.

## **Chapter Two: Theoretical and conceptual framework**

In the chapter, the researcher relates the development of the ideal conceptual framework, upon which the study was constructed. Such a multidimensional framework focuses on the stakeholder theory, the political economy of sport events, and the interrelationship between sport and events.

## **Chapter Three: Literature review**

The third chapter focuses on the literature review concerning sport events that are used as catalysts for tourism and hospitality development. Beginning with an introduction, which sketches the global context of sport events, it proceeds with identifying the reasons and factors contributing to the problem, as well as analysing the challenges and opportunities that are faced by cities and countries that host sport events.

## **Chapter Four: Research design and methodology**

The chapter details the processes and procedure adopted by the researcher in collecting the required data. The topic is discussed, as well as are the research design, the sample size and techniques and the methods of data analysis.

## **Chapter Five: Results and discussion**

The chapter presents the results of the current study. The analysis specifically focuses on the study's intentions and objectives.

## **Chapter Six: Conclusions and recommendations**

After presenting the research conclusions and recommendations, including a summary of the findings, in the chapter, the researcher considers the future action research that should be conducted.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

According to Altinay and Paraskevas (2008), a conceptual framework usually covers the main features (aspects, dimensions, factors, and variables) of a research study, and their presumed relationships. As De Vos (2006:34) states:

A research process starts with a conceptual model, or an organising image, of the phenomena to be investigated. That is, it starts with a set of ideas – whether vague hunches or clearly formulated propositions – about the nature of these phenomena.

The chapter focuses on the emerging principles in developing the conceptual framework for examining sport events as catalysts for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon. The research is conceptualised within the context of a multi-conceptual structure, with the concepts including the political economy, stakeholder theory, and sustainable development.

The present chapter starts with a discussion of the political economy theory, with the main focus being on the political economy of major sport events, starting with a description of globalisation. The study later highlights sport events in developed and developing countries. Following on the above, the stakeholder theory is emphasised with the aim of identifying the key stakeholders involved in the sport, tourism and hospitality subsectors in Gabon. The focus of the discussion is then turned to sustainable tourism and events planning and management.

#### **2.2 Political economy theory**

The phenomenon of the political economy that was introduced during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, came to frame the current concept of economics, which emphasises the interplay of powers, the goals of the different power players, and the basic precepts of the reproductive economic exchange system. According to Arndt (1983:47), the “systematic sources of power which serve to reproduce and foster different aspects of development as asserted by Bianchi (2002:265), is the basis from which the theory forms the foundation for structure and dynamics of the political economy”.

Political economy theory is a broad theory that can be widely applied in terms of the social sciences, including within the broad context of different social systems (Bramwell, 2011). The theory consists of “the materialist basis to emphasis of the economic relations within which humans find themselves. Moreover, it considers workers as capitalists within society and contributing as active economic agents that transform nature through the labour process as a

means to achieving development by building productive forces”, as asserted by Bramwell (2011:464). In the context of the regulatory policy approach to the political economy, Cornelissen, Bob and Swart (2011) depicts the theory as showing the way in which society attempts to regulate instabilities derived from unstable market forces, which are also responsible for creating political relations perceived to be unstable (Cornelissen, 2007:242). An interesting view of the theory depicts it as a key driving force for change in terms of the social system as a whole, with it being considered as an opposing force to the different elements within the context of the entire system as a whole (Bramwell, 2011:464).

Given that it reflects authoritative force, the paradigm is focused on the control patterns that are counter-conflictual to the management processes seeking to determine the external and internal determinants of institutional change (Arndt, 1983). According to Bianchi (2002:266),

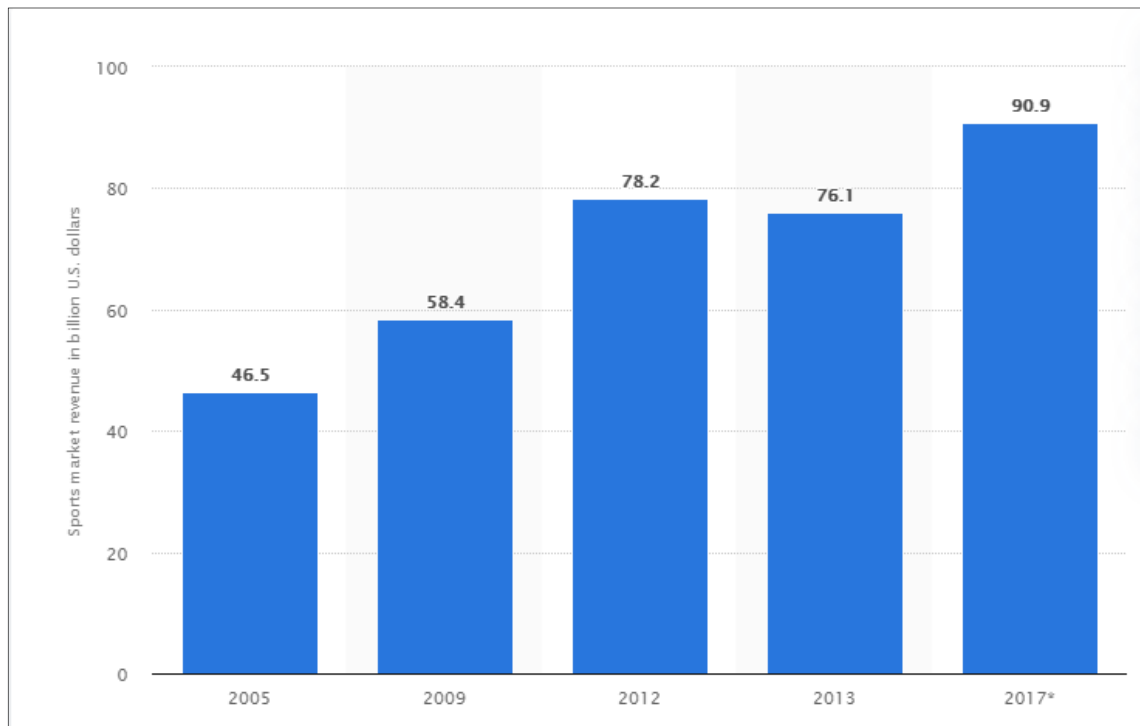
...the central normative preoccupation of such an approach consists of the analysis of social relations related to forces which drive the unequal and uneven processes of development. The author also views the political economy theory as configuration of ideologies and institutions.

### **2.2.1 The political economy of major sport events**

Generally, sport is viewed as being a physical activity that can be practised at both amateur and professional levels. Accordingly, Waitt (2003) defines sport as any physical activity that is structured by rules (Pink, 2008:8). In contrast, Ross (2006) prefers to highlight the fact that sport can be practised at various levels, in line with various motivations, including fun, education, and health (Pink, 2008:12).

Modern sport in its inception stages opted for an organisational model that completely excluded the state sector, and which limited the influences of the commercial sector in sport (Szymanski, 2008). Thus, according to Allison (2006:3), amateurism was the norm in sport for a long time. For example, Soviet amateurisation was implemented in the 1940s in order for USSR candidates to be accepted in Olympic competitions. Allison (2006:3) refers to this era of sport as consisting of an “amateur hegemony”, which lasted until recently. Nowadays, sport is generally assumed to represent big business, although there are obvious disparities among sports and among different parts of the world (Allison, 2006:4). The author notes that the mutation of sport has resulted from a protracted process entailing many important moments, such as the decision that was made by the International Rugby Board in 1995 to professionalise rugby, which, until then, had been a purely amateur activity.

The professionalisation of sport during the last few decades have led to the building of a growing sport industry (Bob & Swart, 2010:74), with substantial economic resources, as can be seen in Figure 2.1 below.



**Figure 2.1: Global sports market - total revenue from 2005 to 2017 (in billion U.S. dollars)**

Source: Yüksekbilgili (2018:41).

Figure 2.1 above highlights the fact that the sport market has been in constant growth over the last decade, increasing in revenue from US\$46.5bn in 2005 to US\$90.9bn in 2017. Sport has, according to Allison (2006), consistently been ranked one of the 10 biggest industries in the European Union, as the 11<sup>th</sup> in the United States, and as the 22<sup>nd</sup> in the world. Furthermore, according to the Business Research Company (2019), the global sports market reached a value of nearly \$489 billion in 2018, having grown at an annual growth rate of more than 4% since 2014, and is expected to grow at an annual growth rate of about 6% to almost \$614 billion by 2022. Even though various research theses, statistics, and forecasts pertaining to the sport market exist, Allison (2006:4), highlighted that seeing sport as a business is still a contentious issue in some quarters. Hence, the need to define the nature of the sport market or industry exists. According to the consulting firm, Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PWC), the sport market has the following four main components:

- The sports market includes sponsorships that can be defined as payments for having a product associated with a specific team, league or event, together with the associated naming rights.
- Large sporting events generate gate revenue.
- Media rights fees are paid to enable the showing of sports via a range of media, including cable television networks, television stations, terrestrial/satellite radio, the internet, and various mobile devices.
- Merchandising includes the selling of licensed products bearing team or league logos, player likenesses, or other intellectual property (PWC, 2011:2).

By means of hosting the FIFA World Cup™ in 2010, South Africa, according to PWC (2011), contributed greatly to achieving the global sport revenue of US\$121.4bn for the year 2010. However, the consistent growth of the global sport market underlies a few disparities. The individual analysis of each component of the sport market may portray different realities in terms of growth (PWC, 2011:13). For instance, while the revenue for the global sport market is still growing, there has been a decline in sport gate revenues. The decline rests upon the fact that this particular component has reached maturity, especially in the developed countries. The fact that such major sport events as the Super Bowl in the USA and the Olympics are generally sold out underlines the fact that gate revenues remain constrained in terms of capacity (PWC, 2011:15). Thus, the gate revenues for major sport events only accounted for 32.6% of the total sport market in 2010, with 82% of the revenue having been generated in North America and Europe.

According to Nauright (2004:1326), countries globally are shifting towards event-driven economies, as events have become an important part of regenerating and shaping the tourism product, as asserted by Bob and Swart (2010:74). According to De Knop (2004:304), new and exciting opportunities to fulfil the tourist through enabling them to enjoy an enhanced sport experience are offered due to globalisation continuously reaching new heights (Roche, Spake & Joseph, 2013). The premise of such a notion is presented by Glyptis (1991) as being that of a system intent on integrating sport and tourism to guide government policy for the development of facilities and services through strategic planning (Swart & Bob, 2007:381). Countries globally are moving towards event-driven economies (Nauright, 2004:1325), with the hosting of events having become an important part of regenerating and shaping the tourism product (Swart & Bob, 2007:374). Researchers acknowledge that sport events, as a niche tourism market, tend to play a significant role in the economy of developed and developing nations; they are valued for their regenerating capabilities, social cohesion, and developmental aspects within the global village (Higham, 2005:9; Swart & Bob, 2007:378). In the context of targeted legacies, Gursoy, Chi, Ai and Chen (2011:302) assert that mega-events are part of global sport tourism; and they tend to create long-term and lasting benefits for the host communities through the development of infrastructure and facilities that are necessary to host these events. Furthermore, major sporting events are understood to possess the potential to create substantial legacies (both positive and negative) for the host destination (OECD, 2017:7).

A re-articulation of the term 'legacy' by Bob and Swart (2010:78) has advanced the academic debate concerning the making of massive financial investments in developing nations hosting mega events. According to Mann (2008:2), legacies, as part of the sought-after impacts of mega events, involve "ensuring that ... many long-term benefits are generated for the host city,

region and nation – well before, during and long after the event”. Moreover, the notion is supported by numerous scholars’ views that positive legacies can be created when the host destination focuses on post-event impacts, instead of on the event itself (Preuss, 2007:209; Pellegrino & Hancock, 2010; Agha, Fairley & Gibson, 2012; Bama & Tichaawa, 2020; Hemmonsby & Tichaawa, 2020). As such, sporting or major event hosts ought to consider the multiple implications of such events, ranging from the economic choices granted to the marketing segment involved, as well as individuality and community behaviour (Weed, 2006:195). To achieve synergies within tourism and within the arena of the hosting of major sport events, it is imperative to maintain a holistic approach (Swart & Bob, 2007:374).

As a system, the integration of sport and tourism serves as a foundation for the strategic planning and policy development of governments (Jonker, 2003:61; Getz, 2008:410), as they pursue economic activities bent on generating infrastructure facilities and services (Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2005; Cornelissen, 2007:248; Preuss, 2007:208).

As reported by the African Economic Outlook (AEC), the infrastructure and services came, as part of the diversification of economic and institutional activities, to regenerate new sources of income in Gabon post the oil-dependent era (OECD, 2007a:271). The Gabonese government Strategic Plan for an Emerging Gabon (PSGE) is the country’s strategy governing critical infrastructure development, whose aim it is to redirect budgetary policy towards such non-oil sectors as tourism. However, the government has been cautioned to keep a sharp eye on public spending, and to monitor the economy’s absorption capacity during the process (OECD, 2007a:275). The PSGE diversification strategy is being advocated by the Gabonese government as the most important factor to offset the economic downturn, though the plan has to be implemented effectively to create processes that are globally competitive (IMF, 2016:7). Therefore, Gabon’s Strategic Investment Funds (FGIS) have been activated as part of the process to redistribute the revenue obtained from the exploitation of natural resources to the diversifying of risk by means of investing surplus revenue for further economic development (US Department of State, 2015:12). Tourism and other strategic sectors benefited from investments aimed at ensuring that future generations can have a share of the revenue derived from its rich natural resources. By September 2013, the fund reported US\$2.4 billion in assets, with it being busy at the time pursuing further investment opportunities (US Department of State, 2015:12).

The aim of the above was to attain enhanced cooperation between the public and private sectors, with the intention of reducing, rationalising, and improving the efficiency of the private sector, while promoting privatisation and increasing competitiveness in the economy (UNDAF, 2011:9). As part of the Gabonese government restructuring policies, Gabon Tour, the agency that was formerly responsible for promoting tourism, was replaced by the Gabonese Agency

for the Development and Promotion of Tourism and Hospitality (AGATOUR) (Oxford Business Group, 2015:2). The Agency's responsibility is to promote tourism, and to coordinate development initiatives for tourism across the country (Cocan Gabon, 2017:44).

### **2.2.2 Globalisation of major sport events**

Sport events and their impacts have been widely researched, with the amount of literature involved being significantly abundant, mainly due to the many debates that have raised about them over the past few decades. Within the tourism context and its related market, Brown et al. (2010:297) consider globalisation as an agent of development and change, which is often responsible for achieving reported economic benefits (Minnaert, 2012:13). Tourism is a global force that is capable of putting people, commodities and capital into global circulation. Such firms as airlines, tour operators and hotel management companies coordinate the production of networks governed by the multinationals. Within the context of globalisation, Hazbun (2004:313) considers tourism as operating on the front line, with it "continually transferring consumer tastes, cultural practices, business people and capital across the globe". As a current driver of global flows, tourism and the consumption of tourism products have come to be of increasing importance in terms of the global economy (Getz, 2008:408), driving many countries to pursue tourism by positioning themselves on the circuits of international tourism (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:27; Giampiccoli & Nauright, 2010; Minnaert, Maitland & Miller, 2011).

The end of the Cold War era, which was characterised by conflicting socio-economic and political policies between the United States and its allies on the one hand and the Soviet Union and its allies on the other, has been credited by Manzenreiter (2004:289) as being the trigger to the emergence of the concept of globalisation as it is known today (Roche, 2006:27). In recent times, the new world economy has been characterised by the influence of global capital and by the appearing of emerging markets seeking financial services (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:126; Manzenreiter, 2004:289; Nauright, 2010). According to Cornelissen (2010:132), globalisation has paved the way for certain structural economic shifts involving financial and technological integration. A more critical view of the concept has been expressed by Cornelissen (2004b:41), as driven by the irregular, interrelated techno-economic crescendos of capitalist market building and technological change based on scientific development (Roche, 2000:7). Cornelissen (2010:131) also considers globalisation in terms of factors of commercialisation and mediatisation, as well as in terms of the incessant development and application of performance-enhancing technologies in the medical and material fields, among others.

Globalisation has been typified as a process involving the close integration, and enhanced interaction, of economies and polities throughout the world. The force has significantly propelled the degree of affiliation exhibited towards the sport arena (Cornelissen, 2008:119).

Guilianotti and Robertson (2004:547) characterise globalisation as consisting of a relatively high degree of interconnectivity within the subjective consciousness of the world as a whole, including several developing nations that have hosted hallmark sport events (Cornelissen, 2004b:42).

According to Hiller (2000:439), “the most prominent example of the relationship between globalisation and sport is that mega-events provide economic restructuring of cities by powerful factors in the attractiveness as stimulants to urban economic development”. Meanwhile, sport is an outstanding tool that can demonstrate the sheer economic power of the global media. Sport has also proved its far-reaching benefits across the cultural limits within which it tends to operate (Cronin & Holt, 2003:33). Sport, which has become a multi-billion-dollar industry (Black & Van der Westhuizen, 2004), enjoys a unique position in terms of the international complexes between the media and tourism sectors (Getz, 2008:412). The factors that play a key role within the globalisation of sport events include the influence of multinational corporations, the lure of international capital and neo-liberal economics, and increased trade (Thibault, 2009:2). Furthermore, the author explains that the mixing of global markets has become a reality, due to deregulation and the progressing communication channels linked to information technology, as well as to the competition to secure the rights to host major sports events for their global prestige and symbolic power, for purposes of potential economic benefit. An intriguing aspect of the globalisation of sport concerns the relationships between developing and developed nations, as “the imbalance of national income is the driving force behind the new global division of labour that also extends to sports and events in general” (Manzenreiter, 2004:292).

In the event context, the harmonising of globalisation and sport tourism includes the accessing of the rewards granted by international capital flows. Moreover, Swart and Bob (2007:374) assert that they create significant economic activities for destinations globally. According to Roche et al. (2013), the enhanced sport experience has reached new heights due to the new and exciting opportunities that have become available with the intention of satisfying the tourist.

Sport and tourism are, quintessentially, a global industry (Hinch & Higham, 2001:1; Admed, Moodley & Sookrajh, 2008:75; Hudson, 2012). The two activities have figured prominently in the development of new relationships between cities, regions, and states in terms of international trade, business development, capital investment, and job growth (UNWTO, 2009:xi). The existence of such a phenomenon aligns with the theory of capitalism, in terms of which economies have been restructured since the late 1960s to the point where, currently, they have become more globalised than ever before (Wright, 2002:17). Indeed, national economies are becoming steadily more integrated, as cross-border flows of trade, investment and financial capital increase. As argued by Pardini (2008), throughout the 21st century,

globalisation has spread across economies, political relations, people, and popular culture worldwide. Sport events provide an instance for analysing the relationship between globalisation and sport (Hiller, 2000:439). In fact, as stated by Tomlinson and Young (2006:1), sport events have long been driven by political and ideological motives, from the ancient civilisations of Greece and Rome to the societies of early modern Europe, as well as throughout many modern Western societies, as well as in less developed and non-Western ones. In the early 20th century, sport events emerged as a source of material for radio broadcasts (Andreff, 2008:14). Consequently, the world of sports has also been radically globalised during the same period. Close synergies between sport and tourism have accelerated the rise of the global tourism economy, with their heightened publicity having bolstered global sport (Cornelissen, 2007:245).

As tourism is linked to aspects of globalisation, due to its socio-economic and cultural implications, with political consequences (Cornelissen, 2006), so have mega sporting events come to be similarly considered. Local economies have adapted to the changing global forces, and the hosting of international events has become part of most destinations' development strategies (OECD, 2010:12). Moreover, they are attributed for their significant role in local development, as catalysts for job creation, exceptional business growth, infrastructural improvements and community development.

Haque (2002:105) explains the concept of globalisation as consisting of a process of integrating nations, societies, peoples, and institutions in the economic, political, cultural, and intellectual domains through such means as the capital, production, exchange, and information owned and controlled unequally by various states, classes, groups, and individuals. Furthermore, Cornelissen (2010) suggests that globalisation refers to the growing network of political, economic, and sociocultural interdependencies that binds human beings together in either a positive or a negative way (Maguire, 2008:4). Towards the end of the previous century, Robertson (1992:8-9) explained globalisation as consisting of the consolidation of the world into a single integral space, consisting of a "global community". The author further explains that globalisation is "the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole".

### **2.2.3 The context of developed and developing countries**

Sporting events have recently been pursued by both the developed and the developing world as a strategy for promoting development, especially in terms of economic growth, the enhancing of social cohesion and healthy lifestyles, and destination positioning (Baade & Matheson, 2004:351; Bob & Swart, 2010:72). Swart (2001:68) posits that a variety of benefits can accrue to the host countries in relation to sport tourism events. Such benefits include the creation of local employment, the turbocharging of the host nation's socio-economic and



political development before, during and after an event, and the creating of a sense of community pride (Swart, 2001:68; Pellegrino & Hancock, 2010).

The above-mentioned strategy was first implemented by Britain's most industrial cities, which sought new ways to attract additional visitors to the cities through the organisation of sport events (Cochrane, Peck & Tickell, 1996:1320). The authors assert that the decline of early industrialised cities made way for sport events to become the centre of economic recovery in both the British cities of Glasgow and Manchester (Cochrane et al., 1996:1321). For some cities, the hosting of major sport events falls within its tourism strategy (Weinberger, 2006:53; O'Toole, 2010:39), which rests upon the assumption that such events generate economic benefits that tend to outweigh the costs involved (Hassan, 2000:242; Getz, 2008:403).

The evidence shows that the bidding process for the hosting of major sport events has largely attracted different European countries (Bennett, 2008; O'Toole, 2010:39). However, in the last decade, developing countries, including those countries that do not form part of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), have witnessed increasing interest in the hosting of major sport events. As an illustration of the above, since 2000, over half of the bids submitted for the Summer Olympic Games have come from countries outside Western Europe, Japan, Australia, Canada, and the US, whereas they only amounted to 20% of the bids submitted before 2000 (Baumann & Matheson, 2013:3). For example, China hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics, India the 2010 Commonwealth Games, South Africa the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, Russia the 2014 Winter Olympics, and Brazil the 2014 FIFA World Cup™. Russia has also since hosted the 2018 World Cup and Brazil the 2016 Summer Olympics (Peeters, Matheson & Szymanski, 2014; Bama & Tichaawa, 2020). Interestingly, the first time that the Olympic Games were hosted outside rich industrialised countries was in 1968, in Mexico (Baumann & Matheson, 2013:4).

Some researchers have suggested that sport events are slowly moving to the emerging countries, as global economic interests shift from the developed to the developing countries (Matheson & Baade, 2004:1085; Swart & Bob, 2004; Bob, Swart & Cornelissen, 2008:52; Cornelissen, 2010). For instance, Baumann and Matheson (2013:5) highlight the fact that, in the economic realm, as the interest has shifted from the so-called G7 countries towards the so-called BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), so, too, has attention shifted in the sport world. The experience of North American countries might provide the best case for the role of public investment in the development of professional sport. According to Gratton et al., (2006:41) the sports strategies of American cities have been based on the infrastructure investments made in the light of the hosting of professional team sports. Sport teams have, indeed, moved to the cities responding to offers for new stadiums and other sport infrastructure. Baade (2003, as cited in Gratton et al., 2006:41) argues that 71% of the costs

of renovating and replacing sport facilities in the United States since 1980 have been funded by taxpayers' money. Although the use of public resources in the funding of professional sport has raised some controversy about the opportunity of channelling public funds towards the development of a profit-making industry, a study by Mules and Faulkner (1996), as cited in Gratton et al., (2006:44) posits the fact that the benefits derived by society from such sport have been higher than the costs, in general. The aforementioned study points to a stream of economic activities derived from hosting a professional team resident in a city as outweighing the associated contribution of the taxpayers concerned (Gratton et al., 2006:57). In the African context, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) recognises tourism as being the sector with some of the greatest potential to contribute to the economic regeneration of the continent. In short, the sector can generate foreign exchange earnings and diversify the African economies (NEPAD, 2004:3).

Developing countries have become increasingly involved in the bidding and hosting for mega events, in a move demanding a share of the economic benefits to be gained therefrom even though the specialised infrastructure and operating expenses that are required to host the events are considered to be substantial (Matheson & Baade, 2004:2). Such expenses are especially high on the African continent, where numerous countries (e.g. Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, and South Africa) have recently sought to host such mega events as the FIFA World Cup™ and the Olympic Games (Cornelissen, 2004b:40). Nevertheless, in the developing countries, and particularly in the case of Africa, the lack of infrastructure is a major challenge in terms of them increasing their share of the economic benefits generated by such sport events (Cornelissen, 2004b:40). Hence, the experience of emerging nations with regards to the hosting of a mega event differs widely from that of the developed nations (Matheson & Baade, 2004:16). For instance, the expenditure that is required for infrastructure, like stadiums, new roads and sport complexes, is likely to be relatively high for the emerging nations. Matheson and Baade (2004:1091) concur that sport facilities and infrastructures are an important requirement for the hosting of major sport events. However, their provision is a daunting task for most developing countries, which tend to lack the required infrastructure that is necessary for the hosting of the games and for catering for the inflow of visitors, as the attendant outlay tends to be much higher in developing nations and can lead to enormous financial loss (Van der Merwe, 2007:68; Baumann & Matheson, 2013:3). For instance, South Africa had to build entirely new facilities to meet FIFA's strict demands so as to be able to host the 2010 World Cup, while, in 1998, the host country, France, merely refurbished its existing stadiums and built the Stade de France to host the opening ceremonies and the final championship. By retaining its existing infrastructure, the latter country was able to spend less than US\$500 million to satisfy the above-mentioned demands (Matheson & Baade, 2004:14).

Furthermore, so as to be able to host the 28th tournament of the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), as a third-order mega event, due to its continental nature (Cornelissen & Swart, 2006), the Confederation Africaine de Football CAF required Gabon to provide four stadiums, when the event was co-hosted with Equatorial Guinea in 2012. Consequently, as was mentioned earlier in the current study, one stadium was newly built in Libreville, and three other stadiums were renovated. In addition, in anticipation for the organisation of the AFCON, the Gabonese government built three hotels in Libreville, namely the Onomo, the Héliconia d'Agondjé (Héliconia of Angondjé), and the Héliconia de Nzeng-Ayong (Héliconia of Nzeng-Ayong), to meet the accommodation requirements of the event. The Cocan further relied on the existing hotel facilities, like the Méridien Ré-Ndama, the Okoumé Palace, and The Nomad (Cocan Gabon, 2012).

In addition to the above, mega events can place tight deadlines on major public works projects (Baumann & Matheson, 2013:13). The deadlines can drive up the related costs, due to the rushed schedules, the relaxed bidding rules, and the potential corruption that can prevail. Indeed, host nations trying to stay within a fixed budget might find themselves needing to reallocate resources towards the building of the sports infrastructure, which must be completed ahead of the event, with the resources being displaced from the general infrastructure development as the set deadlines approach. As such, change may occur to both promised, and planned-for, long-term economic growth. Unfortunately, in March 2017, Durban lost the right to host the 2022 Commonwealth Games. According to Muller (2017), South Africa missed several deadlines to name a local organising committee (LOC), and lacked sufficient operational funds, due to budgetary constraints.

### **2.3 Stakeholder theory**

The diverse set of stakeholders that is directly and indirectly involved in events (including sport events) requires gaining an overview of, and an insider's perspective on, the role and influence that they each command, forming a network, in terms of which all the relevant stakeholders' efforts can be identified and coordinated (Freeman, Wicks & Parmar, 2004:365; Getz, Andersson & Larson, 2007:103). The aforementioned authors underline the crucial role played out within the ambit of such stakeholders, and the networking undertaken especially by the event managers concerned to secure community support and acquire resources. Also referred to as the stakeholder theory, the theory involved pertains to the management of organisational ethics, with it having relevance to corporate governance and social performance (Freeman & Miles, 2002; Phillips, Freeman & Wicks, 2003:472; Freeman, 2011; Phillips, Berman, Elms & Johnson-Cramer, 2011). The core theory serves to substantiate the related interpretation of the functioning of the corporation, including the identifying moral or philosophical guidelines by which the organisations concerned operate (Donaldson & Preston, 1995:66; Freeman &

Phillips, 2002:332). The stakeholders theory has been developed in terms of three distinct aspects: the 'descriptive' aspect describes an organisation's behaviour, and determines its characteristics; the 'instrumental' aspect serves to identify the relationship between the managing stakeholders' interests and areas in synchronisation with the organisation's own developmental objectives and goals; and the 'normative' aspect is used to interpret the corporation guidelines, operation and management philosophy (Donaldson & Preston, 1995:46-74). In the corporate context, employees constitute the firm, with their fundamental contribution to it making them the most important resource of the corporation to which they belong, in terms of representing it to the other stakeholders (Crane & Matten, 2004:224).

According to Harrison, Freeman and Abreu (2015:862), theory is the core idea by means of which any enterprise can develop itself, by way of the input provided by the "various stakeholders", and in terms of the extent of collaboration that is required to achieve its "ultimate goal", in line with the pursuit of the organisation's overall interests (Byrd, 2007:7). Reinagel. (2013:25) explain that the stakeholders' interests may result from the issues affecting any person, group or organisation (Byrd, 2007:6; Harrison & Wicks, 2013; Jones, 2011). Within the concept of the theory, a broad definition of stakeholders is given by Freeman et al. (2004:364) as any persons or groups that have, or that can claim, ownership, rights or interests in terms of a corporation and its activities, past, present or future (Freeman, 2011; Phillips et al., 2011). Consensus in the literature on the stakeholder theory considers customers, employees, persons, groups, neighbourhoods, institutions, organisations, societies, and even the natural environment as actual or potential stakeholders (Lewis, 2006:15; Cassidy & Guilding, 2010; Franch, Martini & Federica, 2010; Elms, Johnson-Cramer & Berman, 2011). Stakeholders are also credited with possessing economic, voting, political and positional power (Bertelli & Laesser, 2011; Freeman, 2011). Parent and Deephouse (2007) view the above-mentioned power as including the legitimacy and urgency that they enjoy as a given, while describing the attributes of stakeholders as being those of the people in power, which, therefore, should be taken into consideration (Marzano, 2007:6). Similarly, Shahzad (2015:155) distinguish three distinct attributes as comprising the dynamics of the interaction between the stakeholders, noting that stakeholders can be identified and prioritised on the basis of their possession of three traits or attributes namely power, legitimacy and urgency.

According to Lewis (2006:15), the stakeholder theory consists of understanding and predicting the behaviour and actions of stakeholders, with the management involved requiring the undertaking of certain tasks to pursue an optimum balance between the diverse objectives, as set out by interest groups and other constituents (De Lopez, 2001:48). Moreover, for the successful implementation of an organisation's planning, it is recommended that, in terms of the process delivery and/or the outcomes of the product or service, the stakeholders must have a mutual appreciation of the interests of all the persons or groups concerned (Lewis, 2006:15;

Byrd, 2007:9-10). The above-mentioned view is echoed by Reynolds et al., (2006:286), who explain the stakeholder theory as “balancing stakeholder interests with competing claims by process of assessing, weighing and addressing interests of those who have a stake in the actions of the organisation” (Stoney & Winstanley, 2001:625).

Within the already complex environment, Jörgen (2009:233) highlights the importance of realising that each stakeholder has its own interests. He further argues that their interests will greatly influence the degree of willingness of individuals among the stakeholders to mobilise resources, and to participate in activities associated with the related event. Moreover, Jörgen (2009:228) indicates that all the stakeholders will, in turn, have their own sets of networks that allow them to perform their tasks, thus reinforcing the argument that the actual event will be influenced, either directly or indirectly, by such. The associated influences also determine the type of ‘political strategy’ that is employed to secure fulfilment of the set objectives (Larson, 2002, as cited in Getz et al., 2007:105). The identification of stakeholders has been recognised as being critical in terms of leveraging mega events and devising the destination strategy (Jörgen, 2009:229). The latter author explains that the complex structure of the network, and the functions of the relationships between the stakeholders, will affect the efficiency of the network, thus emphasising stakeholder identification as a critical success factor.

Aggarwal (2013:56) states that the 2010 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines (SRG) on the issue of sustainability, the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development must include the interests of all stakeholders. The report underlines the role that all the stakeholders concerned, including, among others, the visitors, the local communities, the indigenous people, the industry, and the government, hold the joint responsibility for practising responsible tourism through their actions (Aggarwal, 2013:57). The stakeholders are concerned with the actions of other stakeholders, with whom they seek to foster relationships, so as to generate sustainable wealth over time, resulting in long-term value (Post, Preston & Sachs, 2002:8). Their actions and interests should, therefore, be oriented towards adopting a broad sustainability approach, with particular dimensions being integrated in terms of their economic, environmental and social relevance (Schaltegger & Burritt, 2005:189). Moreover, all the actors and potential actors should share a mutual interest in the policy area (for example, health, education, leisure), which is visualised as being possible through the adoption of a cross-sector policy development model like that which is propounded by Weed and Bull (2004). The authors also define a ‘policy community’ as consisting of the common interests that are shared by actors within the policy sector. They regularly contribute to the policy processes, and interact with them, with the purpose of balancing and optimising each other’s relationships. As defined by Swart and Bob (2007:379), as part of the policy network, the process may require those concerned to operate on a sub-sectoral level. Such were the suggestions made by Walters (2005) as cited in Swart et al., (2018) in respect of a joint task team, comprising the

tourism and sports departments, as well as players from the hospitality field. Other aspects of similar engagements were identified by Swart and Bob (2007:386) in relation to South Africa's tourism strategy framework: the financial implications; the marketing; the regulatory mechanisms; the implementation imperatives; and the incorporation of a developmental agenda. Meanwhile, economic and political transformation, as the prime objective of sport tourism, still tends to dominate tourism trends in the rest of Africa (Swart & Bob, 2007:388).

With regards to tourism, the stakeholders are responsible for all decisions within a destination that will impact on the other stakeholders, with no single stakeholder singlehandedly being capable of leading a process at a destination (Marzano, 2007:30). Hence, there is a need to understand various stakeholders and the kind of power that they wield.

#### **2.4 Stakeholder analysis**

In addition to understanding stakeholders' issues, Jones (2011) argues that the stakeholder theory also determines the strategies employed when responding to their needs and actions. According to the existing literature, the identification of event stakeholders varies in terms of the techniques employed (Stokes, 2006; Getz et al., 2007:105; Parent & Deephouse, 2007:3).

The identification of event stakeholders reveals their stakeholder networks, irrespective of the technique used (Jörgen, 2009:228), proving the irrelevance of defining exactly where such networks start or end. For the purpose of the current study, the relationships that are entered into within the different networks will not be discussed in detail, apart from the one existing between the two broad sets of stakeholders within the linkage involved, namely that which pertains between the major event organiser and the tourism authority. In line with the above thinking, Stokes (2006:683) describes the main roles concerned as being "simple relationships such as that between a major event organiser and a tourism authority". Consideration of the broader stakeholder network upon which the tourism potential relies is largely omitted from the current study. Moreover, the researcher will only discuss the apparent key stakeholders in special events, and in major sporting events, in the context of the host destination concerned (Byrd, 2007:10).

In terms of the linkage of stakeholders, the organiser of any event is central to the process involved (Chalip, 2005:165; Tassiopoulos, 2010a:69). In studying the stakeholders in events, Getz et al. (2007) identified the event organisers as the key players, followed by the event's audience, the government agencies, the media, and the sponsors. Some studies divide the event-organising stakeholders into primary (consisting of the employees, the volunteers, the sponsors, the suppliers, the spectators, the attendees, and the participants) and secondary (the government, the host community, the emergency services, and general business, media and tourism organisations) stakeholders (Reid & Arcodia, 2002, as cited in Getz et al.,

2007:106). Tassiopoulos (2010a:68) identifies stakeholders according to an events triangle, with the event organisation's direct partners being indicated as the suppliers, the participants, and the other production role players. The author indicates the other two points of the triangle as consisting of the sponsors and the event audience, with each point reflecting the varying ranking among the stakeholders. Noteworthy, the position of stakeholders in sport and tourism might vary at different points in time (Weed, 2007:150). The author explains that the relationships between the different stakeholders may change as the result of changes in purpose, or in terms of their temporality. As different techniques have identified the same stakeholders within a specific context (Tassiopoulos, 2010a:68), the researcher will briefly describe the main players and their respective roles within the broader context.

#### **2.4.1 The event owner**

The owners of events comprise the organisation or entity that initiates the event to achieve set goals and outcomes. Ideally, the goals should be for the event owners to nurture an event into "institutional status" (Getz et al., 2007:105). The researchers concerned explain that an event can attain such a status when it is "permanent, legitimate, and/or a valued part of the society", making the host city or region a "highly visible, positive brand that inspires confidence". Depending on their resources, as the event owners might also organise the event, they are, therefore, accountable to various stakeholders for its success (Tassiopoulos, 2010a:69). The author concerned notes that event owners often establish the necessary divisions or organising committees to manage the event, or to outsource services on its behalf. The owners can be private, for-profit organisations, non-profit-making, or voluntary, entities, or governmental and public-private groups. According to Getz et al. (2007:105), event owners heavily rely on supportive networking to ensure an event's legitimacy.

#### **2.4.2 The event organiser**

From an event perspective, the organiser plays a key role in ensuring the successful execution of the event, based on the goals set by the owners. The event organiser, who is bound by contract to the event owners, is often in charge of the competing and bidding for its hosting (Tassiopoulos, 2010a:70). Depending on the size of the event, the author notes that the event organiser who oversees the organisation (entrepreneurial) can generate income through "admission charges, merchandising, sponsorship, media revenue and rental of service to participants". Among other aspects, the organisation's duties are to: manage the activities; organise the required funding; coordinate the staff and voluntary personnel; undertake the marketing and public relations efforts; organise the security; administer the ticketing; coordinate the venues and parking; and oversee such event enhancements as entertainment (Wanklin, 2010:126; Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell, 2011:17). Careful consideration of event stakeholders' reveal that a stand-alone organisation cannot accrue the relevant resources to make such a venture viable. Getz et al. (2007:121) explain that, in essence, large

events (like the AFCON) can be successfully executed through a network of stakeholders who are, in turn, managed by the event organiser.

### **2.4.3 Local organising committees**

The local organising committee (LOC) is an event committee that is established specifically to organise and run a mega event within the specific host destination. The committee can be regarded as a specialist event organising team for a mega event (Wanklin, 2010:110). Similarly, to the event organisation, the LOC has to ensure that the event owner's objectives and requirements are met within the host destination (Parent & Deephouse, 2007:4). The LOC should cooperate closely with the various destination stakeholders to perform the different tasks set out according to several different divisions (administration, finances, infrastructure, transportation, technology, public relations, marketing/sponsorships, international relations, volunteers, and the relevant government departments). For the purpose of enhanced oversight, the LOC team might need to establish smaller project teams in various regions/cities where the event venues are situated (Wanklin, 2010:131). Such teams could, for instance, assist the official LOC umbrella by means of consulting with the local community at the destination, as well as with other event stakeholders. The committee responsible for organising the 2012 and 2017 AFCON tournament (i.e. the Comité d'organisation de la coupe d'Afrique des Nations tournament, or Cocan) was responsible for the related planning, organising and coordinating across the various governmental departments involved (Cocan Gabon, 2017:26). In terms of the committee's task to develop a programme for organising the event and related development, Cocan fostered collaboration with several agencies. For instance, it worked with the National Infrastructure Agency (ANGT) to identify, plan and manage projects related to the construction and refurbishment of stadiums, airports, roads, and other infrastructure (Cocan Gabon, 2017:48). Other agencies were involved in supporting the organising committee's mission, such as the Agence National des Infrastructures Numériques et des Fréquences (ANINF), which provided technical assistance and equipment (IT, communication, etc.), and Agence Nationale de Gestion et d'Exploitation des Infrastructures Sportives et Culturelles (ANAGEISC), whose responsibilities were to manage and maintain the associated sport facilities to meet the required standards (Cocan Gabon, 2017:44). The Cocan committee worked alongside the AGATOUR to ensure the event accommodation capacities were met, as well as to promote tourism during the event (Cocan Gabon, 2017:44).

From the LOC perspective, the government is its main event stakeholder, as it presents key aspects of the event, such as legalities, protocol, and holding rights, as well as monetary, human, and physical resources (Parent & Deephouse, 2007:17). However, other equally important stakeholders are considered to be the event organiser's own staff. Parent and Deephouse (2007:17) list the stakeholders as consisting of the local community (in terms of the human and physical resources), international governance (in terms of the participants),



media (in terms of the image creation), and international sports federations (in terms of the rules of the game).

#### **2.4.4 The role of government agencies**

Sport events, and events in general, encourage personal experiences of their destination, as stated by Anholt (UNWTO, 2009:12). The researcher notes that the preference for a destination with regards to its people, politics, culture, and products tends to increase after such encounters, even when the holiday experience has not been favourable. However, Smith (2010:263) argues that it is the prospect of gaining additional revenue from visitor spending, as well as the tax benefits gleaned by all levels of government (Getz, 2008:420), that remain the greatest motivation for governments with respect to event tourism.

The desire of governments to partake in the “increasingly aggressive place of wars” (Foley, McPherson & McGillivray, 2009:54), and to be ranked as top global destinations can affect their economic and cultural motivations when bidding for a large-scale event (Cornelissen, 2007:253). Hence, such an undertaking is almost always politically motivated. Therefore, it is not surprising that events, including sport events, have become an important tool for use by governments around the world (O’Toole, 2010:35). Moreover, the international visibility of such events, including the associated benefits, be they economic or social, has forced governments to become involved in addressing the interests and concerns of the stakeholders concerned.

According to Swart and Bob (2007:379), a government agency should shoulder the responsibility of leading the stakeholders. Furthermore, the researchers allude to this aspect of government agencies as contributing to a dualistic, rather than to a synergistic approach, to the managing of the tourism policy community, along with the separate government departments that are responsible for the sector (Swart & Bob, 2007:379). In terms of the above-mentioned aspect, the government of Gabon identified governance as one of four keys to the country’s growth and poverty reduction strategy. Accordingly, it introduced new laws on public procurement to satisfy the requirements of transparency, good governance and the use of resources for social development and for poverty reduction (OECD, 2007a:281). Other initiatives undertaken by the government, as reported by Gabonco (2011), were to create and coordinate la Société Gabonaise d’Hôtellerie et du Tourisme (SGHT) and the Organising Committee for the AFCON (Cocan), leading up to the event (Cocan Gabon, 2012). Moreover, the Gabonese Agency for the Development and Promotion of Tourism and Hospitality (AGATOUR) was established in 2015 up by the government as part of the restructuring of its institutions (Oxford Business Group, 2015). So as to support the infrastructure-related projects undertaken by the National Infrastructure Agency (ANGT), the Gabonese government brought the public investment programme (PIP) into play to secure the associated investment projects.

Given that such projects by governments require the commitment of public funds, the publicity associated with the event is regarded as an important political output for the politicians involved (Getz et al., 2007:116). On the local government level, Pugh and Wood (2004:64) purport that sport events provide the ideal means for promoting themselves positively to their local residents, businesses, and visitors, highlighting the key role played by the government in coordinating the resources and activities at a destination. Moreover, Swart (2010:386) argues that the government, at the municipal level, has the responsibility for enforcing the by-laws that must be passed in accordance with the event owner's, or organiser's, stipulations. The author lists, amongst others, the stipulations regarding regulated advertising, controlled access to certain areas, public open space creation and beautification, informal trade, accreditation centres, and event and other hosting sites (Swart, 2010:386). Such government agencies as the city municipalities, the federal agencies, the provincial tourism authorities, and the tourism bodies are categorised by Getz *et al.* (2007:115) as being the regulators and facilitators of events. Clearly, the national government's policies, as well as supportive ones on the local level, are of utmost importance to the sustainable, quality hosting of events (Goslin, Grundling & Steynberg, 2004:77), acting as "non-participating resource providers" that provide grants and "in-kind" support (Getz et al., 2007:115).

#### **2.4.5 Community groups and event influences**

The local community forms part of the stakeholders that are affected by both the direct and the indirect impacts of events (Getz et al., 2007:121; Wanklin, 2010:110). Given the local community's unavoidable influence on the community, the above-mentioned authors give examples of groups that affect event perceptions, namely the civic organisations and political parties, the welfare and environmental groups, and such academic institutions as universities or schools (Wanklin, 2010:110). In line with the aforementioned, Gursoy and Kendal (2006:606) point to the crucial importance of understanding the perceptions of how mega events impact on the local stakeholders, as the success of an event depends on the understanding and participation of all the stakeholders, including the community (Gursoy, Kim & Uysal, 2004; Hiller & Wanner, 2011). However, the level of participation, and the amount of interest generated thereby, correspond to the extent to which the community's decisions can influence the process concerned (Byrd, 2007:8). The community participation is vital for developing a sustainable tourism product (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006:606; Currie et al., 2009:46).

According to Deccio and Baloglu (2002:48), the community's perception is largely influenced by perceptions of the cost versus the benefits, with respect to their economic, social and environmental aspects. Unfortunately, the perceptions involved might be disregarded by many sports mega-event organisations, as highlighted by Prayag, Hosany, Nunkoo and Alders (2013), resulting in the loss of support for tourism development, an unwillingness to work in the tourism industry, and hostility by the host community. As indicated by Steyn (2007:49-56),

the host community should be involved as performers and participants during all stages of the hosting of mega-events.

Other groups that are likely to emerge from the community include academic institutions like universities and schools (Getz et al., 2007:114). In the case of sport events, the community also participates in various aspects of the event. Such participation can influence, or be influenced, as Getz et al. (2007:121) state: “the community at large is impacted by the event and might engage in threatening acts, but also constitutes the base for its audience; as volunteers or political and commercial members”. In the case of a mega event, Wanklin (2010:110) notes that community groups can also include groups from the international community, such as human rights activists and environmental advocates (Herborn, 2007). The tourism and hospitality industry have seen the rise of international electronic platforms, on which the cultural, political, social, and economic aspects of mega events are raised publicly (CoHRE, 2006).

As part of its development strategy, the government of Gabon has had a system for social upliftment in place that has been operational over a considerable period of time (Cahiers Economiques du Gabon, 2015:18). The programme was mandated with assisting employment seekers and the most vulnerable to overcome poverty through the creation and maintenance of mechanisms designed to assist, to empower, and to create opportunities. The associated projects have come to play a significant role in the community, as social development requires the protection of human capital. In the context of event hosting, communities tend to build their image up around other aspects of tourism, with the purpose of developing an attractive tourism product (Cooper et al. 2008:233). The level of integration concerned empowers the community and encourages it to contribute to the fostering of an environment that is conducive to the making of investments for purposes of further growth (Cahiers Economiques du Gabon, 2015:19). Moreover, the prevalent levels of technology and access to social media should make the community conscious of the global awareness of issues of climate change, and its association with the principle of social responsibility (Kavaratzis, 2005:333; Allen et al., 2011:129). Crucially, the community expects a stable market and opportunities for generating jobs for the local people (Cahiers Economiques du Gabon, 2015:19).

#### **2.4.6 The media complex as stakeholders**

The media, which are regarded as an event audience, are considered to be influential, as their representatives (journalists, crew, etc.) attend an event so as to be able to report back to their respective organisations (Getz et al., 2007:106). The media and entertainment industry play an important role in shaping people’s perceptions of a destination’s image (Kotler & Gertner, 2010:42). Moreover, acquiring a positive and powerful reputation is considered extremely important (UNWTO, 2009:9). The development of such an image is likely to influence many

decisions, including those regarding purchasing, investment, migration, and travel (Kotler & Gertner, 2010:42). The above is the reason for the media complex being considered an event and destination stakeholder, as various studies treat the media as being as capable as any stakeholder (Chalip, 2005:165; Getz et al., 2007:104; Hede, 2008; Tassiopoulos, 2010a:69; Wanklin, 2010). In the study on festival stakeholders done by Getz et al. (2007), the event organisers identified their key stakeholders as being the event audience, followed by the government agencies, the media, and the sponsors. Other studies also place the media in as prominent a position as any other stakeholder (Hede, 2005:19).

Nauright (2004:1326) describes mega events and their influence as forming part of the “21<sup>st</sup> century sport–media–tourism complex”. Such events can yield “extraordinarily high levels of tourism ... [and] ... media coverage” (Damster & Tassiopoulos, 2005:12). The media attention that event organisers and host destinations enjoy (Byeon, Carr & Hall, 2009:67) through their publicity and extensive media presence (Getz & Fairley, 2004; Miah & Garcia, 2006; O'Brien, 2006) also drives the appetite for the global consumption of image and lifestyle (Swart, 2010:366). According to Tassiopoulos (2010a:68), the media form a very important component of an event's audience, leading to various strategies being required to deal with their experiences of the event effectively. The visitors at a particular destination are exposed to the event through various media (Hede, 2007; Tassiopoulos, 2010a:68). Moreover, events place destinations under the scrutiny of the media, which tend to report on their progress (Smith, 2010:264).

Given what is at stake in terms of the hosting of an event, the organisers and events should capitalise on its media exposure. The above is why a clear branding strategy is a critical factor for destinations and their stakeholders, providing a tool for promoting the desired effect of a variety of media-publicised events (Brown et al., 2010:297). The destination strategy should also consider what is being communicated, when it is being communicated, and how it is being communicated by the media. Moreover, the media can enhance a destination's image, or highlight a destination's issues (Smith, 2010:264), emphasising the need to negotiate the exposure of the event within its regulations and specific time frame (Brown et al., 2010:297). It is up to the destination marketing organisations involved to control the evaluation and selection of the type of media concerned, in accordance with their ability to affect different dimensions of the destination's image (Chalip, Green & Hill, 2003:214). Host destinations should negotiate the desired minimal level of coverage, or contractually agree to the visual element, the commentary, and the angles in terms of which the event will be presented (Getz & Fairley, 2004:130). In the above regard, Smith (2009:18) states that such control over event media coverage would be very difficult if there were not an official agreement in place. An effective media strategy tends to include the activities before, during and after the event, as the provision of multiple opportunities for destinations can also be managed before and afterwards the event

(Brown et al., 2010:287). In terms of destination branding, events should not be limited to the media and to visitor experiences obtained during the actual event. Instead, event visuals and mentions can be utilised in all marketing communications before and after an event to promote the brand image concerned. As argued by Brown et al. (2010:288), event branding can be enhanced in relation to the overall impact of the brand (Brown et al., 2010:288).

The destination and event organisers should consider the role that is played by non-accredited media centres (NAMCs), which may include smaller and specialist magazines and community radio stations (Miah & Garcia, 2006:1). The representatives (which can be either local or international) tend to focus largely on the destination and its people (Brown et al., 2010:296), as they are chiefly interested in human stories, the activities of local groups, and other programmes that run parallel with the main event (Miah & Garcia, 2006:1). Hence, a campaign run by the destination should effectively manage the media aspects throughout the event life cycle. The clear formulation of an event marketing strategy is key to communicating what exactly it is that needs to be portrayed to the outside world (UNWTO, 2009:9; Brown et al., 2010:297; Smith, 2010:262). It is in the destination's best interest to consider the choice of material, with the nature of the media negotiations focusing on enhancing the destination brand (Brown et al., 2010:288).

In conjunction with the above, Turco, Riley and Swart (2002) emphasise that the supplied information and promotions are vital in influencing potential tourist attendance and purchasing decisions. The media should be used to make tourists aware of the tourism product offered by the destination, including the options from which to choose, as well as that are being directed to catch the attention of the individuals concerned.

In summary, the case of the Australian authorities who used the hosting of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games to develop plans to reap the benefits from long-term tourism (Chalip, 2010:6), by means of exploiting the media opportunities involved, is one such example of how the event and destination strategy is a critical factor in successful events planning (Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules, 2004; Chalip, 2004). An effective strategy and the potential opportunities that are made available thereby for the host region can increase the extent of the media coverage involved, and improve the associated destination image, although a clearly formulated media strategy is not immune to negative media coverage (Swart & Bob, 2012).

## **2.5 Sustainable tourism development**

The term 'sustainable development' came into prominence in the 1980s, when the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) presented the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) with "the overall aim of achieving sustainable development through the conservation of living resources" (IUCN, UNEP & WWF, 1980). Hosting sport

events has been commonly identified as a pro-growth strategy aimed at the renewal of cities throughout the world (Chen, 2006:1).

The concepts of 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' are complex and controversial in nature (Hinch & Higham, 2011). Initially, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) explained the concepts as forming the focus of improving the quality of life for all the Earth's citizens, without increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply them indefinitely (WCED, 1987:43). As was simply put by Doudouras and James (2004:1), "sustainability simply means acting in a way which does not undermine one's ability to sustain one's activity into the future". According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), sustainable development is about creating an enhanced quality of life for all people in ways that will be as viable in the future as it is in the present (UNEP, 2005:8). Furthermore, it is based on principles of sound use of the world's resources, and on equity regarding the way in which the resources are used and in which derived benefits are distributed.

Gabon is one such destination that has embraced the challenges of balancing economic opportunities and the ever-daunting challenge of climate change, with the latter being a significant threat to the world, and to Africa in particular. As part of the country's strategy, Gabon finds itself in the unique position of being rich in minerals, oil and gas, as well as harbouring a relatively unspoiled natural environment (Lee, 2012:3). The country's geographical locale puts it in a firm position to promote the new, environmentally conscious model of development. The national development strategy, 'Gabon Emergent', was developed to close the gap with other emerging economies by attaining a developing country status by 2025. The ambitious strategy consists of the three main pillars of tourism development: Green Gabon; Services Gabon; and Industrial Gabon. The national ambition is to conserve the natural environment, while also developing competitive manufacturing and service sector industries (Lee, 2012:4). On its fulfilment, the Green Gabon strategy is likely to have been the game changer on addressing impacts of climate change, biodiversity and community well-being. The above has been passionately argued as such by President Ali Bongo Ondimba, in an interview with the Chatham House on Environment and Resource Governance (Lee, 2012:5).

In terms of sport tourism, Swart and Bob (2007:376) note that the emphasis has been placed on achieving the sustainable development goals, based on the triple bottom-line approach to tourism (Fredline, Raybould, Jago & Deery, 2005:3; Hede, 2008; Getz, 2009:71). Similarly, sustainable tourism is about considering and managing the results of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts and takes into account the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities (Kisi, 2019:2). In its report on the collaboration of governments, businesses and non-governmental organisations to achieve shared

sustainability objectives, the UNWTO identified five central themes, namely: (i) accountability and responsibility; (ii) local community growth and capacity building; (iii) educating customers and stakeholders; (iv) greening supply chains; and (v) innovation, capital investment and infrastructure (UNEP, 2005).

As expounded on by the UNWTO external consultant, Patrick Oreja, without the preservation of natural resources (e.g. beaches, deserts, mountains, coral reefs, forests, etc.) and cultural riches (e.g. traditions, habits and customs, etc.), the essence of the tourism product would be compromised, so that stakeholders in the sector should be increasingly involved in preserving such assets (Gabon Review, 2017). In line with the above, the events should be used by the host destinations to drive long-term developmental plans, and, therefore, their planning, design, and implementation should incorporate urban regeneration strategies (Weed, 2007:151; Smith, 2012). The attendant legacies should be sustainably beneficial for the host community concerned (UNEP, 2012:iv). A frequently quoted example of the above is that of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, which facilitated the city's addressing of many of its serious problems, with it continuing to enjoy the positive impacts of the Games in terms of enhanced tourism and further economic development (Doudouras & James, 2004:3).

Equally, Gabon's strategy is to capitalise on investments that will be likely to spur on environmentally responsible, low-carbon growth, while creating a suitable infrastructure, as well as additional employment opportunities. The sustainable development plan entails turning investments into co-piloting projects, as a means of piggybacking the financing of other development. The latter, in turn, serves to attract capital flows between PPPs to develop sustainably aspects of the forest, agribusiness, tourism, and environmental land-use rights on an integrated basis over the space of 750 000 hectares (Lee, 2012:5). In line with tourism development having both positive and negative impacts on destinations, sustainable tourism development attempts to find a balance between the two, so as to create an improved quality of life for the host community and the destination (Roy & Hoque, 2015:50). When event organisers address the social, economic and environmental aspects in symbiosis with their handling of the environment (Bennett, Jooste & Strydom, 2005; Bob & Swart, 2010), success can be enjoyed by motivating tourists to visit the places of production concerned, so as to consume the output, while impacts will result from the physical environment in which such consumption takes place (Cooper et al., 1998). In the long term, Gabon's ambitions are to integrate the environmental initiatives, and to consider climate change as an element of the developmental strategies involved. As such, the adoption and implementation of policy toward the Gabon Sustainable Development Registry is necessary to remain competitive, while sustainability is the targeted long-term objective (Lee, 2012:6).

For purposes of sustainable tourism development, the involvement of the local stakeholders and the targeting of the local population is a crucial element of the planning process, as is discussed below (UNESCO, 2009:15). At this stage, the involvement of stakeholders, comprising the members of the local society, is crucial to the implementation of the plan, because it is, they who will have to obey the rules set out in the plan.

## **2.6 Events planning and management**

Events are being increasingly viewed as an integral and major part of tourism development and marketing planning (Tassiopoulos, 2005:9). Further, Tassiopoulos (2005:10) states that events consist of two types, planned and unplanned. Planned events consist of routine, ordinary or common events and special events. Special events include the two categories of minor and major special events, with the latter consisting of hallmark and mega events. Due to the nature of the current study, major events are targeted, as, due to their great size, they tend to affect entire economies, and to reverberate throughout the global media, whereas second-tier events form the basis of the current research. Major events are generally developed following on a competitive bidding process. They include the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup™, and the World Fairs (Clark, 2008a:48; Tassiopoulos, 2010b:15; Bowdin et al., 2011:21). Furthermore, Getz (2005:6) goes on to say: “Mega events by way of their size or significance are those that yield extraordinarily high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, or economic impact for the host community, venue or organisation.”

The nature of mega events and resources required to host them explains why they are actively pursued by some of the world’s major players, argues Silvestre (2008-2009:1). The above is so mostly because they are viewed as a way of fast-tracking their urban development agenda, and of competing globally for international capital. Moreover, mega events can serve as a catalyst for long-term projects for the host cities and countries concerned (Rogerson, 2009:337), highlighting their growing and important role in the global economy. In the context of globalisation, Hall (2006) and Getz (2008) assert that such mega events as the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup™, or World Expos have become increasingly significant phenomena, despite their relatively short duration. Both national and subnational governments have identified mega events as being significant vehicles for attracting or retaining mobile capital, in particular foreign direct investment. Thus, such events, as propounded by Torisu (2006), and Galdini (2007), owe their significance to their potential to generate long-term outcomes for the host regions by means of enhancing, promoting and recreating their image. Broadly speaking, mega events are, by their very nature, credited with manifesting “extraordinarily high levels of tourism, economic impact and prestige [that] they bring with them[,] as well as media coverage for the host destination” (Damster & Tassiopoulos, 2005:12). Moreover, Smith (2010:263) notes that the participants in the events “are either numerous or important, or both”. In addition to the participants, they attract spectators, tourists and



prominent media attention (Byeon et al., 2009:67), thereby providing for the consumption of image (Swart, 2010:366). As observed by Getz (2008:403), the events are an important motivator of tourism, with them helping to form the basis of the strategy for the development and marketing plans of most destinations.

The benefits of hosting sport events and events in general can only be truly achieved through effective planning and a legacy strategy, argue Cornelissen (2007:248) and O'Toole (2010:35). The focus should be on what the host destination wants to achieve (Steyn, 2007:40). The above requires the event planning involved to identify where an organisation is, where it should be positioned in the marketplace so as to maximise its chances of progressing its mission, and its creation of strategies and tactics to achieve the desired position (O'Toole, 2010:44; Bowdin et al., 2011:187). So as to execute such a strategic approach, the event organisers should adhere to the clear guidelines and responsibilities set out for them, argues Sadd (2008:32), who also notes that the communication entered into regarding the above should be channelled through established means. For instance, Wanklin (2005:108) refers to centre-event organisers as devising a detailed plan that is used to undertake preliminary feasibility studies that can guide the decision-makers involved in masterminding any event. Feasibility studies serve to motivate the rationale of pursuing the planning of an event by way of the analysis of the relevant data and resources, prior to the extensive investment involved in realising such a venture.

According to Dickson and Arcodia (2010:236), the event industry is drawn to debating the benefits that can be gleaned from the economic, social, cultural and educational aspects of event hosting. Moreover, the tourism industry is under the spotlight for its contribution to climate change, and is seeking ways to become more environmentally sustainable in the pursuit of growth in tourism. Any large gathering of people can have a potentially negative impact on the air, soil, water, resources, and people (UNEP, 2012:1). Therefore, by their very nature, events create waste, which, if properly managed, can be recycled as excess materials and supplies in useful and meaningful ways, using methods that make minimal impacts on the environment. Such impacts are not limited to the location where the event takes place, as the participants concerned tend to consume such natural resources as water, energy and materials, thereby generating waste, creating local air and water pollution, and contributing to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions. The above is why the design, organisation, and implementation of events must take into consideration sustainable ways of planning them (UNEP, 2009:13), so as to minimise their potential negative impacts and to leave behind a beneficial legacy for the host community and all involved (UNEP, 2012:21). The efforts exerted to attain the required level of sustainable and responsible tourism are recorded in the 2000 Tourism Investment Code, which is promoted by the government of Gabon as creating incentives for foreign tourism investors. Implementation of the Code entailed eight

years of operation, during which imports were tax-free, and other administrative incentives were offered. The Gabonese authorities continue to work on developing the country's ecotourism landscape, having recently signed deals with some high-end hotel chains, including with the Aman Resorts Group of Singapore. To date, ecotourism, which exists only on a small scale, has been very expensive. According to the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) further development of the tourism sector is one of Gabon's top economic priorities (AfDB, 2015:8).

As indicated previously, sustainability has become an important concept in relation to tourism planning and development (Byrd, 2007:6). Its success relies on the integration of all the sectors involved in setting up and running an event. However, the different stakeholders might hold different views on the issue, with some not supporting the decisions made to host a sustainable event, also known as a green event (Laing & Frost, 2010:262), especially if the event planners lack the required information motivating the desire to deliver such an event. Building on the enthusiasm and interest of the private sector and of the public stakeholders by means of cooperating with host cities, venues and hotels is important. All tourism industry stakeholders cannot be assumed to be aware of the potential contribution that they can make to climate change as a result of their operations (Otto & Heath, 2009:188). It is in the best interest of host nations to "manage process designed to enhance the quality of tourism so as to satisfy tourists' needs and expectations by achieving a competitive tourist trade, creating and sustaining liveable host communities; as an integrated quality management" (Go & Govers, 2000:80). The quality of a tourism product depends on the combined contributions and processes made by many of the stakeholders (both private and public) concerned, conclude Go and Govers (2000), noting that the operational definition of integrated quality management is only possible through a professional approach which strives to do things right all the time. Otto and Heath's (2009:188) study found a general lack of awareness among tourism industry stakeholders of the potential contribution of their operations to climate change. In a similar vein, Go and Govers (2000:80) provide an operational definition of integrated quality management as being the management process that is "designed to enhance the quality of tourism, so as to satisfy tourists' needs and expectations, achieve a competitive tourist trade, and create and sustain liveable host communities ...". The quality of a destination's tourism product depends on the combined contributions and processes of many stakeholders (both private and public) that take on a "professional approach to do things right at all times" (O'Brien, 2006; UNWTO, 2009).

In terms of the above-mentioned aspect of protecting the ecosystem and of promoting a positive outlook on the country's environmental awareness, the government of Gabon has a new forestry law in place, obliging timber firms to include an environmental survey as part of their operational plan and provisions for reforestation. The above is an added measure for the enhanced supervision of such resources as the 13 national parks that occupy about 11 per

cent of the country, with the country's animal and plant life being resources that comprise its biodiversity (OECD, 2007a:279). As the backbone of the country's strategy of diversifying the economy, the plan is to achieve strong, sustainable and diversified inclusive growth, by means of stimulating the sectors that are favourable to the Gabonese economic environment. Also dubbed 'Gabon Emergent', the framework is multispectral, targeting, among others, the country's energy, mining, forest, tourism and agro-industrial potential (ORCE, 2011:v). As projected for the tourism industry of Gabon, its success would make the 'Rainforest Africa' a worldwide attraction for hospitality services. Gabon has responded to the major challenge of attaining the 2025 strategy by proposing a national vision for long-term economic, social, and environmental success (White, Gwynne, Chesnel & Bongo Ondimba, 2007:15).

The national objective is to inspire change and to create a legacy that is based on the evidence that creating partnerships with all stakeholders would help them take advantage the event to be hosted, as it would bring about increased funding, knowledge, skills, or capacity (UNEP, 2012:11). According to London 2012 (2010), the stakeholders concerned need to incorporate in the event design an accessible and inclusive setting for all. Having such a strategy in place would help to secure a safe and secure atmosphere for minimising the negative impacts of the development on the environment, encourage healthy living, and promote the maintenance of the sources of the particular area in which an event is hosted (Coakley & Souza, 2013:587). Furthermore, sustainable events leave a positive legacy, deliver excellent customer experience, and encourage sustainable behaviour.

## **2.7 Summary**

This chapter focused on presenting an ideal conceptual framework for the current study, providing an overview of the theoretical overview and conceptual framework of sport tourism and major sporting events, in relation to Gabon's hosting of the African Nations Cup. The next chapter (Chapter 3) focuses on the review of existing literature on studies pertaining to major sport tourism events and their perceived impacts on host communities with a specific focus on the tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville, Gabon.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In recent times, the extent of recognition, promotion and institutionalisation of the role and contributions of sport events within the struggle for just and sustainable development has increased (Hassan, 2000:244; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:33-51; Goslin et al., 2004:77; Darnell, 2012:104). Getz (1997:4) states that sport events contribute significantly towards increasing the amount of tourist traffic, and towards driving economic development in a region. When tourists visit any type of attraction, whether for sport or non-sport purposes, they have a certain expectation concerning service quality, in terms of which they expect the promised service to be performed correctly (Bebko, 2000:11). According to Hudson (2012:3), tourism represents an amalgamation of services and goods for purposes of a human activity that takes place at a specific distance away from the tourist's usual place of residence. Black (2007:261) highlights that sport and tourism are regarded as vital elements to the success of the economies of both developing and developed countries. Consequently, host cities tend to attribute great importance to such factors as the event's economic implications, event-related income, and the development of tourism. A broad spectrum of studies has considered the socio-economic and political implications of staging sport events in host cities, in terms of an attempt to identify the associated benefits, by means of measuring either the extent to which such benefits offset the costs, or the extent to which such benefits can be sustained in the long term (Kim, Gursoy & Lee, 2006; Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Tassiopoulos, 2000; Gratton et al., 2006; Humphreys & Prokopowicz, 2007; Zimbalist, 2010; Fourie, Seibrits & Spronk, 2011).

Meanwhile, other discussions relate to the development of event tourism through the hosting of major sports events (Getz, 2008:407; Higham, 2005; Gotham, 2005; Weed, 2008; Pillay & Bass, 2009). The governments from both the developed and the developing countries have shown interest in hosting major sport events, as a way of stimulating their development (Gursoy et al., 2011:302). As a result, a plethora of studies has drawn attention to the event's likely economic, sociocultural, and environmental impacts (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:19; Steyn, 2007:10; Cornelissen, Bob & Swart, 2011). Silvestre (2008-2009:7) and Cornelissen and Swart (2006:110) assert that sport events have been seen as a way of reviving communities by means of attracting multiple investment opportunities. Moreover, they are believed to confer benefits to the host destination, while also acting as a marketing tool, therefore attracting repeat visits and fuelling development (OECD, 2017:12). As discussed by Taks, Meagan, Wood and Snelgrove (2015:7), sport events can have various impacts on the local communities. While not all destinations have the capacity to host first-order (such as the FIFA World Cup™ and the Olympics Games) and second-order mega events (such as the

Commonwealth Games and the Rugby World Cup), certain destinations are inherently better suited to bid for the hosting of such third-order mega events as the AFCON.

Major sporting events contribute considerably to the economic development and tourist movement in a city and have the potential to contribute to the attainment of positive economic impacts for a host destination or region (Turco, Swart, Bob & Moodley, 2003:223). Furthermore, in terms of worldwide perception, Getz (1998b:8) states that sport events are significant, since they have important popular appeal, and for their ability to generate travel-related benefits for destinations. For a destination's tourism sector, sporting events are important tourism stimulators that figure significantly in the development and marketing plans of most nations (Getz, 2007:403). Therefore, the researcher will focus on major events that fall within the typology of sport events below.

### **3.2 Events in context**

Events are an important motivator of tourism, with them figuring prominently in the development and marketing plans of most destinations (Getz, 2008:403). Synonyms of the term 'event' include: 'occurrence'; 'happening'; 'incident'; or 'experience'. Furthermore, in a sport perspective, the attributive 'event' is commonly used to describe a specific type of competition. The basic criterion defining all types of event is that they are temporary (Getz, 2007:26). Within the professional management of events, the different types of events are known to include planned events that encompass festival, entertainment, recreation, political and state, scientific, sport, and art events (Getz, 2008:404).

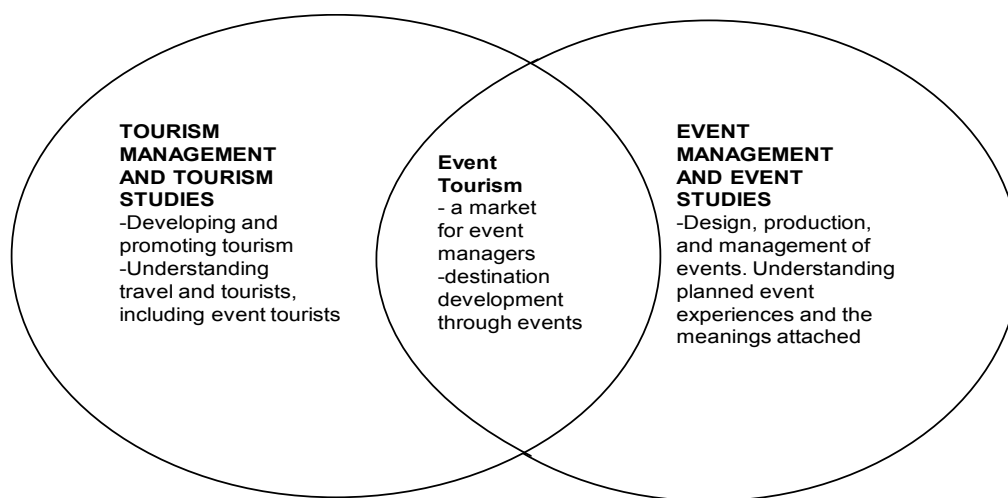
Sport events and other special events share such commonalities as service orientation, the incorporation of celebration and drama, media coverage, and similarities in the organisational and operation phase (Goldblatt, 2002:13). As referred to by Getz (2007:25), motivations of customers and travellers might also be similar, especially regarding the ritual of attendance and related traditions. For instance, traditional sport events like the Olympics always incorporate ceremonies and festivals, with it now having become commonplace to build a programme of special events around a sport meet to create a 'festival' or special event, with attendant heightened appeal (Getz, 2007:26). In contrast, major events can have the effect of building up an image of the host community or country, leading to its favourable perception as a potential travel destination, as asserted by the above-mentioned author. Despite the relatively short period spent, at least partly, on the study of major events, the attention received from the global media has served to attract wide-ranging publicity regarding host destinations, so as to justify the extensive expenditure required in such instances (Getz, 2007:25).

However, the sustainable planning and development of tourism requires thorough understanding of both the event perspective and the tourism perspective (Getz, 2008:404). Moreover, Getz (2008:403) asserts that event tourism has gained the attention of event managers, who consider tourism to be a potentially lucrative market, and who recognise the tourism industry as a vital stakeholder in the economy of any developing country.

### **3.2.1 Event tourism**

The term 'event tourism', linking events and tourism (Brown et al., 2010:280), was coined in the 1980s (Getz, 1997). Event tourism is a form of special interest travel, which "... is generally recognized as being inclusive of all planned events in an integrated approach to development and marketing ..." (Getz, 2008:405). Furthermore, Getz (2008:411) gives the main categories of event tourism as: business events; sport events; festivals and cultural celebrations; and Olympics, world fairs, and other mega events. From an image promotion standpoint, events can be categorised based on their respective core concepts (Sudesh & Shukla, 2005:523), being: competitive events; artistic expression; cultural celebrations; exhibition events; charitable events; and special business events. The sector is considered to be significant for its financial implications, in the sense that events, especially sport ones, tend to increase the tourism numbers that might otherwise have been present. Saayman (2012:2) explains that, in addition to competitors and supporters (including friends and family), events are likely to attract the attention of spectators, officials, the media, and medical personnel.

As can be seen in Figure 3.1 below, event tourism can be seen as the overlap in a Venn diagram featuring tourism and event management studies, with which it shares common characteristics and is interrelated (Getz, 2008:406). Moreover, according to Brown et al. (2010:279), events and tourism are fundamentally linked because of the way in which the images that are associated with an event are transferred to the host destination. Thus, event tourism is considered a speciality within the field of event management and tourism, with the latter being the main motivation of events that are considered as attractions and image-makers for destinations (Getz, 2008:422).



**Figure 3.1: Event tourism at the nexus of tourism and event studies**

(Adapted from Getz, 2008:406)

However, as referred to in terms of the Chalip (2004) model for host community event leverage, one way of maximising the presence of tourists in the country is to build the host destination's brand by means of showcasing the destination in event advertising. By promoting some of the host destination's features, destinations can come to leverage events, including sporting and major ones, optimally. In fact, the World Tourism Organization posits that such events could serve as the tools for development of tourism in Africa. In addition to the above, festivals can offer an alternative way of attracting visitors to a destination, especially when the destination concerned might lack any alternate significant attraction during its low seasons, or for a particular market segment (Getz, 2008:414; UNWTO, 2015:9). The 2012 AFCON Cup organised by Gabon served to promote the country's natural beauty and to showcase its capacities as a modern host for the most prestigious event on African soil (Ghislain, 2014:200). Meanwhile, the analysis of recent tourism indicators across Africa points to the potential for tourism industries. African destinations can tap into such potential by developing a sound tourism product, and by means of defining and applying a strategy for the leveraging of sectoral opportunities (UNWTO, 2015:6).

### 3.2.2 Sport event tourism

The thematic aspect of sport events and other special events tends to be of either a sporting or sociocultural nature, like the Sports World Cups, the racing Grand Prix, the international Expos, and the International Jazz festivals (Getz, 2008:409; Silvestre, 2008-2009:5). The motivations of customers and travellers might be similar, especially regarding the ritual of attendance and related traditions (Chalip & McGuirly, 2004:267; Jago, Deery, Fredline & Rayboud, 2005:252). Traditional sport events, like the Olympics, always incorporate ceremonies and festivals, with it by now having become commonplace to build up a programme of special events around a sport meet, so as to create a festival or special event with heightened appeal (Getz, 2007:40). In contrast, mega events can project an image of the host community or country (Getz, 2007:407), leading to its favourable perception as a potential travel destination (Coakley & Souza, 2013:2). The events of such a magnitude are easily distinguishable by their “high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige and economic impact on the host community” (Law, 2002:141). Noteworthy, “special event” (Getz, 2007:27), “major event” (Chalkley & Essex, 1999) and “hallmark event” refer to major fairs and expositions, as well as cultural and sporting events, with international status (Law, 2002; Getz, 2007:407), with the last term being used as an umbrella concept for the family of mega events (Law, 2002:141; Silvestre, 2008-2009:5), consisting of either regular or once-off events (Hall, 1989:263). Instances of events that have recently been hosted in Gabon are the New York Forum Africa (NYFA), which has been hosted annually since 2012, the AFCON, co-hosted in 2012 and hosted alone in 2017, and the international cycle race Tropicale Amissa Bongo (Economie du Gabon, 2016).

The marathon community, the Gabon International Marathon, which forms part of an annual event held in Gabon, the fourth edition of which was held in 2014, and, the most recent edition of which was held between the 30<sup>th</sup> of November and 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2019 (Ghislain, 2014:344; Ondo, 2019). Its participants, who come from across the globe to compete against each other, are joined by many runners from the Gabonese community. The aforementioned Marathon has so far attracted some 13 000 runners each year, as both athletes and amateurs participate in the sporting event (Le Gabon Emergent, 2013). According to the 2001 to 2007 national statistics reports, several other events are organised and held across Gabon, without them being registered with their respective ministry. Such events range from cultural activities (expositions, concerts and other types of activities) to small-scale sport and leisure events (tennis) (DGSEE, 2009:202). Such events vary in nature from being public celebrations and festivals to being smaller, private events (Getz, 2008:404).

Apart from for festivals, carnivals and events of a sporting or cultural nature, there is a growing trend in convention industry, which can mainly be attributed to the government’s increased awareness of related benefits (Getz, 2008:411). Some events consist of meetings, incentives,



conventions or events/exhibitions (MICE) (Getz, 2008:411), with them forming part of the business and corporate affairs category of events (Getz, 2008:404). The categorisation of events is determined by the motivation for the travel involved, with MICE-related travel relating to doing business and/or to advancing one's career (Getz, 2008:411).

Business-related events, and particularly MICE-related ones, are one of the fastest growing event segments in the developing nations (OECD, 2017:32). The nature of the events makes the destinations involved likely to possess prominent features, as the transportation systems, the hotels and the convention centres that are in place, if of good enough quality, are likely to attract the hosting of business events, and tourism as a whole (OECD, 2017:32). The business event segment might include the gatherings for conventions, congresses, conferences, seminars, workshops, and symposiums, with the attendants involved seeking business development and market growth opportunities through the exchange of information. (Allen et al., 2011:16). However, all business events are characterised by the holding of meetings. The activities that are related to such events are significant, in terms of harbouring professionals who are specialised in the management of business gatherings, with such specialisation extending to meeting-planner firms, associations and services within special event ventures (Getz, 1997:9; Lee & Back, 2005; Yoo & Weber, 2005). Conventions and exhibitions are part of most cities' business attractions, along with firms that specialise in selling and bidding, within a broad market segment (Getz, 2008:411). Growth in the MICE segment has seen the events concerned develop into a market with principal tourism ambitions, establishing their particularity in terms of networking, the developing of business opportunities, and the fostering of interorganisational linkages (Mackellar, 2005:92). The development of MICE can be attributed to the promotion effect, as positive attractions tend to result from increased exposure to the hosting of other events (Solberg & Preuss, 2005:128). The authors assert that the revenue from such events has the highest expenditure other than for the traveller groups within sport tourism events (Chalip, 2002; 2010:9).

In the context of the impacts of MICE-related activities, their intangible and temporal dimension makes them difficult to quantify as such, with the viability of the events being difficult to prove to their key stakeholders (OECD, 2017:33). Therefore, remaining abreast of the sector-driven flow of capital is recommended so as to make evident the benefits that business events generate as return on investment (ROI) and the maximisation of returns (Jago, 2012:5). A broad understanding of the market segment is essential for attracting both private and public sector investment opportunities, as the MICE sector has proven to be a major catalyst of long-term benefits for event tourism, generating profits for the host destination, the delegates, and the sponsors concerned (OECD, 2017:34).

According to the OECD, events, whether sporting-, culture- or business-related, all figure prominently in the development and marketing of a destination. Moreover, events are considered as an important motivator of tourism, as they play a growing role in establishing destination competitiveness (OECD, 2017:11).

However, the sustainable planning and development of tourism requires a thorough understanding of both the event and the tourism perspective, as identified by Getz (2008:404). Moreover, Getz (2008:403) asserts that event tourism has gained the attention of event managers who consider tourism to be a potentially lucrative market, and who recognise the tourism industry as being a vital stakeholder. The potential of those attending events is extensive, with it being related to the type of event concerned. According to Getz (2008:414), entertainment, carnivals and parties are some aspects that are sought after in relation to certain events, while fun and revelry are relevant to sporting events that also encompass nostalgia and subcultural identity for the fans involved. Nonetheless, many events concern learning and opportunities to foster commercial prospects (Getz, 2008:414).

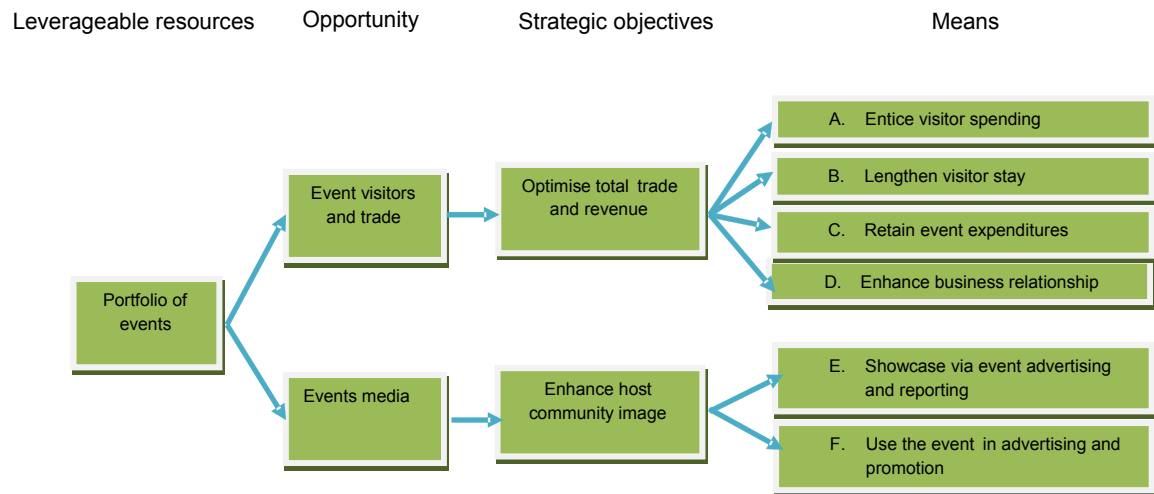
There is general consensus that the investments that are made in sport facilities and events have boosted economic development, through the implementation of consumption-based policies that have prevailed over the past two decades, especially in terms of previously capitalist nations (Baade, 1996; Schimmel, 1995; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2004:188).

### **3.2.3 Leveraging of events**

The strategic use of resources to optimise the best-desired outcomes that come from hosting an event is known as event leveraging (Chalip, 2006:112). In a more specific context, leveraging is the process by means of which the benefits gained from the hosting of mega sport events are maximised (Chalip, 2004; O'Brien, 2006:241). Besides the above, Chalip (2004:228) explains the opportunities granted by short- and long-term benefits that can be leveraged from the hosting of mega events. Moreover, Chalip (2006:113) posits that leveraging can achieve favourable short- and long-term outcomes for the host communities, which is a process that is best accomplished through the provision of networking opportunities among the key event stakeholders' event-related assets (Getz et al., 2007:105; Jörgen, 2009:229). Engaging partners is facilitated by means of purposefully programming opportunities for networking between the government stakeholders and the host, as well as between sponsors and businesses, instead of in terms of an ad hoc approach. According to Chalip (2006:113), leveraging, as strategy, is focused on identifying policies that can be implemented prior, during and after an event, so as to generate the desired results. Leveraging efforts concern the impacts of events and the creation of opportunities to implement a particular tactic that should foster and nurture the desired result (Chalip, 2002:8). The aforementioned author further

highlights the case of the 2000 Olympic Games, listing the four core strategic elements of Australia’s tourism leveraging tactics as follows: repositioning the country by means of capitalising on the media; aggressively seeking out convention business; minimising the diversion effect of the Games; and promoting pre- and post-Games touring.

In terms of the broader perspective, Chalip (2004:229) developed a model (see Figure 3.2 below) to enhance the economic impacts associated with the leveraging of an event. The model is aimed at using event leveraging to put into practice a set of activities to maximise its long- term benefits (Chalip, 2004).



**Figure 3.2: Chalip’s model for host community event leverage**  
(Chalip, 2004:229)

Chalip’s model was developed to leverage a portfolio of events emanating from two strategic goals (Chalip, 2004). The first goal was to optimise total trade and revenue from the event by: (a) enticing visitors to spend; (b) lengthening visitor stays (thereby also increasing visitor spend); (c) retaining event expenditures (i.e. keeping event expenditures within the local economy); and (d) using the event to foster business networking, and to enhance business relationships. Secondly, the goal was to enhance the host destination’s image through the media attracted by the event, by: (a) showcasing the destination in event advertising and reporting; and (b) featuring the event in (some) host destination advertising and promotions. The following subsections will explain the aspects of leveraging within the context of the host destination and sport tourism events.

### 3.2.4 Leveraging framework

The leveraging effort represents a subtle, but significant, shift in event planning. In contrast to the standard approach, which examines the impacts of events, Chalip (2002:7) sees

leveraging as a means of regarding the event as an opportunity (Ritchie, 2000; Chalip, 2004; 2006:120; Chalip, 2018; Hemmonsby, Tichaawa & Knott, 2018; Ziakas, 2020).

Considering Australia's leveraging of the Olympic Games and the shaping of the destination's image as a way of enhancing its tourism potential, the Australian Tourist Commission was designed around four core strategic elements (Chalip, 2002:7; Chalip, 2018). The elements concerned are: repositioning the country by means of capitalising on the media; aggressively seeking out convention business; minimising of the diversion effect of the Games; and promoting of pre- and post-Games touring.

Meanwhile, Australia's repositioning strategy was to pursue and implement three key tactics as core elements for event leveraging and destination strategising. According to Chalip (2002:13), the tactics concerned were mainly intended to align its goals as a host destination and event organiser with the stakeholders' perspective. Such alignment would help to capitalise on the opportunities related to the hosting of the Olympic Games, as well as facilitate communication with the rest of the world, in terms of its ability to diversify the country's tourism sector (Chalip, 2002:8). As such, the host destination strategy was a broad and far-reaching programme consisting of the:

- visiting journalists programme;
- Olympic media programmes; and
- a sponsor relations programme.

The success of the overall strategy is believed to have provided sufficient control over the resultant relationship, by means of engaging both public and private sector members as the backbone of the country's repositioning programme (Chalip, 2002:13). Therefore, the building of partnerships between the public and private sector can enable collaboration for the successful leveraging of sport tourism legacies (Chalip, 2018), with it working collectively as a way of responding to issues of sustainability in tourism (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:93; Ziakas, 2020). As simply put by Rouboutsos and Anagnostopoulos (2008), such partnerships have several benefits for both sides.

Moreover, a post-Games strategy was implemented as a follow-up to the event (Chalip, 2002:8). The purpose of taking such a step in the strategy programme was to cross-leverage events in the host city or region with those in other capitals, similarly to the intentional and systematic way of maximising the use of available resources (e.g. tourism and media assets, complementary events, etc.) by the event destination (Chalip, 2006:113). In terms of the above-mentioned standpoint, it is essential to develop a broad framework for the leveraging of event-related opportunities, thereby creating a synergy of the host city's assets, including those related to sport and culture (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:90). By means of fostering their

interconnectedness, their joint use in tourism development and destination strategy can be attained (Kellett, Hede & Chalip, 2008:115). Therefore, it is possible to introduce leveraging programmes successfully for the joint harnessing of a sport and cultural tourism legacy, thereby diversifying a host city's post-event tourism product (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:90). For instance, in a report by the Operations Department Centre Region (ORCE), Gabon should be able to employ its rich natural appeal, its biodiversity, and its national parks to develop a viable ecotourism product (ORCE, 2011:8), as a set of sporting event and ecosystem leverageable resources. World Heritage Centre publications accentuate the qualities of African tourism development based on culture and heritage. Hence, the tourist product to be leveraged is a complex socio-cultural phenomenon, in terms of which culture and biodiversity are consumed and preserved by means of involving the local communities in transactions and exchanges with tourists (Gravari-Barbas & Jacquot, 2013:7). Such a mix of culture and environment can be leveraged within the Gabonese tourism product. Other aspects of the strategy will be discussed in a later part of this chapter, rounding out issues of the events portfolio and stakeholder awareness.

The successful implementation of an event strategy requires the use of a number of different supporting tactics, as outlined by Chalip (2002:7), though Hall and Rusher (2004:229) are alert to a lack of sufficient analysis of the political context of events, as well as of their development and application to the host communities concerned (Getz, 2008:418). The above is particularly important to event organisers and policymakers in the destination aspiring to be the host (Getz, 2008:417). Although such a programme can be used by destination managers as steps for the design, planning and implementation of a broad and inclusive approach to dealing with stakeholder interests, its primary objective is to seek out and establish a supportive network for managing the event (Getz, 2008:421; Singh & Hu, 2008:931; Ziakas, 2020). The event process, and all those expecting to reap the benefits therefrom, must be alerted to the various stakeholders' perspectives (Getz et al., 2007:105). Doing such requires identifying and managing the stakeholders as a critical success factor (CFS), by means of which to ensure the effective leveraging of events, from a destination manager and event perspective. The stakeholders concerned, whether public or private, are likely to forge inter-organisational relationships among themselves for the purpose of aligning their frequently varying political agendas and of cultivating the attendant long-term economic outcomes (O'Brien, 2006:241). The identification of the event stakeholders that was discussed in section 2.7 is not just a tactic for obtaining large and lucrative aspects of the network, for it is also a means of identifying opportunities, and of then seeking out the ear of decision makers (Chalip, 2002:11; Chalip, 2018). The aforementioned author explains how differences among entities that form the network stand to become apparent. Doing so provides an opportunity for the finding of harmony within their differing understanding of how and what should prove to be the most beneficial to the common effort. In the context of the conventions market, two peculiarities are not shared

by the leisure tourism market (Chalip, 2010:9). Firstly, the organisation planning to host a convention often advertises event-related facts, and might even decide on the issues relating to bids (Chalip, 2002:11). Secondly, the decision about where the convention will take place is typically taken by a few key decision makers, highlighting the need to become familiar with the relevant power bearers to establish a collaborative approach (Swart, 2010:372; Hemmonsbey et al., 2018; Chalip & Fairley, 2019).

Moreover, public and private sector agencies are likely to be concerned with issues of economics, sport and tourism policy development in terms of the leveraging process, though the policy dimension requires the adoption of a proactive approach by the government to develop an entrepreneurial policy for the purpose of public engagement (Whitford, 2004:81). Barney et al. (2002) observe that the attraction of the public and private sector to the hosting of mega events and major sporting events is motivated by such factors as the advertising of products to a global audience (Chen & Spaans, 2009:101; Chalip & Fairley, 2019), the leveraging of business opportunities in terms of exports and new investments (Fredline et al., 2005:3), and the existing level of event management knowledge (Mackellar, 2005:101; Brown et al., 2010:292). As reported by the Oxford Business Group (2015), the increase in size of the private-public partnership (PPP) indicates that Gabon is fertile ground for attracting investments. However, the level of PPPs in the country is limited by weak practices in the planning and management of projects by state bodies, as they do not conform to the best international practice standard (ORCE, 2011:5). In 2012, the Singapore-based Aman Resorts entered into an agreement with Gabon's Strategic Investment Funds (FGIS) (AfDB, 2015:54), for the building of six hotels and resorts. Another PPP agreement was established during a later phase of construction, with Luxury Green Resorts, so as to manage the project (AfDB, 2015). Such an infrastructure is becoming the focal point of the broad scale public/private partnership (PPP), due to global media attention. Investments are provided in terms of a private-public contractual agreement that also attracts corporate sponsorship. The engagement ultimately falls into the realm of public procurement practices that grant concessions in the form of tax or revenue subsidy for a fixed period, as regulated by national policies (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Van Lill & Vorster, 2010:232).

Based on Chalip's (2004) general event leveraging model and on Weed's (2008:95) Olympic tourism leveraging model, a strategic planning framework is proposed for the leveraging of post-Games tourism. According to the UNWTO (2015:40), an important aspect of the tourism product development is that coordination should occur, so that a strongly positive image of the destination can be reflected through collaboration between private and public initiatives, whose main goal is to drive socio-economic growth (Pugh & Wood, 2004:64). Moreover, with Africa's returns on investments (ROIs) being among the highest in the world (UNWTO, 2015:12), there is potential to attract further investments. The national development strategy, 'Gabon

Emergent', aimed to improve the business climate for private sector development, by means of strengthening the infrastructure to support sectors like tourism, among others, and to promote competitiveness in developing alternatives to the oil sector (ORCE, 2011:1). As such, programmes have been put in place to secure alternative and diverse sources of revenue, like the 13 newly-created national parks that are expected to boost tourism, and especially ecotourism, for Gabon (OECD, 2007a:274).

For destinations to attain the joint strategic objectives in terms of an event, there are two grounding strategies that constitute the basis for further synergic growth (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:94). The first entails the utilisation of event venues for organising other events and activities (Getz, 2008:417; Ziakas, 2013:8). The above takes advantage of the structures built for previous events, and the associated prestige embodied in the collective memory. The second is the use of the event's legacy and of the heritage themes in the media (in terms of advertising and promotion), so as to reinforce the destination's image (O'Brien & Chalip, 2008:264; Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:94; Chalip & Fairley, 2019).

The building of partnerships between the public and private sectors can enable the leveraging of legacy (Brown et al., 2010:297), as indicated in the second strategy (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:90). Through the partnerships, several benefits for both sides can be targeted, and risk allocation can also be discussed (Clark, 2008a:48; Roumboutsos & Anagnostopoulos, 2008). An event portfolio strategy that incorporates event bundling can reach a wide range of audiences, with it possibly attracting extensive tourism visitation (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004:270; Ziakas, 2013; Ziakas & Costa, 2011a; Chalip, 2018). Doing so can help the cities to organise and manage their event portfolios effectively, and to become "eventful cities" (Richards & Palmer, 2010:1), with the overall objective being to evaluate the assistance of event cities, so as to be able to achieve certain economic and tourism goals (O'Brien & Chalip, 2008:264).

Although the discussion of the benefits of hosting major sporting events is continuing, aspects of sustainability receive little attention (Leopkey & Parent, 2012:2), in the sense that derived benefits are limited, as they happen only once, and for a short period of time (Gibson, Willming & Holdnak, 2003:182; Brown et al., 2010:297). Similarly, events can be a source of socio-economic rejuvenation, although most of the positive social effects of events are short-lived (Smith, 2009:117). Meanwhile, the massive investment in, and construction of, facilities might have long-term negative effects for the host city and for host communities at large (Bob & Swart, 2010:270; Watt, 2013; Smith, 2014:22). In response to the challenges pertaining to the allocation of resources to a temporal activity, Chalip and McGuirty (2004:269) stress the cross-leveraging of major events with other, smaller scale events, with the purpose being for the destination to deliver, by way of a tourism product offering, a mix of activities that meet the overall expectations of the attendees (Brown et al., 2010:287; Crowther, 2010:227). The

hosting of small-scale sports events might result in additional positive effects for the host communities concerned (Gibson et al., 2003:182). Such events are viewed as regular season sporting competitions that include international sporting fixtures, domestic competitions, and disabled sports tournaments, among others (Gibson et al., 2003:182). Bundling events by leveraging their interrelatedness should optimise the integrated use of resources (Chalip & McGuirly, 2004:270). Moreover, Ziakas and Boukas (2014:96) explain that cross-leveraging enables the fostering of synergies among different events and their stakeholders. Hence, developing an event portfolio that is capable of pursuing the attainment and the magnification of specific end elements of the host city's broad tourism product and service mix is advocated (Getz, 1997; O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006:62; Ziakas & Costa, 2011a). The policy of cross-leveraging could provide far-reaching capabilities to a wider audience (Getz, 2008; Ziakas, 2013:24), as well as making events sustainable through the optimisation of multifunctional resources (O'Brien, 2006:242; UNEP, 2012:4; Ziakas, 2013:2). As propounded by Ziakas (2013:5), the attributes of each event in the portfolio could serve to complement and reinforce the benefits bestowed by other events (Ziakas & Costa, 2011b). The above could enable destinations to: diversify and enrich their tourism product (Chalip & McGuirly, 2004:270; Taks, Chalip, Green, Kessenne & Martyn, 2009:121); build an image reflecting the true cultural and sports events aspects of the destination, in a form of "festivalisation of the city" (Richards & Palmer, 2010; Steinbrink, Haferburg & Ley, 2011:15); tackle seasonality; foster social networks supporting tourism; and help to develop sustainable tourism in general (O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006:62; Wäsche et al., 2013; Ziakas, 2013:3). The potential of event portfolios has yet to be demonstrated, as they represent a relatively novel conception within the field of tourism (Kellett et al., 2008:103), and, subsequently, there is still scant research available on the role of event portfolios as tools for tourism development (Chalip, 2007:20; Ziakas, 2013:3).

As destinations seek to position themselves globally, they diversify the tourism product and continue to contest international events (OECD, 2017:26). According to the UNWTO's (2015:34) outlook on African tourism development, the challenge facing destinations seeking to develop a unique tourism product requires long-term development planning. Moreover, the hosting of major events brings the prospect of increased tourist flow (Gibson, 1998:161; UNWTO, 2015:9). The emergence of new partnerships for the financing of sport, tourism, culture and facilities provides an exciting opportunity for the addressing of infrastructure challenges required for further growth (OECD, 2017:12). For instance, as Gabon is focused on developing its tourism sector, it is currently seeking investors to diversify the tourism product. In fact, Aman Resorts' interest in terms of the above underlines the potential of the Gabonese tourism industry in relation to attracting investments for development (Oxford Business Group, 2015).



Within the context of the destination portfolio and the diversification of the tourism industry, as outlined by Ziakas (2013:4), the Gabonese government vision has been to foster collaboration with private investors, donors, non-governmental organisations, and multilateral funders, so as to be able to develop a sustainable tourism industry (White et al., 2007:15; Ziakas, 2020). Hence, the realisation of the “Rainforest Africa” initiative has been planned around the following seven areas for further growth:

- model parks;
- policy reform;
- the service sector;
- the infrastructure;
- capacity building;
- global marketing; and
- investors and partners.

The implementation and aspects of the Gabonese tourism strategy will be discussed in the next section on the events portfolio (3.2.5), which includes an introductory discussion of the sector’s development and leverageable assets.

Of note, in the view of Chalip and McGuirty (2004:269), the core issues related to leveraging are summarised in saying, “the unfortunate fact is that destination marketers and event organisers often fail to work together in a manner that enables an event to be cross-leveraged within a destination”.

### **3.2.5 Events portfolio**

The literature on various techniques for cross-leveraging has provided two broad sets of grounding strategy, as presented by Ziakas (2013:33): (1) event portfolio planning and leveraging; and (2) the analysing of events networks and of inter-organisational linkages (Hiller, 1998:49; O’Brien & Gardiner, 2006:78; Ziakas & Costa, 2010; Chalip, 2018; Ziakas, 2020). The illustration of the cross-leveraging of major sporting events with smaller scale events refocuses implications of the strategy for the planned legacies, designed in synergy with the destination and its tourism portfolio (Ziakas, 2013:4). Moreover, the author explains that an “event portfolio” is a strategic tool, rather than random collections of miscellaneous events that are hosted in a community (Pugh & Wood, 2004:61). Such a portfolio integrates a series of interrelated events in terms of resources, themes, and markets (Ziakas, 2013:5; Chalip, 2014:8). The strategic approach to the management of events within a portfolio (O’Brien, 2006:257; Ziakas & Costa, 2011a; Hemmonsbey, Tichaawa & Knott, 2018) is a direct response to the discourse revolving around the political process involved in electing to host a major event (Cornelissen, 2007:253), and around the view that the economic, social, and environmental aspects of major events are unsustainable for their host communities (Jago et al., 2010:224).

Despite the growing number of studies on the aggregate impacts of mega events, Goldblatt (2002:2) points to the absence of empirical evidence to validate the social, political, ecological, and economic benefits of the projects concerned. Similarly, the discussed strategy lacks sufficient work either to facilitate or to impede networking and alliance formation for and through events (Chalip, 2004:220), although it, of essence, is a notion of civic or tourism 'boosterism' through the exercise of power (Getz, 2008:417). The commitment of resources to mega events is assessed by means of identifying the potential exploitable events, together with the related assets, to generate effective benefits from tourism's future prospects (Faulkner, Spurr, Chalip & Brown, 2000:132; Andranovich, Burbank & Heying, 2001:114; Bama & Tichaawa, 2020). The concept of leverage within the event management literature shifts the focus from event impacts to event strategies (Chalip, 2005:165; 2006:112; Smith, 2009:4). The process, as part of an event portfolio strategy, is intended to optimise the reach and frequency of events, in terms of the aggregate tourism mix of a destination and the development of tourism product (Richards & Palmer, 2010:17; Chalip, 2014:8). As part of the tourism mix, a destination strategy can be varied in the size of events, as well as in terms of the type of events. As propounded by Gibson et al. (2003:182), small-scale events require less resources than do mega events, thus being less of a burden on taxpayers. Essentially, the portfolio of events in the development of a destination tourism product is founded on a strategic evaluation of the one who is employed for developing a company product and services (Getz, 2008:407).

Moreover, the above involves strategic patterning on the basis of operational and thematic relatedness; in other words, events relatedness refers to the different ways in which complementarity is achieved (Brown et al., 2010:283; Chalip et al., 2003:228; Smith, 2009:4; Ziakas, 2013). The relatedness is established through: (1) capitalisation of the capacity of events to engender markets; (2) the transfer of knowledge in organising events effectively and efficiently; (3) the utilisation of themes that are symbiotically connected among different events, so as to maximise their impact; and (4) the mobilisation of shared resources, as well as (5) volunteer pools that can facilitate event implementation (O'Brien, 2006:9; Chalip, 2006:117; Ziakas, 2013:5). In an event portfolio, potential benefits can be leveraged to diversify the tourism product within the same destination, thereby targeting diverse market segments in a relatively large audience (Chalip & McGuirty, 2004:267; Ziakas & Costa, 2011b). The process is argued to provide an approach for the optimal use of resources through co-branding for the sustainability of the hosting of events (Kavaratzis, 2005:334). Within the tourism policy agenda, the product mix is developed, so as to treat event hooks for one another (Getz, 2008:417). Projects are themed with the related aspects of the destination resources (Chalip, 2006:117), including those from the public and private sector as a holistic strategy for events bundling and co-branding (Stokes, 2006:684; Jago et al., 2010:232; Smith, 2014:22). Though the destination's attractiveness as part of the overall mix of events is inferred by the theory of

population ecology, in the sense that the health of the portfolio is probably more important than is its sustainability, its strategic marketing sense is more critical than are the factors that are of social and cultural consideration (Getz, 2008:418).

An event portfolio is instrumental in accumulating the value that it brings to the host community. In terms of the aspect (Ziakas, 2013:36), the process is summarised as follows:

- First, an event portfolio can bring together, in the form of a network, the event stakeholders in seemingly disparate events, with the purpose of cross-leveraging them. The result can foster collaboration.
- Second, an event portfolio can integrate different purposes into a comprehensive strategy and incorporate different events into a coherent whole that is more than the sum of its parts, thereby achieving synergy.
- Third, an event portfolio can sustain the benefits of events that, alone, would otherwise have an ephemeral lifespan.
- Fourth, an event portfolio can help optimise the use of a host community's integrated set of resources.

According to Ziakas and Boukas (2014:96), the frequency of events and the variety of target markets (i.e. local, regional, national, and international) concerned can serve as a response to sustainability through the devising of a balanced event portfolio strategy, involving events of different magnitude (Ziakas & Costa, 2011a). In the aforementioned context, O'Brien (2006:3) argues that small-scale events can form part of a destination portfolio that reinforces the benefits of large-scale events in terms of a regional long-term plan for development (O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006:26). In addition, they can also serve as a means of fostering the human capital that is necessary for them to succeed (Ziakas, 2013:6). Similarly, one-off events can be included in the destination's portfolio strategy, so as to foster repeat visitation that should serve to increase tourism flow (Chalip & McGuirly, 2004:272; Taks et al., 2009). The strategy refers to those activities that need to be undertaken around the event itself, and those that seek to maximise the long-term benefits gained from events (Chalip, 2004:228; O'Brien, 2006:258). Adopting such a strategic approach entails an *ex ante* and analytical mindset, argues Chalip (2006:113), who focuses on why and how intended event outcomes can occur, thereby explaining the processes and strategic means that can enable their attainment (O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006:30).

Since events are generally sought after as assets, the cross-leveraging of an event's assets with those of the host destination imply the possession of additional assets and resources (Ziakas, 2013:7). Moreover, the goal of all types of cross-leveraging is to foster the development of synergistic means that aim to attain, magnify, and sustain the benefits and planned legacies of events. As propounded by O'Brien and Gardiner (2006:26), the legacy is sought through a networking of relationships engendered by the event-related opportunities for regional business growth and tourism development (O'Brien, 2006:241). However, existing

challenges exacerbate the creation of synergies between culture, art and sport events (Ziakas, 2013:25).

The long-term development of a host city is determined by how such events generate economic growth, manage sustained economic impacts, raise the destination profile (both international and domestic), and bring about immediate social and cultural benefits that subsequently become the legacies of the events (OECD, 2017:20). In relation to an event portfolio, targeted impacts can relate to:

- the economy (in terms of tourism and business);
- the brand, identity and reputation;
- the event-related media and profile;
- the social and cultural aspects; and
- issues of sustainability.

The five key impact areas are used to assess an event's overall success in terms of achieving the desired outcomes (OECD, 2017:20). Furthermore, the areas can be used to cross-leverage potentially related aspects. Globally, cities use the promotion of such events as festivals, shows, exhibitions, fairs, and championships, as tools of urban development (Bob, Swart & Moodley, 2005:107; Richards & Palmer, 2010:2). Special events have often been regarded as a means of developing regional economies and of fostering community links, with events and festivals being dependent on local and regional audiences, as well as established links (Getz, 2004:23; Mackellar, 2005:91; Brown et al., 2010:281). In fact, a link has been established across sport-based initiatives, entertainment, culture, and tourism, to form mechanisms that are commonly used to reshape the urban landscape for an attractive host and its region (Silvestre, 2008-2009:4; Green et al., 2008:354). However, existing research points to a gap in the availability of clear, consistent evaluation frameworks that can be used by the sport and culture sector (Ruiz, 2004; Thornton, 2011:24).

Within the context of community-based festivals, there exists a common good to be gained from shared experience. Such social capital, according to Derrett (2000:125), is responsible for the development of a sense of community that fills the spaces between people and networks, and which is often referred to as 'community pride' and the 'feel-good effect' (Fredline, Deery & Jago, 2006:2).

An environment of social reciprocity can serve to promote the region's cultural capital. In terms of the attainment of symbiosis regarding a sport and tourism portfolio, a region can attract tourists by way of exposure through related events (Gibson et al., 2003:182), or through word-of-mouth promotion (Derrett, 2000:125). Regional actors within the tourism sectors are invited to extend their activities beyond the aspects of economic well-being, to the generating of images that demonstrate and promote the lifestyle and landscape of the local community. By

means of the optimal use of resources that lie within the realm of creativity, through to the use of cultural resources that enable intercultural cities to harness skills and social capital for the sustainability of events, a region's attractiveness can be enhanced (Richards & Palmer, 2010:17).

Meanwhile, Ziakas (2013:7) argues that, to achieve the integration of events in development strategies, the attention should be shifted from merely demarcating the insulated taxonomies of events towards capitalising on their values. Similarly, Swart and Bob (2007:377) posit that collaboration through the exchange that takes place between sport and tourism can maximise cross-funding's related benefits. In an effort to gain understanding of attractive similarities with respect to the events of a festive or cultural nature, Derrett (2000:122) notes that events are an opportunity for visitors to 'do as the locals do'. The linkage is drawn from the values, interests and aspirations of the local residents, which the visitors desire to explore. In the context of sport tourism, the local sites are an attraction for "meeting and convention" planners, who can incentivise their attendees with the environment created by the event (Neirotti, 2003:2).

The portfolio management approach is advocated as being of critical importance for the sustainability of legacies, which could be attainable through the incorporation of cultural heritage tourism within the product mix (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:96). Similarly, Chalip (2006:124) posits examining ways in which the experience can be expressed differently through the synergy achieved through the integrating of different aspects of tourism (Ziakas & Costa, 2010b). In the literature, events are divided in terms of their scale and magnitude, demarcating large-scale and small-scale events without, however, prompting the development of synergies between them, including the bundling together of the sport and cultural tourism products (Ziakas & Boukas, 2014:97). Dwyer and Kim (2003:372) note that the challenges of integration present a set of opportunities that organisations ought to seize to make destinations competitive by means of looking beyond rivalries, involving players, include public and private organisations, that are linked through the sector's development policy (O'Brien, 2006:241). Destinations and tourism development firms can use the multiplicity of industries involved to focus on issues of relatedness as the basis for harnessing resources that can be cross-leveraged as part of a unified strategy (Hassan, 2000:239).

In the context of tourism in Africa, the tourism product is either directed at a specific group, or it is mostly undiversified, in the sense that it is limited to safaris and spa tourism (Richards, 2000; Gravari-Barbas & Jacquot, 2013:4). The sector's potential is more significant, as cultural capacities and natural assets can be leveraged to create opportunities for the local communities, which, in turn, contribute to a sense of social inclusiveness (UNWTO, 2015:4).

Informal social opportunities that are brought about by events provide a setting that is conducive to the increasing of economic impact by means of attracting attendees who can enjoy the sociable atmosphere generated (Chalip, 2006:122). The destination's attractiveness is built into the promotion of the local identity, in the form of social opportunities that are granted to visitors for exploring its cultural values (Derrett, 2000:122). Similarly, events serve as social opportunities for the local communities to socialise and interact with other cultures (Sims & D'Mello, 2005:278). The meaning that is attached to event attendees is founded in the 'doing', or in the 'being there' experience, which then influences future behaviour (Getz, 2008:414). The sociability thus engendered can then encourage increased spending, due to the visitors' lengthened stay (Derrett, 2000:122). As such, a social phenomenon acts as a catalyst to forge new social relationships, or to strengthen existing ones between the relevant stakeholders and the visiting tourists (O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006:39). The newly unearthed social capital consists of inherent behaviours that grow within a spirit of event *communitas* (Chalip, 2006:111; Getz, 2008:414). The manifestation of such behaviour serves to strengthen the social fabrics, with its unique ability to form relationships across age, gender, and social class categories that are not normally bridged outside the limonoid space of events (Chalip, 2006:122). Within this space, festive events generate a cumulative impact, through the publicising of the community's identity, from which the destination benefits (Derrett, 2000:122).

The challenge of event leverage entails the identification of leverageable assets, followed by the formulation of the necessary means to capitalise thereon (Legro, 2000; Sam, 2003; Holan & Nelson, 2004; Jordan, Wurzel & Zito, 2005). The use of cross-leveraging strategies within the context of a portfolio can integrate sport and other events (socio-cultural, festival) for economic and social purposes (Ziakas, 2013:94). Moreover, the integration of the perspectives is believed to bridge the gap between the processes and outcomes of events, hence revealing their interconnections (Quinn, 2009:33). In such a context, the tourism mix manifests the vast structure that constitutes sport as a leisure activity, together with the tourism activities around sport. The kind of environment (such as wildlife-dominated areas, safari environs, beaches, deserts, rivers, mountains, and deserts) that is conducive to such activities varies in terms of location as well as in terms of the sporting disciplines that prevail there (such as trekking, wildlife viewing, diving), apart from for the common factor of the presence of nature (Belber & Erdogan, 2019:75). Therefore, Gabon can be seen to offer innovative structures within the natural environment that serve to attract nature-based tourism and sport activities aimed at enabling visitors to experience the natural aspects of its territories. However, the dynamics that are in place to foster and develop this sector of leisure and sport ecotourism require the involvement of the local communities as actors in the tourism industry (Ghislain, 2014:114).

Noteworthy, according to Ritchie, Shipway and Cleeve (2009:148), the importance (value) that the residents place on certain outcomes, and the degree to which they believe tourism to

contribute to such outcomes (their expectancy) provide useful insights into explaining the variation in attitudes that are exhibited towards tourism, and towards mega sporting events (Fredline, 2004:166).

As argued by Ziakas and Costa (2011a), the managing capacities of a community are considered in optimising destination resources (Jago et al., 2010:220). The design and pursuit of a unique developmental strategy is required to incorporate them within a portfolio (Getz, 2008:422; Stokes, 2008:253). Moreover, such a strategy can serve to drive the targeting of events, including the facilitation of inter-organisational collaboration among the different event stakeholders. Jago et al. (2010:231) note that private sector operators can also leverage mega events to present their own branding. The strategy that is developed as part of a destination portfolio requires the employment of a multidimensional framework (Bob et al., 2008:56; Clark, 2008b:123), which can require the integration of specialised disciplines, like marketing, policy, leverage, and others. However, Ziakas (2013:23) cautions that the complexity of such an undertaking requires the comprehensive understanding of tourism-related aspects, event specifications, and destination portfolio (Yoon, 2002; Marzano, 2007:10; Allen et al., 2011:135).

Finally, Ziakas (2013:14) concludes that it is within the understanding of industry actors that the core aspects of an events portfolio use the triple bottom-line as a means of ensuring the distribution of benefits and the harmonious spreading of the economic, social and environmental implications of the tourism industry (O'Brien, 2006:257; Hede, 2008; Kellett et al., 2008:116; O'Brien & Chalip, 2008; Newland & Yoo, 2020). Accordingly, the following subsections discuss the relevant definitions, contexts and implications of tourism, sport and sport tourism.

### **3.3 Tourism**

In terms of the Commission of the European Communities, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations, and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (2001:13), tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to, and staying in, places outside of their usual environment for no longer than one consecutive year, for purposes of leisure and business, among others. Tourism starts in the tourist's place of residence, at the moment when the planning of the trip, and of the related spending, occurs. At that juncture, tourism becomes lived experience with the journey towards the destination, where the tourist expects to be able to access accommodation, entertainment, amenities, and leisure opportunities (Candela & Figini, 2012:19). In other words, as referred to by Saayman (2012:3), tourism may be described as a highly diversified business, including many different elements, ranging from airlines to hotels. Consequently, tourism is concerned with providing

travel and transport facilities, accommodation, food and drink, entertainment/recreation, information, assistance, and souvenirs.

According to Saayman (2012:3), the total experience that originates with the interaction between tourists, job providers, government systems, and communities comprises the context of tourism (Fredline et al., 2006:9; Ritchie et al., 2009:148). Within the ambit of such interaction exists the process of attracting visitors and of providing services in terms of transport, accommodation, and catering, with a variety of hotels, restaurants, and food, drink and hospitality vendors existing within the tourism industry (Hritz & Ross, 2010:119; Saayman, 2012:4).

According to the UNWTO, tourism is one of Africa's most promising sectors in terms of potential development. In 2014, Africa received 56 million international tourists, up from 26 million in 2000. Meanwhile Kimera (2019) indicated that some 67million international tourists visited Africa in 2018, second only to the Asia Pacific region. International tourism receipts amount to US\$36 billion, or to 7% of all exports on the continent (UNWTO, 2015:2). Due to its natural resources and its location in the Congo Basin, Gabon is covered by a rich biodiversity, with it having 13 national parks (which are classified as protected areas), giving the country as a whole enormous potential for ecotourism development (ORCE, 2011:9). The practice of tourism is considered to accelerate reform, as it plays a significant role in the development of pro-business policies, and in helping to shape reforms that attract foreign investment, and that serve to stimulate the development of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (UNTWO, 2015:8). According to the School of Travel Industry Management (n.d.:2), an equally important element in the tourism industry is the tourism product. Such products consist of many different components, including accommodation facilities, attraction activities, and services, which, together, provide the desired experience for visitors and tourists (WTTC, 2015:2). By organising the 2012 AFCON Cup, the tourism industry in Gabon experienced a boom in restaurant and hospitality-related activities (ORCE, 2011:7).

According to the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), tourism is an efficient generator of employment in the developing countries (Ashley & Mitchell, 2006). Blanke and Chiesa (2013:3) state that the sector is critical for economic growth in terms of job creation and the raising of national income levels. The travel and tourism industry in Africa are estimated to employ about 6.3 million people (OECD, 2008:107). Meanwhile, the regional director of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) for the Africa programme, Elcia Grandcourt, noted that the continent's potential remains "untapped". In addition, she further highlighted that the growth of the industry is positive, in the sense that African countries can meaningfully and sustainably develop the continent's tourism product (UNWTO, 2015). Thereby, a solid contribution can be made to development, economic growth, employment opportunities, poverty alleviation,



investment opportunities, and infrastructure development (UNWTO, 2015:5). According to the then Minister of the Small & Micro Enterprises, Trade, Tourism and Industry, Mrs. Madeleine Berre, in Gabon, tourism is a priority of national importance, as the sector is capable of yielding inclusive growth within a relatively short period (Gabon Review, 2017). Furthermore, the former Minister asserted that plans have been launched, in partnership with the UNWTO, to develop infrastructure and policies for promoting tourism, and for preserving the country's biodiversity (Gabon Review, 2017). These plans were said to be part of the government's Strategic Plan for an Emerging Gabon (PSGE) which were aimed to engender economic diversification (AEO, 2017:262). Gabon is therefore in a unique position today, as the country is endowed with rich mineral resources such as oil and gas, and with the country having successfully kept its natural environment relatively unspoiled (Lee, 2012:4).

In addition to natural resources, local cultural diversities form, in and of themselves, benefits in terms of tourism products. With adequate funding, the protection of land for nature-based tourism can serve as a safety net for some of the poorest communities on Earth (OECD, 2008:109). Nature-based tourism is one of the fastest growing segments in the global tourism industry. A wide range of activities (including trekking, wildlife viewing, climbing, etc.) in a wide range of locations (e.g. islands, deserts, forests, mountains, and savannas, etc.) can serve to diversify the tourism product (OECD, 2008:107). However, such opportunities require to be seized on by national economies that wish to convert their values for visiting tourists into revenue by way of the tourism industry. As part of the Gabonese government's pursuit of the principle of sustainable development, the strategic pillars involved are Services Gabon and Green Gabon (Lee, 2012:5), which are being used as a path for diversifying, for growing ecotourism, and for expanding tourism-related products and services. For instance, the country's rich biodiversity and national parks are assets that can be employed to provide multiple activities in support of safari and seaside tourism, using suitable territories to develop water-based tourism, and a range of water-based sport activities (ORCE, 2011:11).

Apart from their natural resources and economic variables, a community's socio-demographics are critical factors in terms of tourism, in the sense that they influence the perception of events (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000b:766; Fredline, 2004; Sims & D'Mello, 2005:275; Ritchie & Inkari, 2006, as cited in Ritchie et al., 2009:148). Proximity to the event, and to the tourism product as a whole, may influence political affiliation, length of stay, or how the connection is established between visitors and the local community (Kim & Petrick, 2005:25; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006:609; Ritchie et al., 2009:143). The reaction to mega events can be explained through the variables that reflect the differences existing among subgroups in the community. The issue of dichotomy is raised in terms of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors relating to resident perceptions of events, and the influences that they have on tourism (Sims & D'Mello, 2005:278; Ritchie et al., 2009:148). The 'extrinsic' dimension refers to those

variables that affect resident perceptions at the macro level (where they have a common impact on the community as a whole), whereas the 'intrinsic' dimension refers to the heterogeneity of the host community, and to the perceptions of impacts that may vary, according to the variations in the characteristics and circumstances of the individuals concerned (Fredline et al., 2006:5; Ritchie et al., 2009:148). Furthermore, residents' involvement in decision making is regarded as an important factor in their perceptions of tourism development (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006:604). Essentially, the perception becomes part of human culture, which can be transmitted across the generations within shared information systems (Hudson, Hinch, Walker & Simpson, 2010:74).

Saayman (2012:3) posits that, from a sport tourism perspective, sport activity serves as an attraction. Therefore, for the purposes of the current study, the next section will focus on one aspect of the tourism product, namely sport.

### **3.4 Sport**

A popular perception of sport is best reflected by Bale's (1989) comment that sport is what is written about on the sport pages of daily newspapers (Hinch & Higham, 2001:47). Neirotti (2003:2) points that the definition of sport is varied in terms of numerous perspectives (Turco et al., 2002; Gibson, 2013; Roche et al., 2013), and that it depends on two clear specifications, being those of active sport and event-based sport (Kaplanidou & Gibson, 2010:164), which are widely accepted as an important element of sport tourism (Ross, 2006; Kumar, 2009; Schwarz, Hunter & Lafleur, 2013:4). As a socially constructed activity that is marked by unique interaction, such tourism bridges historical eras, societies and cultural dimensions (Weed & Bull, 2004:14; Chain, 2009:13). An oft referred to definition of sport is that it is a "physical activity regulated by principles and regulated by rules, in which participation is competitive" (Turco et al., 2002:3).

Sport is defined in various ways and from different viewpoints (Neirotti, 2003:2; Pink, 2008:8; Gibson, 2013), with the varying perspectives on sport having resulted from the multiple points of connection existing between sport and tourism (Kurtzman & Zauhar, 2003:35). Standeven and De Knop (1999:12) argue that a relatively broad realisation of what constitutes sport is required. McPherson and Curtis (1989:15) identify five aspects of sport that closely reflect its essence and development. They define sport as a structured, goal-oriented, competitive, contest-based, and ludic physical activity. Such aspects are closely related within the context of sport as an activity, while also allowing for a more inclusive view of sport in terms of participants and spectators. Pink (2008:3) classifies sport in terms of physical, regulated and competitive aspects, with their physical activities' variance residing in their intensity, frequency, domain of activity, and extent. In terms of the exertion that is involved in physical activity,

participation is motivated by the pursuit of pleasure, skill, excellence, and health/fitness (Chelladurai, 1992:43-44).

Sport is structured in the sense that, in general, sport activities are governed by rules (Pink, 2008:10). Such rules may be manifested in a variety of ways, including in terms of the dimension of the location in which the activity takes place and the duration and intensity of the sport activity (Pink, 2008:4). Sport, as a structured activity, is defined by Ritchie and Adair (2004:3) as “socially constructed and determined by historical eras, societies and cultures”. The structured aspect of sport can usually be adapted to a less rigorous, informal form, either as a recreational activity, or because the participants are amateurs (Pink, 2008:8; Ghislain, 2014:102). Broadly speaking, traditional sport structures have lost their homogenous application within the sports system (Hinch & Higham, 2001:54; Augustin, 2007:224; Bouzougoula, 2012:195), with sport being a physical activity that relates to space and time (Hinch & Higham, 2001:48).

Furthermore, sport is goal-oriented, in the sense that sporting situations usually involve an objective to be achieved in relation to ability, competence, effort, degree of difficulty, mastery, or performance (Hinch & Higham, 2001:48). Coakley (1990) reflects such aspects in his characterisation of sport as a quest that requires a complexity of physical skills and energetic physical effort. Similarly, Ritchie and Adair (2004:4) insist that the classification of sport should encompass four major factors, consisting of physical conditions, complex physical skills, intricate physical skills, and individual participation. A comprehensive view that encompasses the above aspects pertains to sport being an activity involving physical exertion, skill, and/or hand-eye coordination as the primary focus of the activity, marked by elements of competition, with rules and patterns of behaviour governing the activity that takes place formally through the functioning of the relevant organisations (Pink, 2008:10; Ghislain, 2014:164-165).

Meanwhile, the competitive aspect is interpreted much less rigidly, comparatively speaking, in terms of competing against individual standards, inanimate objects, or the natural forces of nature (Hinch & Higham, 2001:48). Tomlinson (2011:10) asserts that sport has the capacity to construct a world of its own, with distinct rules, schedules and spaces, and offers the possibility of improvement of skill and performance through planned practice. Weed (2010) provides another definition that is relatively flexible, in terms of considering the competitive aspect of sport, defining sport as an autotelic physical contest. A similar context is found in the writings of Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988:365), who identify several different dimensions of the activity. The researcher defines sport as encompassing: intense involvement; deep concentration; the clarity of goals and feedback; the loss of a sense of time; the lack of self-consciousness; and the transcendence of a sense of self, leading to an intrinsically rewarding experience. A specific and more inclusive view of the competitive aspect

in sport is proposed by Emery (2002:317), in line with a definition proffered by the Council of Europe in its 1993 Sport Charter and revised in 2001. As stated in the revised Sport Charter sport is considered to consist of “all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, is aimed at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being; through which social results are obtained at all levels of competition” (Emery, 2002:317). The aforementioned aspect of sport reflects the thinking of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, father of the modern Olympic Games, who held a belief that sport could bring people and nations together, as competition acts as a provider of harmony among organisations, nations and competitors (Saayman, 2012:2).

The aforementioned definitions are those that are the most commonly cited in the sport tourism literature. In the above context, Hinch and Higham (2001:48) also view sport as not being limited to acts of physical prowess, but also being inclusive of the demonstration of such acts. Moreover, a closely related aspect of competition is the contest-based nature of sport, in terms of which outcomes are determined by means of a combination of physical prowess, speed, stamina, strength, and coordinated accuracy. Bjelac and Radovanovic (2003:260) define sport as consisting of creative and complex sports-like, recreational activities, which are of an entertaining character. The activities are performed in accordance with a particular predetermined programme, achieve touristic effects, and have social and economic importance for the place or region in which they are held.

Finally, McPherson and Curtis (1989) define sport as having a playful nature, being ludic, which is a term that is derived from the Latin word *ludus*, meaning play or game. Sport is, therefore, rooted in, although not exclusive to, play and games (Pink, 2008:11). The notion is mirrored by the game occurrence approach, as observed by Neirotti (2003:2). The element concerned includes the notion of uncertainty of outcome and formalised rules. In relatively competitive versions of sport, a basic objective is that the competitors should be evenly matched, thereby making the outcome of a game uncertain (Hinch & Higham, 2001:48; Ramshaw & Gammon, 2005:232).

A country like Gabon, which is rich in historical and cultural traditions, has a web of around 62 languages that are spread across a vast array of ethnic groups (Ghislain, 2014:94). Each ethnic group has a unique culture, with its own variety of games that reflect the group's cultural identity (Minkoue M'Akono, 2008:53). The games can all be classified as aspects of social, cultural, economic, and traditional purpose. When observing such practices, the notion of collective activity, regulation, and social lessons are deeply embedded in the folkloric activities, which, in essence, reflect ancestral value. Caillois (1958, as cited in Ghislain, 2014:162), a socio-anthropologist critic of contemporary literature, argues that traditional practices (ancestral events), which, in some form, are physical, are fundamentally entwined with aspects

of social education, ceremonies, festivities, and initiation games that might include elements of amusement, or hunting (Minkoue M'Akono, 2008:58; Bouzougoula, 2012:82; Ghislain, 2014:43).

In Africa, and in Gabon in particular, cultural and traditional values, including sport techniques, have been passed down from generation to generation (Dietschy & Kemo-Keimbou, 2008:20; Callède, 2010:9). The activities were often practised by a clan, group, or members of a family, as a rite of passage, or to honour the traditional values inherent therein (Boukingui-Ngouangui, 1999:110; Bouzougoula, 2012:82). The purpose of such practice was not only cultural and social acceptance, but it was often a way of learning practical life lessons, like those relating to self-defence, organisational structure, cultural identity, and artistic display (Caillois, 1958:42-43), amounting to a folkloric home-grown Olympics (Ghislain, 2014:162).

In formulating the definition of sport, consideration was given to its physical, competitive and institutional characteristics, as well as to how it has been shaped by both social and cultural influences (Pink, 2008:8; Ghislain, 2014:75). The benefits attributed to participating in sport are outlined in Thornton's (2011:19) study on Olympic Games and Paralympic Games as consisting of the following:

- Participation in sport (and cultural activities) improves educational results, social networks, and social cohesion, as well as increasing confidence and a sense of self-worth (Ruiz, 2004).
- A link has been demonstrated between participation in sport and culture and a reduction in offending behaviour (Ruiz, 2004).
- Sporting and cultural events have an economic impact in terms of generating employment, boosting regeneration, and attracting increased expenditure or visits (Ruiz, 2004).

Looking at Leiper's (1990a) perspectival model of the tourism system Hall and Page (2010) consider sport as a set of interlinked activities. As such, Getz (2008:409) notes that sport, as a concept, overlaps with the concept of tourism, setting itself up as a significant activity within tourism, and possibly involving travel (Kumar, 2009:51). Tourism thereby becomes a fundamental aspect of sport (Hinch & Higham, 2001:48; De Knop, 2004:304). Given the interconnectivity of sport and tourism, the overlapping of activities is essentially what characterises sport tourism as a whole (Pigeassou, 2004:287).

### **3.5 The confluence of sport and tourism**

Since the mid-1990s, sport tourism has been identified as an important and growing sector of the sport and tourism industries, with its development, since then, has taken on impressive proportions (Gibson, 1998:155; Travassos, 2008; Hritz & Ross, 2010:119). Like most social science concepts, no universally accepted definitions of sport or tourism exist that would make

such an exercise easy. Each concept is vague, and a variety of definitions have been developed to address a broad range of needs (Hinch & Higham, 2001:46).

The treatment of sport and tourism as separate spheres of activity by both academics and practitioners is observed by Glyptis (1991), who also identifies the close link in behaviour characterising the two fields (Higham & Hinch, 2002:175). The linkage is presented in a systematic and integrative approach by Stevens and Van den Broek (1997), as well as by Delpy (1998). The mapping of models of sport as a touristic activity is discussed with respect to the primary reason for travel being either sport (Kurtzman & Zauhar, 2005:47) or travel (Robinson & Gammon, 2004:226). The aforementioned classification system is further grounded by Standeven and De Knop (1999:63), who distinguish sport tourism as consisting of a two-dimensional experience that takes place in a particular setting. Moreover, the researchers concerned articulated key components of the two dimensions, thereby allowing for the concept of sport tourism to be analysed more deeply still. A bisectonal concept was established from two distinct perspectival points, sport or tourism (Gammon & Robinson, 2003:22). A series of frameworks was then developed to prove the interdependence of the two activities, pointing to the influence that the one has on the other (De Knop, 1998; Standeven & De Knop, 1999:12). The above is echoed by Hudson (2012), and by Standeven and De Knop (1999:5), who describe the relationship as symbiotic, due to the reliance on the support of each to make the other successful. The symbiosis is reflected in the sense that tourism provides food and beverages, accommodation, transport, and other services, with the further growth and development of the tourism industry depending on sport as a mainstay (Saayman, 2012:3).

According to Hinch and Higham (2001:47), most definitions tend to include activity, in terms of specific spatial and temporal dimensions (Pink, 2008:2). Standeven and De Knop (1999:12) define sport tourism as “all forms of active and passive involvement in sporting activity, participated in casually or in an organised way for non-commercial or business/commercial reasons; that necessitate travel away from home and work locality”. A similar view is proposed by Gibson (2003:207), who refined the definition to convey the following: “the intention to travel for participating in a sporting event or be a spectator for a sporting event when sport is the primary reason for the travel to the destination and is motivated by external forces”. Another definition suggested by Weed and Bull (2012:56) and Hudson (2012) further highlights the aspect of participation, as events tend to attract participants and spectators (Getz, 2008:412). This viewpoint on sport tourism is further articulated by the key characteristics of sport tourism as including travelling away from home to play or watch sport, or to visit a sport attraction, as well as the related competitive and non-competitive activities (Hinch & Higham, 2004:19). Sport is generally positioned as being the primary travel activity, although Gammon and Robinson (2003:24) distinguish between sport tourism and tourism sport.

Gibson (2003:207) defines sport tourists as being those individuals who live away from their home community, and who actively participate in, watch, or visit sport attractions (Hudson, 2003:2). Thus, sport tourism is the activity of those who visit a destination for the primary purpose of participating in, or viewing, sport (Turco et al., 2002:3). The approach is distinctly expressed by Smith (1988), whose definition of tourism diverges from many others. The researcher evokes the idea of someone travelling away from their home environment for at least a 24-hour period. Gibson (2004:207) reveals that the sport tourist is someone who travels primarily for sport, or for a sporting event, while away from home. In contrast, tourism sport indicates that travel and seeing new places is the main reason for the visit paid, whereas sport is the secondary reason. Kurtzman (2005:49) adds to the aforementioned notion that travelling relatively great distances to attend, watch, and participate in sporting events has become part of the culture of sports, as embraced by the specific sector of the tourism industry that is increasingly being accepted as sport tourism. Sport tourism has had a major impact on tourism and the tourism experience (Kurtzman & Zauhar, 2005:12).

Discussions on differentiating sport tourism and tourism sport, as conducted by both Hinch and Higham (2001) and Gibson (2004; 2005b), have led to the establishment of travel as a primary reason for the sport tourism confluence. However, the attraction of sport tourists might be motivated by other aspects (i.e. destination, participation, mode of transport, etc.) (Kurtzman, 2005:50). Active sport tourists take into consideration such segments of the hospitality industry as golf courses, ski resorts, country clubs, and so forth (Gibson, 1998:155). Sport, in the context of tourism, is defined by Coakley (2001:8) as being “organised and institutionalised competitive activity that involves vigorous physical exertion, or the use of relatively complex skills, by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors”. In the developed world, sport and tourism are the most sought-after leisure experiences, thereby forming the context of sport tourism (Ritchie & Adair, 2002:1).

In the context of sport tourism, consisting of the overall tourism experience, including goods and services (Neirotti, 2003:3), and not necessarily as bound by the sporting aspect of the event, other factors exist that influence the tourist decision to undertake travel to experience the destination tourism product (Green & Chalip, 1998:276; Getz, 2008:414; Sheng & Chen, 2013). The aspect of socialisation and personality is considered to be the primary reason for travelling to an athletic event (Neirotti, Bosetti & Teed, 2001:328; Robinson & Gammon, 2004:222). The tourist experience is motivated by the expectation of such benefits as ease and fun, cultural entertainment, personal identification, historical reminiscences, and escapism (Zhou, 2015:4). The tourism experience is formed by the complex interaction of: opinion leadership; tourist self-image; information; memory; tourist sources of communication; travel motivators; attitudes; and perceived risk (Neirotti et al., 2001:327). In contrast, the literature on consumer behaviour in relation to sport describes the social and cultural reasons that motivate

travel. The motivations that underpin the unseen desire to travel by individuals and groups are listed as: recuperation and regeneration; compensation and social integration; escape; communication; freedom and self-determination; self-realisation; happiness; the broadening of the mind (Robinson & Gammon, 2004:223).

In the context of sport tourism, sport fans tend largely to be more concerned with watching the sporting competition than with anything else. Gibson et al. (2003:182) concede that establishing the primary motivation for attending a sporting event is of major importance. The motives that are associated with spectator attendance of events of a sporting nature, as identified by Wann, Allen & Rochelle, (2004) are: group affiliation; family; aesthetic reasons; self-esteem; economic motives; eustress; escape; and entertainment (Robinson & Gammon, 2004:223). Some spectators use sport to escape from “under-stimulation and boredom”, whereas others use it to escape from “overstimulation and stress” (Wann et al., 2004:110). According to the relevant literature, the spectator attendance of sporting events is motivated by three different factors, namely: (1) the festival, party, cultural, or ritual atmosphere (Gibson et al., 2003:186); (2) the association with athletes, or with the event itself; and (3) patriotism or nationalism (Yiannakis, McIntyre, Melnick & Hart, 1987; Bryant & McElroy, 1997; Neirotti et al., 2001:328; Chen, 2006; Getz, 2008:416). Such factors are highly relevant to the hosting of such mega events as the Olympic Games, the World Cups, and the continental championship (AFCON) (Neirotti et al., 2001:328).

Furthermore, the motives to participate in sport tourism do not operate independently of each other, with primary and secondary motives collectively forming the reason for travel (Robinson & Gammon, 2004:223). Sport tourism experiences are products of the interaction between people, destinations and sport activities, which form part of the broad tourism and hospitality sector (Neirotti, 2003:3; Weed & Bull, 2004:134-136). In addition to the experiences that help to form the decision to participate in a specific type of event (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2006:5), there are the tourist expectations that are considered to be a crucial factor in making such a determination. Experiences and expectations are argued to influence the overall degree of tourist satisfaction, highlighting the importance of major sporting events as a destination tourism strategy (Zhou, 2015:4).

Given that the sport tourism experience is a product of interactions between personnel, other tourists, and the overall tourism mix (Moutinho, 2001:5; Ritchie et al., 2009:147), it is important to understand the subculture of spectators and participants. Such understanding is important to enable adjustments to be made to entice the sport tourist to participate in other activities together with members of the host community (Gibson et al., 2003:182). Subcultures, which are based on a sense of shared purpose and common goals, might be geographical in nature, or form part of a community of interest (Schulenkorf, 2005:238). So as to understand the



motives related to sport spectator consumption, several studies have contributed to the existing body of knowledge in this regard (Armstrong, 2002; Bilyeau & Wann, 2002; Fink, Trail & Anderson, 2002; Funk, Mahoney & Ridinger, 2002).

The literature reviewed shows that the major impact of sport tourism events for the host community involves increasing the sense of community cooperation around the event (Gibson et al., 2003:182). A community spirit and high levels of morale influence how the residents are likely to volunteer for an event. Such so-called “psychic income” (Burgan & Mules, 1992) is known to positively influence the decision to travel (Moutinho, 2001:5; Neirotti et al., 2001:327). The above exposes the paradigm of community support, as indicated by Hritz and Ross (2010:120), without which it “is difficult to develop a sustainable tourism industry in the community” (Andereck & Vogt, 2000:27). Meanwhile, communities need to develop a profound understanding of the sport tourism-related benefits that can be gleaned from the hosting of events (Ross, 2001:3). The hospitality of the local community is vital to the tourism industry. As argued by Brown et al. (2010:281), the role that is played by the community is important for special events, as they often depend on the patronage of the local market for their success. Destinations are, accordingly, urged to develop themselves according to their host community needs (Andriotis, 2005; Kim & Petrick, 2005:25).

A 2013 study on the “role of local populations in tourism development projects” in Gabon states that the quality of the tourism product should be designed so as to embed the cultural identity of the local community in enhancing the tourism experience (Cooper et al., 2008:243; Payen, 2013:2). In other words, the experience should be uniquely constructed in terms of the richness and diversity of the natural and cultural heritage of Gabon, which can justify taking the trip concerned, as well as any future ones (Rodary, 2010:43, as cited in Payen, 2013:2). The country’s assets for helping to ensure a quality tourism experience are reflected by the online page, Gabon (2019). The brochure states that Gabon is an environmental treasure, and that it, therefore, is unique in terms of the quality and potential of its tourism product. Gabon, which is the perfect link between the equatorial jungle and the Atlantic Ocean, is bestowed with wide green land that is inhabited by elephants, buffaloes, monkeys, gorillas, antelopes, and much more wildlife. The country also has a remarkable archaeological heritage. In addition to its national parks, Gabon has a magnificent waterfall and vast untouched beaches, where dolphins, humpback whales and leatherback turtles cavort offshore (Gabon, 2019).

Promoting the country’s heritage (cultural, natural and environmental) to attract outside visitors requires putting the local community at the centre of the Gabonese tourism product, and the development thereof (Diecko, 2014:3). Its heritage is legitimised through the eyes of the local community, before gaining broader attraction (Gravari-Barbas & Jacquot, 2013:6). Tourism policies and programmes should consider the development of human capital for boosting the

destination's tourism and competitiveness, by means of promoting the national heritage through the experience and tourism mix (Stacey, 2015:10). In the above context, the social exchange theory is put forward to serve as a framework for understanding the variation of resident attitudes and perceptions toward tourism and events. The assessment of social impacts to underpin the community's perception of impacts is formed by means of direct experiences, social interaction, and other sources of information, such as the media (Ritchie et al., 2009:147). Therefore, the integration of major sporting events in terms of the longitudinal approach can put within reach the principle of sustainability in relation to tourism.

The contributing categories within the overall tourism product include the following forms of tourism: adventure; health; nature; spectator; competitive; recreational or leisure; educational; and business (Neirotti, 2003:2).

### **3.6 Service quality in sport tourism**

Service quality is a way of managing business processes so as to ensure total satisfaction for the customer on all levels. Furthermore, it is observed that quality is a complex term, which is made up of several different elements and criteria. If even only one element of quality is missing, the "complete quality" of a product or service is impossible to obtain (Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1061). Moreover, the efficiency of the whole system is possible only if we monitor and analyse the demands of customers, define and control the process, and implement constant improvements (Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1061; Van Heerden, 2012; Williams & Buswell, 2003:44).

According to Cooper et al. (2008:234), the focus on perceptions and expectations discussed in the Service Quality model (SERVQUALS) by Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1985:41-50; 1988:12) provides a guideline for quality management intervention strategies (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000b:765; Twynham & Johnston, 2004:246; Fredline, 2006). As stressed by Evans and Lindsay (2008), there is a need to understand the various perspectives from which quality is viewed to be able fully to appreciate the role that it plays in the business organisation (Han & Liu, 2007:4). Sport tourism is a service industry that is influenced by the quality of the services provided (Kouthouris & Alexandris, 2005:102). According to Crouch (2000:75), standards in service quality within tourism organisations have become increasingly important. They influence the tourism perception and experience, and the level of satisfaction obtained with the product delivered (Silvers, 2004:123). The issue of tourist satisfaction is one of competitive advantage for the destination concerned (Fuchs & Weiermair, 2004:213; Bull & Lovell, 2007:230), as it serves as a primary indicator of profitability (Greenwell, Fink & Pastore, 2002:132). In a sense, the interaction between the service providers and the tourists is essential to influencing tourist perceptions and the actual tourism experience (Crouch, 2000:75; Harris & Baron, 2003:148; Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1062).

However, as the tourism industry is multifaceted (Bennett & Schoeman, 2005:30), the need for destinations to establish the factors determining the choice of the sport tourist is complex (Williams & Buswell, 2003:65; Johnston & Clark, 2005:105; Hoffman & Bateson, 2006:5, 334; Mudie & Pirrie, 2006:7). As propounded by Getz (2008:422), studies need to provide the means to close the gap between the tourist's intrinsic perceptions and the extrinsic element that motivates attending of the event. A tourism firm needs to be able to evaluate the "latent" demands that have yet to be fully articulated by the consumer, through established expenditure patterns (Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1061). The author explains that, by tapping into latent demands within the consumer psyche, tourism-based firms can satisfy their customers with their creativity and innovation. Service quality from the tourist perspective is termed 'perceived service quality' (Pawitra & Tan, 2003:411; Fisk, Grove & John, 2004:153). The destination product is an experience consisting of an array of commercial tourism services (e.g. accommodation, commercial attractions, events, car rentals, restaurants, tours, etc.), formed by such other industries as hospitality and transport (George, 2004:21; Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1061).

The interaction between customers and tourism service providers is recognised in the tourism services research as being essential to service quality (Crouch, 2000:75). As a major internal factor that plays a role in determining choice for a destination, perception is the process by which an individual select, organises and interprets information, so as to create a meaningful picture of the world (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 1996; Wang & Fesenmaier, 2007:863; Seymour, 2009:19). In the above context, the literature is rich in tales of the quest to establish the relationships between tourism, destination, image, media, influence, cultural identity, loyalty, attraction, service, sport tourism, events as marketing tools, participation, perception, risk perception, resident perception, visitor behaviour, and quality (McKay & Plumb, 2001; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Fink et al., 2002; Kim & Petrick, 2005; Neirotti & Hilliard, 2006; Custódio & Gouveia, 2007; Rein & Shields, 2007; Taylor & Toohey, 2007; Amponsah, Ahmed, Kumar & Adams, 2018; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Ruhanen & Whitford, 2011; Taks, 2013).

According to Fridgen (1991), perception formation could be selective, with it being based on an individual's learning, experience and information received about a phenomenon. Perception is also relative, because what one person perceives to be right might be deemed by another to be wrong (Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1062). Moreover, the perception that one holds of a phenomenon (place, person or destination) is liable to change, based on further information received. The tourist's choice of destination has been identified as being greatly influenced by a destination's image, in other words what is communicated about its tourism product (Kennedy, 2003:82; Custódio & Gouveia, 2007:288; Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1061). A destination uses marketing opportunities that are presented by the media to communicate messages about the event as a way of affecting pre-event perceptions of the host (Garcia, 2004:315;

Custódio & Gouveia, 2007:294; Amponsah et al., 2018:324). So as to grow the tourism product, the UNWTO highlights the importance of a well-defined strategy to analysing and identifying future prospects. In the case of Africa, the tourism potential is wide-ranging, with it promising an array of opportunities for tourism product development (UNWTO, 2015:6). Different cultural groups have been indicated as having different levels of perception, when considering the quality of the tourism product (Atilgan, Akinci & Aksoy, 2003:420). Moreover, international sport events use culture to evoke support for, and to legitimise, their work, proving that culture can impact on the perceptions of an event and of the host country (Amponsah et al., 2018:330). However, a holistic perspective is essential for a destination to incorporate cultural dimensions within a sport-themed destination strategy successfully (Tibbot, 2002:73). Events can be included in a destination-imaging strategy, irrespective of their nature, as a portfolio might bundle MICE, sporting, social and cultural events together (Getz, 2005; Jayswal, 2008:292).

The sport tourism industry is a service industry, and, as such, it is largely influenced by the quality of services provided. Service quality has been suggested as being a key concept for organisations, since research has shown that it is directly related to customer retention rates, and to increased profits for organisations (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Francis, 2003; Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). When customers' perceptions of service quality are positive, the behavioural intentions have been shown to be favourable, which strengthens their relationship with the organisation concerned (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003; Guler, Akdağ, Dalgiç, Benli & Çakici, 2016:11). In contrast, when service quality assessments are negative, the customers' behavioural intentions tend to be unfavourable. According to Smith (1988:184) previous definitions do not encompass the business side of tourism. Smith (1988:183) therefore attempts at providing a more up-to-date definition of tourism by stating that it is "basically a retail service industry". The goods and services required by a traveller to facilitate and enhance the enjoyment of a trip vary, depending on the type of travel involved, depending on whether it is business- or leisure-related (Smith, 1988:183). Evans and Lindsay (2008) stress the need to understand the various perspectives from which quality is viewed to be able fully to appreciate the role that it plays in the business organisation (Francis, 2003:114). In terms of the accessibility of the tourism product and the quality of the facilities provided, sport tourists consider a) the destination; b) the sport venue; and c) the accommodation (Turco et al., 2002:87). However, successful image enhancement is multifaceted, in the sense that the marketing message can effectively influence tourism perceptions when it is combined with the venue, the target audience, the media, and the event infrastructure (Rein & Shields, 2007:83; Jayswal, 2008:252). The destination attractiveness needs to be supported by means of the supply of essential services, and by means of the regular maintenance of the existing infrastructure, so as to accrue a positive image (Avraham, 2004:473). The overreaching objective is for the host to cater for visitors, residents, business people, and local companies.

In terms of destination attractiveness, the human capital for the production of the tourism experience in Gabon is believed to lack an understanding of the industry standard procedures and of the concept of quality tourism. The tourism industry in Gabon has yet to equip itself with sufficient knowledge, standards and capacities to guarantee a worthwhile tourism experience, especially in terms of ensuring the preservation of ecotourism and environmental awareness (Diecko, 2014:3). In the context of sport and tourism, quality is evaluated in relation to three distinct dimensions: (a) the core service; (b) the physical context, including the physical facilities; and (c) the interpersonal interactions that occur in the performance of the service. Understanding the above reveals those aspects that are critical for developing a destination sport tourism product (Chelladurai & Chang, 2000:4-5; Allen et al., 2011:135). The aforementioned aspects will be discussed in detail in the next section on the characteristics of sport tourism.

### **3.7 Characteristics of services in relation to sport tourism events**

Certain differences in the nature of services in relation to sport tourism are believed to create special challenges for service marketers and for consumers buying services (Fisk et al., 2004:153; Li & Petrick, 2008:235). To help understand the differences, a number of characteristics describing the unique nature of services have been proposed from the perspective of Turco et al. (2002). The characteristics were first discussed in the early services marketing literature by Parasuraman et al. (1985), and are generally summarised as consisting of intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability (Kennedy, 2003:74; Trošt, Klarić & Ružić, 2012:67). Service has four natural characteristics that distinguish it from goods (Zhang, 2009:36). The latter author asserts that marketers need to be concerned with the four basic characteristics that distinguish the marketing of service offerings from that of manufactured products. The characteristics that are common to all tourism industries (Lovelock, 2001:13; George, 2004:25; Seymour, 2009:2) will be discussed in the following subsections in relation to sport tourism events. It is essential that African countries adopt clear strategies that are based on suitable methodologies for developing their unique tourism product, and for enhancing their competitiveness within the global sector of tourism. The continent has natural and cultural assets that give tourism development a unique position from which to build the tourism sector towards economic sustainability (UNWTO, 2015:25).

#### **3.7.1 Intangibility of services**

What is being sold to the sport tourists in this case are sport tourism products that cannot be seen, tasted, felt, heard, or smelt before being bought. Sport tourism products are, therefore, intangibles. The above means that sport tourists are unsure of exactly what they are purchasing, and an element of risk is present, because they cannot evaluate, or test, the

service beforehand (Turco et al., 2002:41). The aspect is explained by Lovelock and Gummesson (2004:24-25) as being represented within three distinct dimensions: (a) physical intangibility; (b) mental intangibility; and (c) generality. The intangible service might provide the experience of observing a professional baseball game, or the experience of playing in a chess tournament, but the sport tourist returns home with only memories of the experience (Turco et al., 2002:41).

### **3.7.2 Inseparability of production and consumption**

Service products cannot be separate from their provider (Bennett et al., 2005:250), with the production and consumption both happening simultaneously (Kandampully, 2002:32). Because sport tourists must be present to produce and consume the experience (inseparability), they must always be brought to the site of the sporting activity (Turco et al., 2002:41). As illustrated by the authors, the sport tourism experience is very difficult to manufacture in one city, and to have sent to the consumer in another.

### **3.7.3 Perishability of services**

Perishability describes an offering that cannot be saved, stored, resold, or returned (George, 2008:25), with the product itself, therefore, being perishable. The researcher further asserts that the sport tourism events, attractions, facilities, and amenities at the destination site must continue as scheduled, whether or not the associated sport tourists arrive. Consequently, extensive financial losses have to be dealt with if, for example, the spectators or competitors are few, or if the airlines and hotels remain empty (Kandampully, 2002:37). Neither the event seats nor the hotel beds can be saved for another time; they become a waste if they are not used when they are offered (Turco et al., 2002:41).

### **3.7.4 Heterogeneity of service offering**

Also referred to as variability, heterogeneity is an indicator of a service performance that is unique to each consumer (George, 2008:25). The author notes that sport tourism services or experiences may vary according to the characteristics of a given situation. The weather may be bad, the game may be boring, the hotel service may be inadequate, or the directions to the venue may be poor (Turco et al., 2002:41). Furthermore, Lovelock and Gummesson (2004:27-28) posit that the service providers are not all the same, As they are human beings, they tend to deliver different levels of service that lead to the understanding that, similarly, no two consumers are precisely the same, as they have different demands, expectations, tastes, moods, perceptions, and emotions. The critical incidents of emotions and emotional experience drawn from spectators at the London 2012 Olympic Games were identified by Emery, Kerr and Crabtree (2013:160) as being the emotions “to build moment”, “to watch the moment”, “to be in the moment”, “to capture the moment”, and “to share the moment”. The five

key moments identified are interrelated as a collective constituting the personal experience, as asserted by the authors involved.

The heterogeneity of services in sport tourism events reflects their potential for high variability in terms of service delivery. The challenge is to establish standards of behaviour and performance, with the interaction of employees and consumers affecting their experience of services and of the overall tourism product (Lovelock & Gummesson, 2004:27). The purpose is to assist in predicting sport tourism-related impacts (Allen et al., 2010:60), which are the topic of discussion in the following section.

### **3.8 Impacts of sport tourism events**

For the purposes of the current study, the impacts of sport tourism events can be seen as a way of understanding the management of sport tourism events in the context of the triple bottom-line perspective. Several authors support the 'triple bottom-line' approach in outlining the potential impacts of events (Fredline et al., 2005:2-3; Sherwood, Jago & Dery, 2005:16; Hede, 2007; Getz, 2008:420; Bob & Swart, 2010:74). The triple bottom-line analysis includes the separate evaluation of the economic, social and environmental impacts of sport tourism (Sherwood, 2007:4; Fairley, Tyler, Kellett & D'Alia, 2011; Monterrubio, Ramírez & Ortiz, 2011), and the monitoring of both quantitative and qualitative indicators (Veleva & Ellenbecker, 2000:117; Lovelock, 2001:438; Fredline, 2004; Getz & Fairley, 2004:129; Norman & MacDonald, 2004).

Similar to other types of niche industries, sport tourism and major events in particular have economic, social and environmental impacts on the local communities (Mules & Dwyer, 2005; Horn & Zemann, 2006; Dwyer et al., 2010:225; Hritz & Ross, 2010:119; Ahmed & Pretorius, 2010:274). As pointed out by Hede (2007:13), "one area of special event research that has burgeoned, particularly in the past two decades, is event evaluation". The impacts that can result from the hosting of events, especially major sporting events, are related to the following aspects (Solberg & Preuss, 2005:125):

- enhanced international awareness, and knowledge, of the region;
- increased economic activity;
- enhanced physical facilities and infrastructure; and
- increased social and cultural opportunities.

The factors that motivate destinations to host events, and to capitalise on tourism and hospitality-related benefits, have benefited from the impact of sport events. The current study, in part, aims to analyse such motivating factors as those encouraging Libreville to host sport events. As was previously mentioned, the city has, in recent times, hosted two major

international events, namely the 2012 AFCON, and the 2017 AFCON. Thus, analysing sport event impacts in the present literature review is important.

To the above effect, the triple bottom-line approach has been adopted by Bob and Swart (2010:74), as is shown in Table 3.1 below, in terms of them addressing the social, economic and environmental benefits to be gleaned from the hosting of mega sporting events.

**Table 3.1: Benefits derived from the hosting of sport events using the triple bottom-line approach**

Triple bottom-line components	Potential benefits
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- investments from outside the hosting region</li> <li>- the development of new infrastructure and sport facilities resulting from investments</li> <li>- support from political leaders</li> <li>- rejuvenation and the upgrading of existing facilities</li> <li>- positive impacts for tourism, in terms of the amount of money spent on accommodation and shopping</li> <li>- the creation of a positive tourism image through the media, and the use of media-related opportunities for destination marketing purposes</li> <li>- sustaining a presence as a sport tourism destination, and expanding the market to host relatively small events</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- encouragement of the local host community to engage in physical activities, and to cultivate a culture of health and wellness</li> <li>- the use of sport stars as examples for cultivating the ethics of health and wellness, especially in terms of the youth market, where they can be regarded as role models for healthy living</li> <li>- the instilling of pride in a community</li> <li>- the provision of opportunities to engage in skills development and voluntarism</li> </ul>
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the injection of the necessary funding for embarking upon environmental and heritage projects</li> </ul>

**Source: Bob & Swart (2010:74)**

As indicated by Bob and Swart (2010:75), the benefits or impacts of sport events are interrelated, as improvements in infrastructure can lead to an improved quality of life, and, consequently, influence aspects of the society (Kim et al., 2006:88). According to Silvestre (2008-2009:2), major sport events are widely used to generate a general spirit of optimism and combined vision, or as a vehicle to attract exogenous resources and to regenerate urban areas (Preuss, 2007:207). Moreover, major sporting events are believed to create employment both during the pre- and post-event period, hence the event life cycle is a temporal set of opportunities for business growth and networking (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2000:9; O'Brien, 2006:242; O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006:26). At times, the hosting of major sporting events requires the creation, or renovation, of infrastructure so as to accommodate the high volume of visitors that attend such events (Gibson et al., 2003:188; Dwyer et al., 2005:351; Solberg & Preuss, 2007:215).



The following section provides detailed insight into the economic, social and environmental benefits and costs of the hosting of major sport events.

### **3.8.1 Economic benefits**

Hall (2006:59) states that nations, regions, cities, and corporations have used mega events to promote a favourable image in the international marketplace. Such events are wide in range, and vary in terms of category and characteristics (Fredline et al., 2006:2). Such events range from those at the mega-event end of the scale, like the Olympic Games, which are vigorously competed for globally, to small regional festivals that are promoted by the local community and stakeholders, with the latter being undertaken in search of economic benefits and enhanced developmental growth (Roche, 2000:1; Gibson et al., 2003:182; Matheson & Baade, 2003:1-2; Solberg & Preuss, 2007:213; Kellett et al., 2008:101; Baade, Baumann & Matheson, 2008:82).

The primary motivation for a city, region or country to host a major sporting event is the potential positive impacts of the events on the local economy, which, in turn, can enhance the social status of the communities in the host region (Malfas et al., 2004:212). Furthermore, Horne (2007:84) posits that cities are interested in hosting mega and major sporting events for their perceived power to deliver lasting benefits, including enhanced prospects for the community (McKay & Plumb, 2001:243; Bob et al., 2005:107).

Such sought-after prospects are related to the stimulation of spending in the host economy, among others (Daniels & Norman, 2003:214). The economic impacts of events are widely researched, with the literature particularly referring to their benefits as being “the creation of jobs and incomes for local populations” (Hashmi, Fida & Alhayky, 2008:30), including the granting of opportunities for “skills development and technological transfer” (Harris, 2011:410). A host destination can also benefit from an event that helps in “generating revenues for local businesses through the sale of tourism-related services including visitors’ tax revenues” (Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2005:10) and through business networking opportunities that come about through the building of new markets (O’Brien, 2006:26; Smith, 2009:4).

In addition to the above benefits, the following economic impacts can result from the hosting of a major sport event, given the role that the media play in: putting the country on the map (Yoon, 2002:7); “showcasing the region” (Whitford, 2009:674), “promoting the political system” and “creating new trading partners”, “attracting investment” as a result of “boosting tourism” and “creating jobs and business opportunities” (Hall, 1992:5; Getz, 1997:6; Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2005:10). Besides the benefits that are gained from the aggregate economic effect of mega sport events, initial impacts can occur soon after the destination is featured among potential bidders for a mega event. They are sure to occur immediately after the bidding

process ends, due to the increased publicity that is projected to the “global audience” (Jago et al., 2010:279).

As articulated by Chalip (2005:165) and Smith (2009:4), opportunities can be created to foster and sustain the strategic approach to networking between event organisers and all relevant stakeholders, so as to ensure long-term rewards (O'Brien & Chalip, 2008:264-265). In the context of potential economic benefits, major sporting events are perceived by Jago and Shaw, (1998:29) as:

a one-time or infrequently occurring event of limited duration that provides the consumer with a leisure and social opportunity beyond everyday experience. Such events, which attract, or have the potential to attract, tourists, are often sought to raise the profile, image, or awareness of a region.

The following reports and forecast were published by the UNWTO in its 2017 Country Economic Outlook (Oxford Business Group, 2015). The travel and tourism industry in Gabon have generated economic activities, with it having attracted the capital investment of XAF28.8bn in 2016, which was expected to expand by 4.7% in 2017. The industry forecast for 2027 is expected to grow annually at an estimated 3.8% over the space of ten years, to reach capital investments of XAF43.6bn (WTTC, 2017:5). Moreover, an improved transport infrastructure and the expansion of hotel chains have raised Gabon's international connectivity, promising new opportunities for future growth in the tourism sector (Oxford Business Group, 2015). Investments in such sectors as hospitality and sport tourism, in general, are associated with perceived prestige, a raised profile, and the enhancing of tourism (Law, 2002:135). Events (including sporting events) are opportunities for skills transfer and for technological advancement (Hashim et al., 2008:30; Silvestre, 2008-2009:4).

### **3.8.1.1 Media revenue and branding opportunities**

Major sporting events require consumption by attendees (Müller, 2015:630), hence the motivation to travel to the host destination is an essential aspect of sport tourism (Kurtzman & Zauhar, 2005:21). However, due to the widespread broadcasting of events that has occurred since the 1980s, the clear majority of those who watch an event do so in front of a screen (Horne, 2007:82; Sugden & Tomlinson, 2012; Müller, 2015:630). The size of mega and major sporting events, in terms of their mediated reach (Roberts, 2004:108; Müller, 2015:628), has highlighted the importance of media as a conceptualised dimension of events of such magnitude, and their lucrative potential (Horne, 2007:82; Grundling & Steynberg 2008:15). The exposure brought by major sporting events, combined with the media sports complex, is unmatched in terms of global visibility and opportunities that are provided for the host (Black, 2007:264).

For a host preparing an event, the revenues from advertising and sponsorship are immediately accruable due to the increased publicity and investments generated (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006:605; Diaey, Dufourg, Tjuševs & Garavelli, 2011:2). As highlighted by Cornellsen (2004b:43), opportunities are instantly available to the host associated with an event due to the formation of the sport-media-business alliance (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2004:191; Cornelissen, 2007:247). In fact, the media are considered one of the sport events stakeholders, in terms of making significant pre-event contributions (Getz & Fairley, 2004:128; Hede, 2007:19; Brown et al., 2010:287). The increased media attention is credited for bringing the spotlight to bear on the host city, for purposes of image enhancement (Amponsah et al., 2018:324; Smith, 2010:262). Through the extensive exposure provided by the media, the host destination can market their development strategies by means of shaping the event product (Brown et al., 2004; Xing & Chalip, 2006; Heath, 2009:270; Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1055). Moreover, Kavetsos and Szymanski (2008:5) assert that increased media exposure provides opportunities for extracting revenue throughout the event life cycle. Such an opportunity is highly appealing to almost any organisation that is up to taking advantage of the event's "showcase effect" (Hiller, 1989:119). Therefore, major sporting events attract extensive funding through the media-generated sponsors, which translates into economic gains for the sectors involved, including the local communities (Brown et al., 2010:287; Smith, 2010:262).

The amount of media exposure for an event experienced can be considerable, not only in terms of the immediate revenue gleaned through advertising, but largely in the form of the event-related information that is conveyed to a wide audience, as it serves to shape the perceptions of the host nation and cities, as well as of the event (Amponsah et al., 2018:326). The destination images projected to the target audience benefit from being highlighted in the media in the following ways: (a) they are seen to be more credible, because they are not controlled by destination marketers or event organisers; and (b) they tend to last longer than the event itself, often beginning years before (with resultant substantial cumulative effect) (Amponsah et al., 2018:328). As the destination projects the re-imaging message, it competes with other destinations to attract tourists, conferences, sporting events, entrepreneurs, investors, industries, the siting of company headquarters, and global capital (Avraham, 2004:471). The host destination's efforts to use all avenues through the media complexes are known as "place marketing" (Short, Breitbart, Buckman & Essex, 2000:318). (Avraham, 2004:471) defines "place marketing", or "city imaging", as "the re-evaluation and re-presentation of place to create and market a new image for localities to enhance their competitive position in attracting or retaining resources". As part of the place attraction arsenal, the host destination has to manage and adapt to such competing factors as cost, technological skills, and the ability to price below market (Rein & Shields, 2007:74). A host-imaging strategy uses the media to communicate either through "organic images", which derive from such sources as film and the broadcast news, or through "induced images" (Kim & Richardson,

2003), which are a product of marketing communications, including the promotional materials that are developed by marketers (Amponsah et al., 2018:331). The overall process is known by different terms describing the activities, namely: 'civic boosterism'; 'place marketing'; 'city branding'; 'destination marketing'; 'selling places'; and 'city reimagining' (Smith, 2009:4). A closely associated aspect of destination image is 'destination personality', which is characterised by Lee and Lijia (2011:1) as consisting of a cognitive destination image that is descriptive and measurable. In characterising a destination, the cognitive elements that form the theoretical image product are divided into: the natural environment; the built environment; the socially responsible environment; and the local people.

The event platform is a catalyst for attracting investments and development opportunities to improve the infrastructure in the destination region, which is required for purposes of further growth and attractiveness (Rein & Shields, 2007:78).

The marketplace for destination attractiveness has become increasingly competitive and volatile, requiring cities to be innovative in capturing new markets and in overcoming the challenges of establishing uniqueness in terms of imaging strategies (Rein & Shields, 2007:74). Nevertheless, destination branding, and sport tourism events are intrinsically connected, by means of the host strategy, in marketing the event and in determining how the intended audience perceives the destination image (Keitha, 2008:42). As cities seek to project an image onto the global stage, and as the sport industry grows and captures the attention of marketers and brand managers (Rein & Shields, 2007:75), investing in sports and in the sports economy, as a component of imaging, is how destinations capitalise on readers'/viewers' interest expressed in an event (Amponsah et al., 2018:325). The authors propose the notion that sports can serve as a central platform for some countries, rather than being supplementary to the destination branding strategy, combining travel, lifestyle, political and cultural values, so as to strengthen the marketing message projected through the media feast. Moreover, sport events tend to receive widespread free media coverage, attracting tourists, residents, and investors, due to the amount of visibility gained (Rein & Shields, 2007:75). After the initial attraction to the host nation, the sport-induced emotional energy that is generated by an event binds the audience and the participants together under the symbolic umbrella of a spirit of sportsmanship, which serves to enhance the tourism experience involved.

Globally, major sport events are integrated in most national tourism strategies as a component of economic development, and of promoting the image of the nation concerned through a blended mix of media, facilitated by advanced technology (Allen et al., 2011:129-133; Trošt et al., 2012:67; Owusu-Mintah, 2013:1055). Within the context of international exposure, Horne and Manzenreiter (2006:5) packaged the role played by media in a tripartite model of "sponsorship rights and merchandising", "exclusive broadcasting rights", and "sponsors'

association”, together with high-profile sport events and the “vast global audience they provide”. The link between the host and the potential target markets is quickly established through the media, which form part of the wide event audience (Getz et al., 2007:106). Sport tourism and major sporting events-related opportunities can include, among others, television fees, advertising revenue and franchised goods (Bob et al., 2005:107). Hence, Ritchie and Crouch (2003:119) underline the need to capitalise on the “media floodgate” and related investments from an early stage, as both the public and the private sector are drawn to the host destination (Alegi, 2001:6; Waitt, 2001; Cornelissen, 2004a:1293; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2004:192; Hede, 2005:189; Hall, 2006:62; Sterken, 2006:376). The above is evidenced by the revenue that was garnered from the 2003 Cricket World Cup in South Africa. As the host destination, South Africa retained approximately 40 per cent of the revenue created from the sale of television broadcasting and sponsorship rights, accounting for its extensive gains from the event (Cornelissen, 2004a:49).

The global audience of the AFCON is increasing, as the result of more African footballers playing in European leagues now than in the past. The above is being reflected in the growing amount of global television coverage and sponsorship that is being received from the leading brands. In 2009, Orange signed an 8-year agreement to become official sponsors of the tournament, seeing it as an outstanding opportunity to raise their profile, not just in Africa, but globally. With the funding and backing of global brands and networks, such support should undoubtedly serve to boost any host nation, as well as the status of African football overall (Annetteabena.com, 2017). In the LOC campaign to host the 2017 AFCON in Gabon, Cocan targeted some 100 million viewers, and another 4.4 million in the publications *l'Equipe*, *France Football* and *Jeune Afrique*. The body collaborated with about 2000 journalists in the above regard, with a potential media exposure of 200 million people (Cocan Gabon, 2017:90). Overall, the campaign was launched on a multimedia platform, with the purpose of creating interest on an international scale, and of maintaining a positive image, promoting the event objectives, and using the event to uplift the community through the coverage in the magazine *Esprit d'Equipe*, an in-house publication (Cocan Gabon, 2017:86-89).

### **3.8.1.2 Infrastructure development**

As an integral part of sports tourism, visible bundles of services, consisting of *sports* activities, transport, accommodation, marketing, collective services, the physical and social environment, and the infrastructure (Wäsche et al., 2013, as cited in Zhou, 2015:23). Hosting an event requires the building of infrastructure and sports infrastructure as part of urban renewal (Garcia & Miah, 2005:32; Preuss, 2007:211). The emerging literature emphasises the broad economic impact of mega events, focusing on the benefits to be gained, stretching way beyond the financial viability of the event itself. The relevant scholars tend to view infrastructural development as being significant in the hosting of mega events (Coates & Humphreys,

2003:338; Cornelissen, 2004b:41; Preuss, 2007:208; Gratton & Preuss, 2008:1926; Gursoy et al., 2011:302), citing several economic benefits involved for the destination. According to the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), host nations can attract investments by promoting their infrastructural development, using an event as an opportunity to accelerate the implementation and the delivery of the plans involved, by means of increasing the momentum supporting the existing projects (OECD, 2010:17). A destination-developed infrastructure (embracing transport, sport facilities, and technological and urban aspects) can generate economic benefits from a multitude of positive impacts, including job creation through construction projects (Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2005:10) and the subsequent utilisation of local supply chains (Smith, 2009:4). As pointed out by Tichaawa (2013:96), the literature posits that South Africa's strategy to reach its 2014 Millennium Development Goals included fast-tracking the infrastructure improvement and community development, among others (Bohlmann, 2006:21; Cornelissen, 2007:244; Burnett, 2008:7; Ahlfeldt, Maennig & Olschlager, 2012; Gibson, Kaplanidou & Kang, 2012).

Major sporting events create impacts that, in turn, effect urban development and cities' strategy for urban renewal (Solberg & Preuss, 2005:129; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006:11; Bama & Tichaawa, 2020). The development is evidenced by the facilities that are brought about by the event, such as improved roads or enhanced sports arenas, and the regeneration of rundown areas that can be claimed as urban spaces (Dwyer et al., 2005:353; Smith & Fox, 2007:1127; Bama & Tichaawa, 2016). As a result, the economy benefits from the contribution made by mega events in terms of the business growth and other employment opportunities offered to organisers, promoters, volunteers, and entrepreneurs in the short term (Gursoy et al., 2011:302). In the long term, infrastructure facilities are provided that can be of value in terms of further economic growth (Dwyer et al., 2005:353; Zimbalist, 2010:9). Therefore, government spending is a stimulus to 'economic' growth, as long-term economic benefits are anticipated (Zimbalist, 2010:9) through accrued tourism and business, in the form of high return on investments (ROIs) (Bob et al., 2008:49).

In relation to stimulating growth through infrastructure investment, Gabon set up the National Infrastructure Agency (ANGT), which was tasked with managing the identification, the planning, the management, and the implementation of large public infrastructure projects (US Department of State, 2015:4; Cocan Gabon, 2017:48). Long-term development initiatives have contributed to sustained benefits for the Gabonese economy in relation to tourism, hospitality, and restaurants, as well as it being in line with it being an overall leisure destination (Gabon, 2019). In developing its infrastructure, the Gabonese Agency for the Development and Promotion of Tourism and Hospitality (Agence Gabonaise de Développement et de la Promotion du Tourisme et de l'Hôtellerie [Agatour]) secured investments for hotel chains in terms of a PPP agreement (Oxford Business Group, 2015:2; US Department of State, 2015:8).

Although initial investments were not induced by the hosting of a sport event, the Gabonese development strategy was fast-tracked, and hosting of the event enabled projects to meet their deadlines. The above is in accordance with aspects of gains brought about by the event, and with how additional capital can be generated through developing a destination infrastructure (OECD, 2010:17). As reported in a publication of state activities (Le Gabon Emergent, 2013), two newly built stadiums, with a capacity of around 20 000, were part of the sport infrastructure necessary to host the 2017 AFCON Cup tournament, namely the Stade de Port-Gentil and the Stade d'Oyem (Cocan Gabon, 2017:52). The sport facilities were added to the two other stadiums that were built for the 2012 AFCON Cup™ that was co-hosted by Libreville and Franceville (Cocan Gabon, 2017:22).

Other public works undertaken were the refurbishment of Libreville international Airport and the finalisation of the Port-Gentil airport (Oxford Business Group, 2015; Cocan Gabon, 2017:48). For the successful hosting of the event, and in following through on the country's development strategy (PSGE) for economic diversification 2012 to 2016, several other infrastructure development projects were aimed at energising Gabon's tourism industry and related sectors (Oxford Business Group, 2015). The above included the improvement of transport networks, as well as an increase in investment levels in high-quality accommodation (WTTC, 2015:2). Refurbishments of national roads including the much-needed road connecting Libreville to Port-Gentil, and infrastructural support for the national rail service, Transgabonais (OECD, 2007a:278). The development projects were earmarked and prioritised to open up Gabon's interior territories (Le Gabon Emergent, 2013; Cocan Gabon, 2017:50). They formed part of the diversification plan to facilitate access to national parks and other locations of touristic importance that had previously been difficult to access (Oxford Business Group, 2015). As expressed by Zimbalist (2010:9), such infrastructure has boosted economic growth, with it having helped to sustain the related long-term goals by means of attracting tourism. The development of the infrastructure in Gabon extended to the critical structures to support the tourism and to grow the special economic zones (SEZ), such as those featuring hotels, lodges, resorts, and national parks as sources of additional revenue from the tourism expenditure of the influx of visitors (Le Gabon Emergent, 2013; US Department of State, 2015:9).

However, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) report on The Urban Investment Opportunities of Global Events observed that the optimal use of infrastructure and sport facilities induced by an event need to be in synergy with the host city's long-term development plans (Clark, Huxley & Nemecek, 2010:4). They list aspects that should enable additional benefits to be gained from, and for, infrastructure development and urban growth, namely:

- the re-planning of, and site assembly for, uses beyond the immediate needs of the event;

- the early determination of how the infrastructure and amenities will be used after the event;
- the marketing of development opportunities to realise the full potential of areas and land;
- the reconfiguration of sites and logistics for post-event usage and required investment;
- the retention of commitment to the long-term outcome, while delivering on the short-term ones; and
- the building of capacity to manage the development process effectively after the event.

In the above context, Müller (2015:635) attests that, globally, international events and major sport events are included in cities policies as strategic aspects of infrastructure development and urban renewal.

### **3.8.1.3 Employment opportunities**

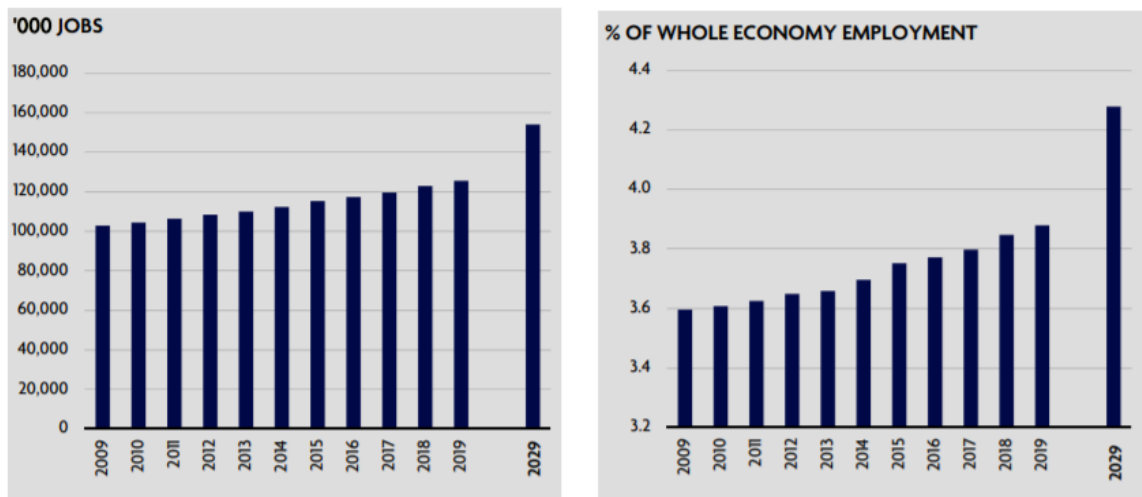
Major events are generally credited for the significant role that they play in stimulating investment (Cornelissen & Swart, 2006:110), which, in turn, can serve to stimulate employment and skills development through acquired experiences. Such events tend to attract foreign investments to several sectors of the economy, through the fostering of business growth (Fredline et al., 2005:164; Sherwood et al., 2005:25; Solberg & Preuss, 2007:218; Gursoy et al., 2011:302). Moreover, major sporting events provide capital injection into the host nation's output, so as to create employment opportunities in sectors like construction (Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2005:8). Harris (2011:410) found that the construction of stadiums alone created 66 000 new jobs in South Africa in relation to the hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, albeit that such jobs were mostly temporary in nature. Moreover, Malfas et al. (2004:212) identify the contribution of special events as exceeding the construction of stadiums, naming tourism and retail as industries that benefit from the large number of jobs created for the hosting of such events, including the employment created in terms of the local supply chains (Smith, 2009:4; OECD, 2017:25-26).

Within the context of employment, Bohlmann and Van Heerden (2005:10) note the widely held belief that major sporting events can have a 'trickle-down' effect (Dwyer et al., 2005:32; Getz, 2003:19; Kim et al., 2006:88; Saayman & Rossouw, 2008:1; Silvestre, 2008-2009:14). Through the employment opportunities generated by mega events, there is acquisition of management-related knowledge and skills development, including the transfer of knowledge (TOK), which are widely accepted as being positive contributions to the local economy (Bob et al., 2008:50). Moreover, human capital is boosted through the hosting of events (Gratton & Preuss, 2008:1927), in terms of (a) the skills and knowledge, which can be upgraded in the service industry through hospitality training; (b) the improvement of skills and knowledge necessary to win competitions (in terms of congresses, fairs, and cultural and sport events); and (c) the enhancement of skills required to secure a safer environment for the major sport event than might otherwise have been the case (Solberg & Preuss, 2007:218). As such, a successful and



sustainable event can serve as a marketing tool for the host community. According to Allen et al. (2010:59), host communities can showcase their expertise, to boost their attractiveness to investors, and to promote new business ventures.

Figure 3.3 which follows reflects the jobs associated directly with travel and tourism activities in Gabon that were reported to be 18 600 in 2018 (3% of total employment). The number was forecast to remain the same in 2019. The figures included hotels, travel agents, airlines, and other passenger transportation services. The industry has been projected to account for 9000 direct jobs (with an annual increase of 6.6%) for the next ten years, including activities in the restaurant and leisure industries that are directly supported by tourists (WTTC, 2019:4). Moreover, the travel and tourism economic impacts on the industry’s total contribution to employment in Gabon was set to number 11 500 jobs in 2016 (representing 2.7% of total employment in the country) (WTTC, 2017). Such figures relate to the wide effects on travel and tourism investments, like the supply chain and other induced revenue. The outlook is expected to remain positive, with an increase of 6.0% in 2017, or of 12 500 jobs, and contributing to 2.8% of total employment. The WTTC (2019) forecasted an addition of another 21 000 jobs by 2027, being an annual increase of 5.5%, which should then contribute to 3.5% of total employment in the travel and tourism industry (WTTC, 2019:4). The total contribution of travel and tourism includes its ‘wider impacts’ (i.e. the indirect and induced impacts) on the Gabonese economy.



**Figure 3.3: The direct contribution made by travel and tourism to employment in Gabon** (World Travel & Tourism Council [WTTC], 2019:4)

### 3.8.1.4 Boost in tourism

The capacity for international sporting events to generate tourism has been widely addressed in the tourism and events literature, acknowledging that they boost the number of visitors to a destination (Gibson et al., 2003:181; Green, Costa & Fitzgerald, 2008:354; Cornelissen, 2004b:41; Dwyer et al., 2005:73; Getz, 2008:403; Brown et al., 2010:282; Smith, 2010:263;

Fourie & Santana-Gallego, 2011:1365). Studies conducted on the topic of tourism determinants are numerous.

Scholars point to the obvious boosts in tourism during sporting events (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2002, as cited in Malfas et al., 2004:211; Kavetsos & Szymanski, 2008:5). Moreover, they attest to the positive effects of tourism-related revenue concurrent to the event, as well as to the legacy thereof (Solberg & Preuss, 2007:213; Preuss, 2007:222; Hagn & Maennig, 2009:3299; Fourie & Santana-Gallego, 2011:2).

For instance, Solberg and Preuss (2007:213) find that mega events increase the number of arrivals of foreign tourists in the host country. In addition to job creation and the economic development of host nations, a boost occurs to the tourism industry, with it often being considered to be the primary objective for the hosting of major sporting events (Andranovich et al., 2001:183; Getz, 2008:403; Spronk & Fourie, 2009:3; Brown et al., 2010:279; Homafar, Honari, Heidary & Heidary, 2011:25). Such benefits are attained through the influx of visitors linked to the event, which, in itself, is part of sport tourism and the wider tourism industry (Getz, 1997:4; Lee & Taylor, 2005:595; Mules & Ayling, 2005:86).

According to Gong (2012:10), tourist revenues derive from direct and indirect visitors spending on travel, accommodation, food and beverages, tickets, entertainments, and shopping (Kavetsos & Szymanski, 2008:5; Cornelissen & Maennig, 2010:98). Similarly, Hudson's (2012, as cited in Tichaawa, 2013:63) view is that individuals or groups of people, for whom the primary purpose of travel is attending or participating in sporting events, tend to engage in various tourism activities, such as shopping or visiting tourist attractions (Weed, 2010:107). Tourist behaviour and length of stay is, according to Page and Connell (2009:386), the source of additional expenditure, amounting to substantial revenue for the destination (Brown et al., 2010:282; Cooper et al., 2008:239; Smith, 2010:263). Similarly, Chalip (2002:5) attests to the fact that event-induced tourism earns higher expenditure than does leisure tourism.

According to the *UNWTO Barometer* (2019), international tourism receipts grew in all regions, with Africa growing by a 2% share from USD36bn to USD38bn (UNWTO, 2019:3). International tourist arrivals in Africa are estimated to have increased by 7% in 2014 to 67 million international tourists during the same period (UNWTO, 2019:3).

The national agency, AGATOUR, is tasked with the responsibility for promoting tourism, coordinating development initiatives, and managing state-owned hotels across Gabon (Oxford Business Group, 2015:2). Long-term development initiatives, as stated by the US Department of State (2015:8), have enabled the Gabonese government to gain benefits in terms of tourism, hospitality, and restaurants, amounting to making it an overall leisure destination (Oxford

Business Group, 2015). The above is so true that the country has hosted AFCON for a second time in the space of five years, establishing the country as a developed and capable attraction for the outside world (Gabon, 2019; Cocan Gabon, 2017:136). In terms of the effects on the Gabonese economy, travel and tourism were expected to generate XAF6.6bn (USD11.8mn) in visitor exports in 2016 and were deemed likely to experience growth of 4.2% in 2017, with an expected 639 000 international tourist arrivals (WTTC, 2017:5). The WTTC considers visitor exports as spending by international tourists occurring within the country for the purpose of either business or leisure travel (excluding international spending on education) (WTTC, 2017:17). The industry forecasted impact of activities by 2027 is that it will generate the expenditure of XAF10.6bn (USD18.9mn) from international tourist arriving in Gabon, with an annual increase of 4.5% (WTTC, 2017:5). While most visitors stay in the capital, Libreville, or Port-Gentil, the centre of Gabon's oil sector, developments in the national parks are raising the country's profile as a destination for seeing natural attractions and experiencing high-end hospitality (Oxford Business Group, 2015).

Gabon is a member of the UNWTO Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) that allows the accessing of soft data on all tourism-related activities and on the economic impacts of the tourism sector (Le Gabon Emergent, 2013). The data are collected in conformity with the guidelines of the 2008 UN Statistics Division: Recommended Methodological Framework (United Nations, 2008). In the first report from the TSA in 2011, the data gleaned showed that the majority (59%) of tourists visited Gabon for business reasons, followed by the 10% who travelled to visit family, the 9% who were holidaymakers, the 8.4% who attended exhibitions or conferences, and the 3.9% who made up the leisure travellers (Le Gabon Emergent, 2013).

For destinations to grow their attractiveness to potential visitors and infrastructural legacies, including sport facilities and tourism superstructure (Preuss, 2007:210), coupled with marketing activities for brand enhancement (Hede, 2005:189), they should combine the strategies that are commonly used globally, as noted by Vigor (2004, as cited in Silvestre, 2008-2009:6), consisting of those pertaining to global exposition, economic dividends, and urban transformation. In terms of such thinking, the host uses various media (Tassiopoulos, 2010a:68) to target both local and international audiences, based on customer behaviour (Ritchie & Adair 2002:42). The increased exposure is meant to attract more tourists during and after the event than there might otherwise have been (Kavetsos & Szymanski, 2008:5; Fourie & Santana-Gallego, 2011:1165), as yield is expected to flow to the destination concerned, in the form of ROI (Damster & Tassiopoulos, 2005:12; Bob et al., 2008:49). The expected sources of additional revenue, as intended economic benefits to be gained from the hosting of a major sporting event, are likely to be generated from the additional spending of tourists and organisational spending. The latter relates to spending in anticipation of the event or/and activities held in preparation for its hosting (Kim et al., 2006:88; Maennig & Du Plessis,

2007:579; Saayman & Rossouw, 2008:2; Maharaj, 2011:257). Moreover, benefits are expected to accrue from the revenue of economic and tourism 'spinoffs' that major sporting events are expected to generate for the 'entrepreneurial city', with 'urban boosting' resulting from the increased exposure brought about by the event (Solberg & Preuss, 2005:129; Smith & Fox, 2007:1127; Maharaj, 2011:257). Visitor spending is equated to the exporting of goods and services, as the money originates from outside the host economy (Cooper et al., 2008:239; Kristiansen & Brødsten, 2011:34). In the context of the positive impacts on the society, Kim et al. (2006:88) point to the link with aspects brought about by the event, namely the quality of life and lasting infrastructure facilities, which are largely perceived as being the most significant benefits granted by the hosting of major sporting events, according to the residents concerned.

### **3.8.2 Economic costs**

Firstly, servicing sport tourists inevitably leads to leakages of revenues and incomes. As highlighted by Matheson and Baade (2003:8), the expenditure that is required for the hosting of major sporting events represents the opportunity cost of resources (Chapin, 2002:5; Bob et al., 2005:107; Bohlmann, 2006:14; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006:10; Preuss, 2007:208). Hosting one-time sport events necessitates paying licensing fees, in consideration of eventually being made host (Smith, 2009). However, financial cost and the other significant resources allocated are a reality within the generic processes of preparing a participatory bid (Hall, 1992:69; Emery, 2002:320). The most significant and obvious cost is related to the operational aspects of hosting a major sporting event, to which additional leakage is reported for the construction of the necessary infrastructure (sport, transport facilities, etc.) (Essex & Chalkley, 2002:3; Essex & Chalkley, 2003; Gong, 2012:21). The decisions taken to pursue a bid are, unfortunately, often made by individuals with limited understanding of the real costs and benefits of sports facilities (Chapin, 2002:1). Note worthily, the opportunity cost of host nations, requiring the building of most of the infrastructure that is needed to host an event, is higher in comparison to the costs that are associated with only having to refurbish existing facilities (Allmers & Maennig, 2008-2009:513; Humphrey & Fraser, 2015:4). Moreover, such displacements of funds are largely paid for out of the public coffers. Just such a subject has fuelled the debate on the net gains made in relation to events-related impacts, within the relevant literature (Coates & Humphreys, 2003:352; Baade & Matheson, 2004:347; Burnett, 2008:8; Allmers & Maennig, 2008-2009:510; Cornelissen & Maennig, 2010:102). Investments that have been financed by the government generally mean one of three things: increased taxes; redistribution; or deficit (Kristiansen & Brødsten, 2011:31). The authors explain how financing such an investment is made possible through the following mechanisms:

- Increased taxes (of the communities and businesses concerned) can enable governments to finance sport facilities.
- Redistribution entails either cutting some other government investments, or moving some investments forward in time.

- Governments can finance stadiums and sport facilities that are required for the event by means of deficit spending.

Should the host nations fail to attract PPPs by means of prior engagements with investors and private clubs, events hosting might have a negative economic effect on event investments and cause the crowding out of other tourism (Kristiansen & Brødsten, 2011:33). Nevertheless, the appeal of event hosting, specifically in relation to a major sporting event, has grown significantly over the last two decades, due to the promise of economic windfalls (Andranovich et al., 2001:124; Baade & Matheson, 2004:344; Lee & Taylor, 2005:395; Du Plessis & Venter, 2010:3).

The above is the essence of the debate on the financing of the hosting of the 2012 and 2017 AFCON tournament, with the required funding being directed within state institutions. The Gabonese government delegated its responsibility in such regard to the National Agency of Major Public Works (ANGTI), which is a state agency that manages all infrastructure projects, with the resultant spend being reported as having been 283 billion FCFA. The organising of the event was done by another agency that was established by the Gabonese government (Cocan Gabon), which spent 180 billion FCFA on the 2017 event (Moussi, 2016). On the upside of the debate, a number of PPPs were signed up by the state to construct several hotels and resorts over a set number of years (Oxford Business Group, 2015:2).

However, the “economic costs” of sport tourism and mega sport events are often ignored in favour of the “benefits” involved (Kim et al., 2006:88; Matheson, 2006:21). As cautioned by Tilley (2006:2), spending on infrastructure could displace public funding and perhaps delay other projects of comparative public interest (Preuss, 2007:212; Allmers & Maennig, 2008-2009:513). The benefits of mega events for impoverished communities are generally assumed to occur automatically by means of the ‘trickle-down’ effect, although recent studies have suggested that merely concentrating on hard physical legacies is insufficient (Kim et al., 2006:88; Smith & Fox, 2007:1128; Burnett, 2008; Silvestre, 2008-2009:14). Similarly, Hiller (2000:453) and Horne and Manzenreiter (2004:198) draw attention to the inaccuracy of such a notion by indicating that growth might not then be achieved, as the jobs that are created by events-related investment tend to be temporary and low paying. The primary costs that a host city/nation might suffer are also categorised as ‘impact costs’, ‘displacements costs’ and ‘opportunity costs’ (Hiller, 2000:454).

### **3.8.2.1 Leakage of economic benefits**

As observed by Whitson and Horne (2006:80), the economic benefits that are linked to mega events are often exaggerated, tending to arouse challenging expectations, in terms of the growth multipliers that are adopted (Weed & Bull, 2004:13; South Africa. DEAT, 2005:19;

Horne, 2007:88; Du Plessis & Maennig, 2011), as well as the irony of 'leakages' (Chapin, 2002:5; Bob et al., 2005:107). The bulk of expenditure on an event is also known as the operational costs (Bohlmann, 2006:10) or on-site costs, which refer to the leakage that is related to additional equipment or supplies, to labour, and to the amount of time associated with hosting the mega-sporting events (Howard & Crompton, 2004; Whitson & Horne, 2006:75). Politicians might use the events for their own purposes, rather than to generate investments for the good of all (Andranovich et al., 2001:34).

The expenditure for which a potential host destination needs to account is significant, including in terms of the bidding process, which includes the consulting agencies, the public relations (PR), the marketing, and the advertising (Baloshenko, 2012:21). Bidding-related expenditure can become extortionate, in terms of the aspiring participants continuing to raise their bid amounts and/or subsidiary payments, as can be expected of them by monopolistic sport associations. As the associations concerned tend to award the hosting of events to the highest bidder, they stand to benefit significantly thereby, while the host destination tends to reduce the expected gains (Baade & Matheson, 2002:129; Maennig & Schwarthoff, 2008:8; Pomfret, Wilson & Lobmayr, 2009:21). The bidding climate often excludes many developing countries, or amounts to being their biggest financial loss in the eventuality of a failed bid (Cornelissen, 2008).

A study commissioned for South Africa's 2010 World Cup bid by Grant Thornton, and the 2004 report by the FIFA Inspection Group for the 2010 FIFA World Cup found that South Africa would gain significant direct and indirect economic benefits from the hosting, with minimal costs (Grant Thornton, 2007). The total investment in stadiums was expected to add up to US\$1.23bn (R9.6bn) (Bama & Tichaawa, 2020). Some authors considered the large public expenditure to be 'odd', given that the potential for post-tournament usage was arguably low, as such large facilities would not be paid for by the maintenance and operation costs of private clubs, or other agencies (Horne, 2004; Unterreiner, 2006:10; Maennig & Du Plessis, 2007:586; Allmers & Maennig, 2008-2009:513; Bama & Tichaawa, 2016; Bama & Tichaawa, 2020). The view is echoed by Horne and Manzenreiter (2006:14), in terms of the long-term impact of the expenditure: "the expected 'under-utilisation' of the facilities built will essentially mean that not all localities will obtain their benefits as promised" (Smith & Fox, 2007:1127; Humphrey & Fraser, 2015:9). A longer-term view of the stadiums, facilities and infrastructure than the above must be considered for mitigation against the potentially negative consequences involved (Preuss, 2007:220; Burnett, 2008:6; Gong, 2012:14). The report on the AEO indicates that Gabon's investment in infrastructure, and attending to the social needs of the population, place constant pressure on the public resources (OECD, 2007a:275). In fact, the financing of sporting infrastructures for the organising of the 2012 AFCON, which was co-hosted by Gabon, is reported to have amounted to 400 billion FCFA, while the 2017 edition, which was fully hosted

by Gabon, cost 463 milliard FCFA (Economie Du Gabon, 2016). Other events that have required public investment by the Gabonese government are the NYFA, which has been held yearly since 2012, and which cost 4.7 billion FCFA in 2015, and the cycle race, Tropicale Amissa, which is also held annually, and which cost 1 billion FCFA in 2015 (Economie du Gabon, 2016).

Matheson and Baade (2004:1) argue that the hosting of an event might produce lower-than-expected economic impact, thus failing to justify the huge event-related expenditure, turning the opportunity cost into a loss (Baade & Matheson, 2004:345; Matheson et al., 2012). Moreover, the researchers hypothesise that similar infrastructure spending in the developing nations is likely to have an even more severe effect, especially on impoverished communities (Pillay & Bass, 2009:92; Howard-Griffin, 2015:22). Similarly, Cornelissen (2004b:48) expands the notion that developing countries, especially those on the African continent, are likely to experience relatively high opportunity costs with regards to the economic and social aspects of hosting mega events (Matheson & Baade, 2004:1092; Cornelissen, 2005:139; Humphreys & Prokopowicz, 2007:12; Baloshenko, 2012:3; Ntloko & Swart, 2012). In practice, each impact of sport tourism and mega events will be of a different magnitude, although, often, negative economic outcomes make them a costly affair (Cornelissen, 2005:139). The outcome depends on various interchangeable factors, including: the size of the sport tourism development; the number of sport tourists; the size of the municipality; the size and level of the development of other (competing) tourism activities; the local community's acceptance of mega events, and others (McKay & Plumb, 2001:2).

### **3.8.2.2 Over-reaching**

Humphreys and Prokopowicz (2007:12) explore the tendency to over-reach, citing Poland and Ukraine as finalists for the hosting of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) 2012 Football Championship. The researchers argue that a simple cost-benefit analysis of the hosting of the event concerned indicated that the costs would exceed the direct economic benefits (in terms of the tourist influx and related spending) involved. A cost-benefit analysis is used to evaluate the public measure and the factors of production, with it being best suited to considering the worthiness of embarking on the prospective hosting of a large event. Bohlmann (2006:13) explains that the cost-benefit analysis of a project entails comparing the proposed event with other potential events, so as to ascertain whether the advantages (or benefits) involved outweigh the disadvantages (or costs) (Burgan & Mules, 2001; Baade & Matheson, 2004:342; Preuss, 2004; Burnett, 2008:2). Despite the expected large number of spectators and television viewers concerned, Humphreys and Prokopowicz (2007:496) highlight "the considerable margin by which costs would outweigh benefits; the latter as desired outcome is largely dependent on many other factors like an improved transport infrastructure which is often required by developing nations" (Humphreys & Prokopowicz, 2007:496-509; Kristiansen

& Brødsten, 2011:29). In the same context, Cornelissen (2004b:48) refers to South Africa's failed bid to host the 2006 soccer tournament. Had the aforesaid bid been successful, South Africa would have generated US\$2.3bn in revenue, while the incurred costs were estimated to have been US\$1.7bn (South Africa, 2008). Cornelissen (2004b:48) calls for an objective debate on the merits of the hosting of mega events by African countries (Cornelissen & Swart, 2006:120).

Meanwhile, developing countries wishing to host an event of the above-mentioned magnitude tend to believe such hosting to be an 'irresistible' opportunity for economic gain (Alegi, 2001:1; Matheson & Baade, 2004:1; Humphreys & Prokopowicz, 2007). Some critics, however, characterise the undertaking as a "dubious use of public resources", which is seen as "providing festivals when people need bread" (Andranovich et al., 2001:127). Moreover, Humphreys and Prokopowicz (2007:496) suggest that "mega-events may not be effective medium for regional economic development in transition economies" (Baloshenko, 2012:17). In the above-mentioned context, it is increasingly important to assess the impacts of mega events with specific reference to poverty reduction (Fredline et al., 2006:23; Pillay & Bass, 2009:84). Several scholars underscore the fact that spending on infrastructure for mega events could displace public funding (Whitson & Horne, 2006:73), resulting in delays to the roll-out of other projects that are more directly in the interests of the general public (Matheson & Baade, 2003:9, 2004; Cornelissen & Swart, 2006:117; Allmers & Maennig, 2008-2009:513; Desai & Vahed, 2010:157). Similarly, Cornelissen (2007:245) observes that some "infrastructural development associated to mega-events may be seen negatively if the local community has little to no advantage for it after the event". With regards to financial implications, the question of whether it was financially viable to host the major sporting event was raised in connection with the hosting of the 2017 AFCON in Gabon. Despite the promise that was made of tourism exposure, questions were raised regarding the rationale for the re-hosting of the event. Two additional questions were raised as to whether the costs involved outweighed the potential lure of tourists, or whether there were not more pressing socio-economic issues on which to focus. Considerations for ensuring Gabon's economic viability and the success of the tournament are essential (Annetteabena.com, 2017). With regards to Gabon, the researcher notes a dearth of academic literature on the viability of hosting an event of international appeal.

However, cases of overspending have been documented globally, with some being much higher than others. The issue came to be of particular importance to the industry, with researchers being spurred to ascertain why and how the phenomenon occurred. For instance, the hosting of the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich resulted in the loss of £178mn, and the hosting of the 1976 Games in Montreal led to the loss of £692mn (Saayman & Rossouw, 2008:3). The bidding and operating costs, added to the high cost of infrastructure development, required to host mega events can produce economic difficulties that often necessitate the



relevant government's financial intervention (Preuss, 2000; Matheson & Baade, 2003:9, 2004; Burnett, 2008:8). Some researchers attribute the economic cost of an event to an inadequate cost-benefit analysis of the market, or to inaccuracies in the methods of assessment (Matheson & Baade, 2003:12, 2004; Bohlmann, 2006:10). In contrast, others point to issues associated with bias or poor planning, and the ineffective management of the event as the cause (Preuss, 2007:210; Baumann & Matheson, 2013:7). As expressed by Jago et al. (2010:224), economic evaluation studies can fall short of "assessment standards".

### **3.8.2.3 The crowding-out effect**

Mega events are widely believed to be used for attracting tourists to further boost a destination's tourism industry (Hall, 1992:99; Kavetsos & Szymanski, 2008:5; Allen et al., 2010:58). However, the recent literature suggests that mega events do not necessarily increase tourist numbers, as event-specific tourists might be crowded out, or they might displace the non-event tourists (Solberg & Preuss, 2007:221; Allmers & Maennig, 2008-2009:35; Preuss & Kurscheidt, 2009).

Spronk and Fourie (2009:3) refer to the crowding-out effect as consisting of the displacement of tourism, as the regular and ordinary visitors cancel their usual travel plans to avoid the sporting event, during the period that the event is held (Allmers & Maennig, 2008:5; Sadd, 2008:32; Harris, 2011). In such context, Matheson (2006:9) points that the destination might lose its regular revenue, due to the regular tourists choosing to stay away to avoid congestion (Baumann & Matheson, 2013:7). Fourie et al. (2011:1365) go further, in distinguishing the type of crowding-out effect concerned, by considering the supply and demand constraints involved. The researchers explain that supply-side crowding-out is the result of capacity constraints exerted, in the sense that some infrastructure might not be available to the regular tourists (in terms of transport, accommodation, and other amenities), as they are used to capacity by the visitors of the sporting event concerned (Fourie et al., 2011:1365). Other supply-side constraints may occur as investment crowding out, causing prices to increase. The constraint is considered to have a negative economic effect, as investment can drive price increases, owing to resource scarcity, causing investment crowding out (Kasimati, 2003:439). The demand-side crowding out happens due to event-related price increases, safety and security concerns, and any kind of congestion that might negatively impact the experience of the regular tourists (Fourie et al., 2011:331). The researchers concerned conclude that the crowding-out effect might also be a reason for the incorrect judgement of tourist receipts, which may also occur if no distinction is made between sports tourists and non-event tourists (Spronk & Fourie, 2009:4). The latter tend to consider the event a secondary attraction, whereas the former travel for the purpose of attending the event (Hinch & Higham, 2004:19). Such classification results from their consumption of services and spending behaviour being different (due to their varying

length of stay), therefore the gains obtained tend also to be different for the industry (Spronk & Fourie, 2009:4).

Other crowd outs happening during the event are those of regular tourists who stay away from the areas surrounding the venues, therefore holding sources of revenue away from the local businesses (Solberg & Preuss, 2007:214; Preuss, 2007:2011; Spronk & Fourie, 2009:5). The domestic tourism market might also reorganise their travel plans to coincide with the event so as not to lose out on the potential receipts that might be lost in this way (Bob & Potgieter, 2013:75). In terms of the domestic expenditure during the event, behaviour and patterns might be influenced by factors created by the event (Crompton, 2006:1), with the failure to account for such resulting in the overestimating of tourism effects (Matheson & Baade, 2004:1091; Kristiansen & Brødsten, 2011:35). On the contrary, the expenditure on construction, or lack of resident spending on the event, might be compensated for elsewhere in the economy, either simultaneously or at a later stage (OECD, 2017:39).

#### **3.8.2.4 Business displacement**

As indicated by Matheson et al. (2012), the high expenditure associated with events and the construction of related infrastructure places huge demand on the sector that might, in turn, displace the investments that might otherwise have been made, thus representing a relatively high opportunity cost in terms of the resources of the host community (Allmers & Maennig, 2008; Cornelissen & Maennig, 2010:102). The resources involved consist of: human resources; knowledge; physical and capital infrastructure; and the tourism superstructure, including its historical and cultural elements (Hiller, 1998:48; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:20-21).

In an economy that uses certain sectors and services to capacity, the increased demand brought about by the hosting of an event might, for instance, grow activities in terms of the construction of sport facilities, by reducing them in other regions of the economy (Maennig & Schwarthoff, 2008:9). Such displacement can occur to labour, with a consequently higher demand in a region in relation to depletion in another, thus negatively affecting the populations and social classes concerned (Hiller, 2000:440; Diaey et al., 2011:35). The host nation economy is likely to experience the inadequate demand caused by the rising power of capital competing against labour, which is a self-inflicted suboptimal effect that operates to the detriment of the host's economic well-being (O'Hara, 2006:58). Furthermore, other research studies have often concluded that infrastructure investments have little to no long-term effect on the host economy (Matheson, 2002:2; Tichaawa & Bama, 2012; Bama & Tichaawa, 2016). Therefore, event projects that are funded by taxpayers are argued to displace funds, and to constitute a high cost for the public concerned (Blanchard & Perotti, 2002:35; Coates & Humphreys, 2003:343; Whitson, 2004:1227; Kristiansen & Brødsten, 2011:33; Bama &

Tichaawa, 2020), with them possibly contributing to the negative legacies of the event (Cornelissen, 2007:5).

With regards to Gabon organising the 28<sup>th</sup> AFCON, questions have been raised as to whether an assessment of how the event might affect the community had been carried out. For the 2012 co-hosting of the event with Equatorial Guinea, some controversies emerged when it was revealed that public funds had been used for organising the event, to the tune of 400bn FCFA (Le Gabon Emergent, 2013).

Other forms of displacement might occur, due to the replacement of an existing facility with a newer, or refurbished, one. The careful consideration of associated costs is required, as it might involve the demolishing of the old facility, the removing of debris from the site, and the remediation of the site (Chapin, 2002:16). The author points to the potential decrease of business activities due to the disruption. In the event that the old venue complemented the local businesses (e.g. restaurants, bars, visitor shopping, etc.), the surrounding district might experience a slump in its economic activities, forcing its businesses to relocate, or to terminate operations, as their customer base might have been displaced (Sims & D'Mello, 2005:278). The above view is echoed in the sense that new sport facilities contain their own restaurant(s) and shops within the enclosure. Therefore, Kristiansen and Brødsten (2011:30) argue that the promised positive economic effect for businesses around a new sport facility is certain to be unfulfilled, given the availability of services within the facility. Moreover, the new stadium, or other sport facilities, can often be surrounded by a parking lot, obviating the need for visitors to venture through the neighbourhood (Kristiansen & Brødsten, 2011:30).

#### **3.8.2.5 Lack of quality employment opportunities**

Although the staging of major sporting events is widely believed to generate new jobs (albeit temporary due to stadia construction), Schimmel (1995:145-146) indicates that, in terms of their quality and duration, the jobs that are created by sport events are generally service-related, and, thus, part-time or low-paying. Hiller (2000:455), similarly, labelled such employment opportunities as being “low-paid” and “short-lived”. In the above context, Baade (1996) concludes that seasonal service sector jobs cannot serve as the basis for a quality economy (Raco, 2004:35). Even in terms of the successful 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, Miguelez and Carrasquer (1995, as cited in Malfas et al., 2004:212) report that the event created only a limited number of permanent jobs, as the rest were directly associated with the event, thus being of only a temporary nature (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006:10). The spatial and temporal dimensions of sport tourism events similarly affect employment, as pointed by Bob et al. (2005:107). In considering the jobs that are made available by an event, Maennig (2007:2) views such opportunities as being limited to those who are nearby, pointing to their negative connotation (Tichaawa, 2013:98). The latter author explains that, after the event,

those who are employed to provide services at the facility (e.g. vendors, ticket-takers, ushers) might return to being unemployed (Malfas et al., 2004:212; Merkel, 2013). The unintended impact is that major sporting events might exacerbate the situation for the usually unemployed, as the results are mostly insignificant, or sometimes negative (Maennig & Schwarthoff, 2008:2). The entrepreneurs involved are likely to attempt to exhaust the existing resources by asking their employees to work overtime, or to perform other, additional tasks, due to the short duration of the sporting events. Crompton (1995, as cited in Kasimati, 2003:435) argues that it is not sustainable to hire additional temporary staff for the event alone.

According to the Oxford Business Group (2015) report on Gabon, the exposure to recent events taking place in the country has highlighted the importance of having skilled personnel in place, noting that they are necessary if Gabon desires to carve out a niche in the high-end tourism market. The report goes on to say that, in recent years, although Gabonese tourism has benefited from some training opportunities, they are believed to have been insufficient for the associated industry needs (Oxford Business Group, 2015:5). Similarly, Harris (2011:410) indicates that a destination that is in need of skills and experience to host a major sporting event often receives the short end of the stick, as labour is brought in from outside the host region for the duration of the event (Jago et al., 2010:227).

### **3.8.3 Social benefits**

In relation to one aspect of the triple bottom-line approach, this subsection considers the social implications for the hosting of the mega events, specifically positive ones. The analysis of economic, social and environmental impacts is advocated as being one of the best and simplest ways of assessing benefits and costs (Turco et al., 2003:228; Horn & Zemann, 2006; Hritz & Ross, 2010:119; Fairley et al., 2011; Monterrubio et al., 2011). In addition to benefiting organisations, government agencies, organising committees, civil society and the broad populace, events and related activities (whether sport, cultural, or festival) provide entertainment for the spectators and possibilities of achievement for the participants (Allen et al., 2011:15).

Despite the complex nature of social impacts, the literature abounds with studies on the effect of mega events on the host community (Jeong & Faulkner, 1996; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Roche, 2000; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Turco et al., 2003; Andereck, Valentine, Knopf & Vogt, 2005; Horn & Zemann, 2006; Kim et al., 2006:87; Ntloko & Swart, 2008; Fairley et al., 2011).

The social effect of events is given by Cornelissen et al. (2011:309), who describe them as "intangible effects, mostly related to subjective experiences that may generally only be felt; – such as the change in resident or visitor's perception of the host city or region" (Kim et al., 2006:87). The complexity of extracting social implications results from them being translated

by multidisciplinary experts, who use a multitude of subjects that are related to major sporting events (Weed, 2006; Gibson, 2013). The tourism industry is largely a reflection of environmental, cultural and social areas that, in nature, incorporate the multifaceted elements of sociology (in terms of the social impacts of tourism) (McGehee & Andereck, 2004:132; Chain, 2009). Assessing the social impacts of sport events tourism is based on the principles used by sociologists to establish societal behaviour in relation to the event and related dimensions (Weed, 2006:195). The WTO report on Africa asserts that tourism authorities support tourism product development to improve service delivery and to provide facilities for its people, thereby enhancing their “quality of life” (UNWTO, 2015:9).

Some definitions should help in the quest to determine how social impacts can result from the hosting of major sporting events (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000b:765; McGehee & Andereck, 2004:132; Gursoy & Kendall, 2006:605). According to Roche (2000:21), international events play an important role in shaping a sort of “international public culture” that represents the collective identity of a nation and its residents. Hall (1992:67) views social impacts as “the manner in which tourism and travel effect changes in the collective and individual value systems, behaviour patterns, community structures, lifestyle and quality of life”.

As stated by Black (2008:471), the positive impacts on the community, and their association with the event, serve to evoke a sense of pride (Coates & Humphreys, 2003:336), with its symbolic function creating excitement and emotion (Stokes, 2006:684). The residents’ support for tourism development enables policymakers to improve the quality of life of the community (Chen, 2001; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:15). By means of hosting a special event, a sense of community pride and national identity acts as “a ‘cohesive force’ that can both hold a nation together and shape their relationships to the family of nations” (Nauright, 2004:1330; Kim et al., 2006:87; Smith & Seokho, 2006:129). Such unity of a nation, as aroused around sport events and the global village, are best reflected in what Nelson Mandela (2004) said about sport: “it has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does”. According to Isabirye (2017), the AFCON tournament has been a crucial platform for the exhibition of Gabonese diversity in terms of the nation’s cultural norms and customs. The cultural asset is the product of a social mix of 52 ethnic groups that coexist peacefully, and which are bound together by traditional beliefs, deeply rooted folkloric dance, and fun exotic outfits (Gabon, 2019).

In terms of the broader sense of how a community can be socially impacted upon, the prospect of hosting sport competitors, visitors, media and sponsors is likely to create a sense of enthusiasm (Malfas et al., 2004), which translates into the community promoting the event by word of mouth. Moreover, Smith (2010:270) argues that the sustained support of the local community adds to the feel-good effect. According to Black (2008:470), a community that is

driven by a high level of enthusiasm will tend to protect its integrity by, for instance, enlisting volunteering programmes and ensuring the visitors' safety. The latter point is echoed by Ntloko and Swart (2008:88), who state that volunteering for the event "instils pride, strengthens patriotism and establishes a strong sense of the community" among the local residents (Kim et al., 2006:87). Moreover, Bob and Swart (2010:78) concur that, to monitor such an intangible effect as "community pride" or social cohesion is more difficult than assessing infrastructure development or the increase in tourism say. For the 2017 AFCON tournament in Gabon, the organising committee enlisted the help of up to 1896 volunteers (Cocan Gabon, 2017:30).

Furthermore, volunteering for a mega event is considered as capable of promoting new skills development training and employment opportunities (Smith & Fox, 2007:1141), with the appropriate socio-economic effect on the host community. The local community patronage is considered "significant" in the role of major sporting events (Brown et al., 2010:281). The feel-good effect, which is interchangeably regarded as a sense of happiness, well-being and utility in the sphere of economics, is identified as being one of the key benefits of hosting major sporting events (Bob & Swart, 2010:79; Kristiansen & Brødsten, 2011:61). The effect is suggested to be one of the most significant among others that are induced by sporting events, although quantifying it is considered to be problematic (Maennig & Du Plessis, 2007:588; Baade & Matheson, 2002, as cited in Cornelissen & Maennig, 2010:99). The feel-good effect can enhance the sense of social cohesion and increase the levels of civic pride, despite the absence of a direct leisure-related experience, which might benefit the person or group expressing it (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2001; Heyne, Suessmith & Maennig, 2007:153). The effect is a non-pecuniary benefit that is generated by the hosting of visitors for a special event (Raney, 2004:52; Maennig & Du Plessis, 2007:579; Knott, Fyall & Jones, 2015:52). In the context of a host, major sporting events require the provision of accommodation, transportation, entertainment, services, and facilities as a collective product of tourism (Wäsche et al., 2013). The feel-good factor is a self-awarded sense of well-being or political capital for achieving host status, and for being associated with the "global stage" (Wolfgang & Porsche, 2008:7; Cornelissen & Maennig, 2010:99). In terms of fulfilling the aspirations of a host, the community feeds upon the positive energy involved (Siegfried, 2006:101) in celebrating cultural modernity and in expressing national maturity (Tomlinson & Young, 2006:12; Kavetsos & Szymanski, 2008:16). The social impact that comes from the hosting of mega events is encompassed by the "social cohesion" that is characterised as being the most intangible social impact involved (Nauright, 2004:1330). Moreover, a sense of civic pride "strengthens people's well-being" and promotes a spirit of openness and tolerance as part of the "national identity" (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:2; Bull & Lovell, 2007; Black, 2008:470).

In terms of a broad perspective on the community, the positive impacts of sport tourism are the "improvement of physical fitness and mental well-being for participants" (Emery, 2002:317),

social inclusion, and the provision of entertainment from a unique vantage point for the spectators (James & Ross, 2004:25; Robinson & Trail, 2005:59; Tomlinson & Young, 2006:11). In addition, the positive impacts foster a sense of “social interaction” among those who might otherwise have felt “socially excluded” (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006:11; Malfas et al., 2004:214; Fredline et al., 2006:24), and “boost socio-economic prospects” for the host region and community (Turco et al., 2003:225; Swart & Bob, 2010:76). Moreover, prospective marketers are suggested as seeking out the community buy-in, as it is a crucial step in securing a memorable tourist experience (Waitt, 2003:200). According to the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the development of sustainable tourism in Gabon will be achieved through initiatives and investment that consider the communities’ quality of life, which can be improved. The WCS posits that Gabonese economic success will, in turn, contribute to national development (e.g. the expansion of medical facilities and schools) (White et al., 2007:17). Wildlife and nature-based tourism contributes significantly to the life of many poor people (OECD, 2008:38). Moreover, tourism development can provide several social benefits in the case of responsible tourism products (e.g. fairness towards the local community/pro-poor, etc.); in supporting community-based tourism projects; and in seeking to alleviate/eradicate poverty through such programmes such as Sustainable Tourism for Eliminating Poverty (Abbot, Thomas, Gardener, Neba & Khen, 2001:1116; UNWTO, 2015:40).

Capitalising on the large audience that an event like the AFCON can attract, and on the community's excitement about it, the Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF) champions campaigns of social importance in redressing issues that affect the community’s socio-economic fabric. Through football and its power to unite, the Federation (CAF) has teamed up with sponsors and entities that are associated with the event, so as to be able to cooperate in support of, among others, the following:

- StreetFootballWorld, which is an international network of grassroots organisations that uses football to empower the youth;
- the African Union (AU), in its commitment to economic transformation across the African continent;
- UNAIDS, in promoting the Protect the Goal campaign that promotes zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS-related deaths; and
- United Against Malaria, which is implemented in the form of the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) campaign, with the aim of combating malaria in Africa, and of fighting against Ebola (in the shape of 11 against Ebola), as well as of countering the devastating effect that the diseases have on the communities concerned. The campaigns bring together donors, activists, government agencies and civil society, uniting them with the intention of promoting opportunities for broad economic stability and for a healthy community (CAFOOT, 2015:57).

The broad implication of the sociocultural impacts makes assessing them time-consuming, as is asserted by Burnett (2008:4), who explains that the involvement therewith “translates into the forging of mutually beneficial relationships, networking (and) social integration” (Kim et al., 2006:87). In a broader sense still, the socio-economic impacts related to aspects driven or to

the driving effects thereof can be derived from the following list: “international recognition of host region”; “breakdown of racial and cultural barriers”; “local, community and national identity and pride”; “social integration and nation-building”; “increased community participation – voluntarism and intercultural interaction”; “introducing new and challenging ideas”; “revitalising traditions”; “expanding cultural perspectives”; “liminality – the feeling that an overtly sacred act is occurring”; “access to health services and health education”; “awareness of outsiders’ perceptions”; “increase of quality of life for higher socio-economic classes due to improved amenities”; and “improved cultural and shopping opportunities for locals’ tolerance and social cohesiveness” (Sparks, Chadwick, Schafmeister, Woratschek, Hurley & Dickson, 2006; Steyn, 2007:44; Crowther, 2010:227). In the context of positive impacts on the society, Kim et al. (2006:88) point to the link with aspects brought about by the event, namely community pride, strengthened cultural values, and traditions leading to a better understanding within the region. Overall, the African Cup of Nations itself stands as a symbol of development in Africa and of comradeship on the continent, and, therefore, hosting has its natural benefits (Annetteabena.com, 2017).

#### **3.8.4 Social costs**

As was discussed earlier, any event that is hosted in a community usually has direct social and cultural impacts. As sport events and the culture of the sport tourist entail travel outside of the home region to the experiencing of sport (Chalip, Green & Hill, 1998:276), Cook et al. (2010:303) explain the above by saying that the “host community may experience some change within its social fabric given that cultures can be influenced into changing”. Social impacts can be defined as “changes in the structure, habits or pattern within the social order; due to exposure or involvement in particular dimension” (Ohmann et al., 2006:130).

In the case of hosting a sporting event, the presence of sport tourists and participants can attract some undesirable elements to the local community (Fredline et al., 2006:1), especially when hosting a highly desirable mega event (Müller, 2015:628). The event destination may, therefore, attract such vices as prostitution, the sale of drugs, illegal gambling, vandalism, or hooliganism (Turco et al., 2003:228; Kim & Petrick, 2005:25; Bob & Swart, 2010:83). Any degradation, or disruption, of the residents’ lifestyle and pattern brought on by the event is a social cost to the community (Turco et al., 2002:59). Construction programmes related to building the infrastructure of the event (in terms of sport and transport facilities) can serve as a source of personal irritation to the local households and businesses (Waitt, 2003:200). Additionally, the city might experience traffic jams, due to road closures and/or due to an increase in the number of vehicles on the road (Bull & Lovell, 2007:236).

The effects of tourism and sport events are of great concern for the host community, as its interests and activities might be impacted on negatively, with social practices and customary



beliefs possibly being influenced by an outside presence (Page & Connell, 2009:389; Cook et al., 2010:303). According to Page and Connell (2009:387) the far-reaching consequences on the community's way of life is what makes up the cross-cultural exchanges, which is then passed down from generation to generation. The nature of sport tourism events requires the use of resources (e.g. natural, physical, cultural, etc.) in building the tourism product towards sustainability. In the above context, the exploitation of social and cultural values evokes a problematic moral dilemma (Getz, 2008:406).

The effects of tourism, mega events and sport, in particular, have the potential to impact the social and psychological well-being of a community by pushing (positive) or pulling (negative) on them (Adams & Piekarz, 2015:228). As such, their social implications for a community provide a good example of the presence of "a double-edged sword" (Marcouiller, 1997, as cited in Fredline et al., 2006:2). As hypothesised, in terms of the role played by sport events, sports and related events are noted as being opportunities for freely expressing a collective cultural identity that unites and binds a community (Adams & Piekarz, 2015:228). However, the authors argue that, in uniting a community, the possession of a collective cultural identity, in a sense (depending on the perspective), reinforces existing differences, thereby intensifying the division caused by the feelings of 'them' and 'us'. In so doing, such an identity represents a cost to the community (Adams & Piekarz, 2015:228). Giulianotti (2004, as cited in Adams & Piekarz, 2015:222) points out that the paradox involved lies within the ambit of the symbolic value that is attributed to sport and related events, as the cause of "social conflict and prevention to integrate certain groups of society". Such conflict is often expressed through nationalism, sexism, racism, and other forms of xenophobia (Fredline, 2005:268). Horne (2010:33) attributes the above to the subjectivity of the matter in saying: "mega-events provide multiple meanings for different groups of people, so it is not surprising that positive and/or negative impacts can be found depending on who is being looked at, or even who is doing the 'looking'".

Conversely, it is pointed out that the benefits that accrue from playing sport do not necessarily extend to sport events (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011:250; Coalter, 2013:3). The injection of tourists into a rural region is argued as dividing a previously homogenous community, because the influx changes the dynamics of the community (Fredline et al., 2006:2; Cook, Yale & Marqua, 2010:303). Whether through the removal of surplus populations and the socially marginal from host sites and venues, the construction of highly gender-specific male cultural centres, or the reaffirmation of the hierarchical ranking of nations through sport performances, major sporting events can contribute to the naturalisation of social inequalities (Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006:18). In the context of cultural rights, the notion that sport institutions reinforce Western cultural conception and hegemonic dominance, due to their universal reach,

is propounded by post-colonialist theorists as exhibiting unequal socio-political power, to the detriment of global human rights (Giulianotti, 2004:362).

Major sporting events are viewed by hosts and organisations as being a stage of projecting their identity to the global society, characterised by such principles as “universal citizenship” and “corporate citizenship” (Roche, 2003:104, 2006). However, criticisms have been levelled against them for being the driver of various social costs to communities. The social negativities refer to such cases as (Lenskyj, 2002:55-56) that of a Queensland, Australia law that was passed for the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, which effectively cleared aboriginals off the streets at the time of the event (Giulianotti, 2004; Foley, 2008:127; Adams & Piekarz, 2015:230). Following the ‘Asian crisis’, Malaysia returned to an authoritarian regime after the country failed to display itself as a model for ‘modern Muslim society’ through its participation in the Commonwealth Games (Van der Westhuizen, 2004, as cited in Pillay & Bass, 2009:84). For the 2012 London Games, the lawmakers concerned passed the 2006 Olympic Act, granting repressive and intrusive power to authorities, by allowing forced entry to private property and increased surveillance, in a bid to address security concerns (Jennings & Lodge, 2009:5). In the face of incidents of grave violation of “human and labour rights”, due to the poor, exploitative and often dangerous working conditions faced by immigrant workers in Qatar’s construction sector, Amnesty International (2013) identified exploitative practitioners involved in the construction of the FIFA 2022 World Cup facilities, which resulted in high numbers of accidents and deaths. The alleged injustices pointed to a wide range of social costs involved, raising the notion that, often, hosting rights are awarded to countries that systematically repress the “human rights” of its citizens (Lenskyj, 2002:228; Roche, 2001:171; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006:12). In the meanwhile, events are posited as actually providing an opportunity to redress social costs by way of exposing them (Giulianotti, 2004; Hough, 2008:1292; Spaaij, 2009; Adams & Piekarz, 2015:230). Similarly, Lenskyj (2010:15) sees events as the silver lining that can draw the eyes of the world, and expose regimes and industries that abuse human rights, while also potentially giving a voice to the less powerful, marginalised groups, exposing corrupt practices, and forcing changes in the governments involved.

The perceptions of a destination and its sociocultural image might have a negative effect on its ability to raise its political profile. The above was observed by Dimeo and Kay (2004) in the co-hosting of the 1996 Cricket World Cup by India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The countries involved were going through a period of instability, due to divisive regional politics (in the shape of political tensions between India and Pakistan, and the presence of civil war in Sri Lanka) (Pillay & Bass, 2009:84). Instead of acting as a social unifier (Labuschagne, 2008:3), the event failed to promote a positive image of the region, as the negative coverage of the problems faced by South Asian countries at the time overshadowed the event, with them being

exacerbated even further, due to the underlying stereotyping of South Asian cultures (Dimeo & Kay, 2004).

#### **3.8.4.1 Socio-economic costs**

Firstly, the social and cultural impacts are seen to be external to economic evaluations, which are used to justify the hosting of the event. Secondly, the impacts are comparatively intangible and difficult to measure. Thirdly, the impacts tend to be considered as negative factors, leading to their measurement not being encouraged (Ritchie et al., 2009). Thus, measuring and understanding the social impacts of a sports mega event should be regarded as being as important as measuring and understanding the economic impacts thereof (Kim & Petrick, 2005:25).

Some scholars argue that the economic growth that is associated with events infrastructure can have a negative effect on the local population (Andranovich et al., 2001:127; Tomlinson, Bass & Pillay, 2009:15), specifically in terms of the low-income households (Hall et al., 1998; Sims & D'Mello, 2005:279). The negative impacts refer to the mandatory land purchases made by the state, and to the building clearances undertaken by the organisers, so as to secure land for new development, as causing sudden increases in rents and house prices (Sims & D'Mello, 2005:279; Silvestre, 2008-2009:12; Pillay & Bass, 2009:87). The stadiums and other sport facilities built in low-income communities might upset the local setting by transforming the social classes involved (Silvestre, 2008-2009:12; Allen, Bryant & Vandaman, 2010:61-64). Doing so can alter the value of property in adjacent areas, which could experience an escalation of rents beyond the affordability of the residents, thus having an adverse effect on the local communities (Hiller 1998:54, 2000:445; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006:12). Incidents of human displacement due to major sporting events are recorded in relation to the forcible eviction of people from their homes to temporary housing (Hall, 1992:70; Smith, 2010). Similar displacements of the local community were recorded for the 2014 football World Cup and for the 2016 Rio Olympic Games, with the local community alleging eviction without compensation (CoHRE, 2006:29). The displacement in Brazil infringed on the human rights of the individual and the community, resulting in dire social costs, and thus proving that not all communities enjoy the so-called 'benefits' of major sporting events (Whitson & Horne, 2006:86; Adams & Piekarz, 2015:227).

Other secondary costs to the local communities are caused by an increase in the municipal/government expenses, so as enable the authorities concerned to provide additional services to the events participants (Sims & D'Mello, 2005:279; Whitson & Horne, 2006:75). The influx of tourists to a city increases the demand on resources needed for safety and security, healthcare, fire protection, and other purposes for the duration of the event

(Häußermann, Läßle. & Siebel, 2008:265). The increase in taxes to secure additional services can have unintended consequences of an escalation in the rents and rates levied (Sims & D'Mello 2005:279; Tichaawa et al., 2015:177). The local community might be drained of resources, or the host city's own development projects might suddenly become unimportant (Ivanov, 2005; Häußermann et al., 2008:265). The latter author points out that such reallocation of resources might exert pressure on the other public services intersecting the event.

Cornelissen (2004b:52) attributes such negative effects to the improper planning undertaken by the host city. For instance, Gabon has been acting in accordance with a plan for poverty reduction and growth strategy since 2006. The plan, PRGSP, targeted good governance and the use of resources for social development and for the reduction of poverty levels. The reallocation of resources, as planned for the country's public investment programme (PIP), and for projects of the national infrastructure agency (ANGT), has, so far, prevented the country from achieving its goals to uplift the community, and will, undoubtedly, result in some social cost (OECD, 2007b:281). Another social programme that is likely be affected by the displacement of funds is the national health development plan (Plan National de Développement Sanitaire – PNDS). The plan's objectives are to improve the health system, develop human resources, and improve the financing of the system, among others. The above-mentioned points are essential for the providing of quality care and for tackling the main health problems, like the high rates of infant and maternal mortality, malnutrition, anaemia, and malaria. Other vital programmes are the TB campaign and the national anti-HIV/AIDS strategy (OECD, 2007b:282). In 2004, Gabon was ranked 123rd in the world in terms of the Human Development Index of the UNDP, which is a medium category for human development (OECD, 2007b:282).

In addition to the above negative effect, a second set of costs relates to the infrastructure, safety and security, the health services, and other measures to do with hosting the event (Zimbalist, 2010; Tichaawa et al., 2015:177)

### **3.8.5 Environmental benefits**

The environmental impacts of sport tourism development (Collins & Flynn, 2008) are usually neglected, or at least considered in anticipation of an economic windfall, as revealed by Koenig and Leopkey (2009:14) and by Jago et al. (2010:6). While the environmental benefits are not so tangible and immediate, their impact can be long-lasting (Ahmed & Pretorius, 2010:273).

While major events probably generate several different positive economic benefits (Bob et al., 2008:49), the host countries should be aware of their potential environmental impacts. As

propounded by O'Brien (2006:258), an event should not be regarded as an 'intervention', but, rather, as an opportunity to foster and nurture sustainable long-term outcomes (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000:766; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002:50; Tibbot, 2002:73; Matheson & Baade, 2004:346).

Obvious aspects of major events impacts are reflected in new physical infrastructure, like stadiums, transport infrastructure, and airport facilities (Doudouras & James, 2004:5). The link between the long-term benefits that accrue to the host cities and to the public infrastructure, particularly for the transport system, can be seen in the light of the massive investment that tends to follow on the hosting of mega events (D'Arcy, 2006; Li, Blake & Thomas, 2013). By their nature, mega events attract large number of visitors (Smith & Fox, 2007; Cornelissen et al., 2011). So as to satisfy the requirements for the hosting of mega events, large-scale infrastructure development tends to be undertaken, like the construction of new sporting and leisure facilities, the telecommunication infrastructure, improved roads, and the development of the public transport network, so as to ensure efficient transportation to the sporting event (Essex & Chalkley, 1998:189; O'Toole, 2010:39; Smith, 2010:275). Therefore, it is argued that benefits can be drawn from the development of the infrastructure that is not directly related to the event (Doudouras & James, 2004:5), like leisure facilities, commercial centres and open spaces. Such improvements, including upgrades to water and sewage service facilities, are aimed at improving the physical appearance of the host city or region concerned (Kitchen, 1996). Doudouras and James (2004:5) posit that mega-sporting events then provide opportunities that might not have been politically or financially feasible without the event. Consequently, mega events are used to trigger large-scale urban improvement for organising and urbanising a chaotic urban space (Clark, 2008a:46). The case of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics is often quoted for the use of mega-sporting events in this way. Through major investments, for the Olympics concerned, it was possible to build new transport systems, and the run-down coastal area was transformed into a new marina, with leisure facilities and attractive sandy beaches (Essex & Chalkley, 1998:192; OECD, 2010:13).

At a time when the international community's attention is on the issue of climate change, events with such a global audience provide an opportunity for engaging both the public and the private sectors in adopting policies and practices that can serve to reduce the tourism industry's carbon footprint (Collins, Jones & Munday, 2009:828). Responsible tourism should entail planning, so as to minimise the negative ecological impacts when constructing facilities for the event (Muhanna, 2006:22; Booyens, 2010). Moreover, introducing a new level of environmental accountability might require adopting extensive measures to assess an event's energy footprint (Collins et al., 2009:830; Otto & Heath, 2009).

In the above regard, conservation has been championed by the government of Gabon as forming part of its overall tourism strategy. It aims to preserve the biodiversity, and to promote green activities (Gabon Review, 2017). Opportunities of tourism development in Africa are extensive, due to the continent's untouched resources, natural beauty, cultural heritage and historical sites, wildlife, safaris, beaches, and deserts. A benefit that might derive from a carefully planned strategy is the opportunities that are granted for cultural tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism, and diaspora tourism (UNWTO, 2015:5). As a proud engine of ecotourism, one of the country's pillars for an emerging Gabon is the Green Gabon initiative, which is committed to meeting the goals of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium and to implementing the relevant climate plans (Gabon, 2019).

Sustainable events are those that can endure indefinitely, without consuming or spoiling the resources upon which they depend (Getz, 2005:123), and without spreading any negative impacts across time (Doudouras & James, 2004:1; Booyens, 2010, as cited in Bama & Tichaawa, 2015:6). Hence, the developed and the developing countries need to work in terms of the guidelines of environmental impact assessments (EIAs), with sport being used as a powerful tool for communicating environmental messages, and for encouraging actions to clean up the environment (Ahmed et al., 2008:79). In the case of Gabon and the benefits granted to the tourism industry, plans have been put in place for developing tourist products within the ambit of ecotourism and sustainable tourism (Oxford Business Group, 2015:2-3).

### **3.8.6 Environmental costs**

An examination of the mega events' literature reveals that the environmental impacts of such events are very often overlooked, which is a view that is reflected by Koenig and Leopkey (2009:14) and by Jago et al. (2010:6). From a developmental perspective, the prospects of economic windfall often overshadow the impacts that sport tourism has on the environment, thereby neglecting its implications in relation to economic gains (Collins & Flynn, 2008; Ahmed & Pretorius, 2010:274; Preuss, 2013:3582).

Concerns about the environmental effect of sport tourism have been brought into focus by the global realisation of the implications of climate change, raising questions about the factors contributing to the mega events' huge carbon footprint. Public-private sector policies have been brought into review, fuelling international scrutiny of practices, and putting the spotlight on discussions of corporate social responsibility (Burak, Dogan & Gazioglu, 2004:519; Collins et al., 2009:829; Cornelissen et al., 2011:307; Van Wynsberghe, Derom & Maurer, 2012:186). The growing importance of sport tourism as a niche market highlights its application, and making issues of total quality management, and of sustainability within the industry, points of contention among policymakers (De Knop, 2004:309; Enright & Newton, 2004:779). Moreover, it is held that "increased popularity in natural and adventure sport tourism will bring

sustainability principles within development studies as many of these events take place in natural destination areas” (De Knop, 2004:309).

Despite the lack of studies with evaluated and quantifiable results, a widely held assumption is that large sporting events might negatively impact on the environment (Wood, 2005:38; Schmied, Hochfeld, Stahl, Roth, Armbruster, Türk & Friedl, 2007:7; Silvestre, 2008-2009:8). Several techniques have been used to assess the environmental impacts of major sporting events, including a twofold approach focusing on the results of policies that promote environmental awareness, and the external consumption of event-related infrastructure (Collins et al., 2009:829).

Contrary to the environmental benefits that are not so tangible and immediate, costs are often quickly felt (Malfas et al., 2004:213). Cognisant of the negative impacts that might derive from the hosting of mega events, the main challenges for the countries that host them lie in finding new ways of improving environmental performance, in terms of water, energy and waste management, transport, mobility, and carbon offsetting (Doudouras & James, 2004:4; Collins et al., 2009:829-835). In the above context, the objectives to limit the negative impacts and to secure positive environmental legacies should be a matter of public interest within the stakeholder’s perspective. Outcomes cannot simply be left to happen, but, rather, the intention should be to drive aspects of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and community identification therewith (Preuss, 2007:209).

The environmental effects of major sporting events should be given consideration, from the pre-bidding stages involving, for instance, the assessing of locations under a strategy of sustainability and urban regeneration programme to reclaim rundown areas (Jones & Grippaios, 2000:218-219; Smith & Fox, 2007:1138) through to infrastructure efficiency (including transport). Educating the public about recycling and raising the stakeholders’ awareness of green legacies to limit the costs (both short and long-term) that might occur due to the hosting of the event needs attention (Thurow, 2004:31-56; Leopkey & Parent, 2012:12; Preuss, 2013:3586). Hence, event organisers should involve the stakeholders in observing the ecological footprint in terms of policy and planning, in relation to the participation in sport development, as discussed by Collins et al. (2009:833). In the above context, the non-disposal of waste, or untimely action, are seen as negative environmental impacts by Masterman (2004:78), who also views the destruction of the habitat as a form of environmental cost.

Meanwhile, Davenport and Davenport (2006:281) consider mega events to be:

the greatest ecological threat any form of mass tourism creates, indisputably lie in the infrastructure and transport arrangements required to support it (such as the physical development of resorts, consumption of fuel by buildings, aircraft, trains, buses, taxis and cars, overuse of water resources, pollution by vehicle emissions,

sewage and litter), which accrue into substantial, often irreversible, environmental degradation as well as social consequences.

Indeed, tourism development is primarily reliant on the natural landscape, and on the appeal of unpolluted resources (Sasidharan, Sirakayab & Kerstettera, 2002:166). The emerging literature suggests that such natural resources are considered as sensitive ecosystems, forming the basis of attraction for nature-based tourism, especially for developing nations. The researchers consider the potential impact of mega events on the local ecosystem, and they assert that the negative effects thereof pollute the biologically and culturally diverse areas of the world (Muhanna, 2006:14; Schmied et al., 2007:12). Furthermore, they list the utilisation of irreplaceable natural capital, and the high consumption of energy and water during the event, which both affect the local communities and contribute to climate change, with their large carbon footprints (Schmied et al., 2007:12; Jones, 2008; Collins et al., 2009:829).

As far as Gabon is concerned, the failure to create cohesion with the local communities is the reason for the country's decline in participation in ecotourism projects, despite the efforts that are made by the leaders to initiate community-based tourism in some national park locations, as noted by Gravari-Barbas and Jacquot (2013:8). Some reasons therefor that are cited by Tichaawa et al., (2015:8) are the lack of sense of ownership by the community, which is mainly attributed to the failure to implement community integration by including the necessary actors in projects. In the above respect, a community-based pilot project was developed in 2003, by the European Union, in the Loango National Park, Gabon (Payen, 2013:4). Its operational responsibility was later left to the national agency, Agence National des Grands Travaux et Infrastructures (ANPN). Other constraints that have been identified are: the lack of synergy; the making of non-transparent international investments; the lack of charters and commitments in respect of the recruitment of inhabitants; the appropriating of projects by communities as beneficiaries; and the competing locals and different NGOs seeking funding and aid, as well as others (Gossling, 2002:284; Gravari-Barbas & Jacquot, 2013:8).

In the global context, water issues chronologically follow on from climate issues, as water stresses and quality issues are gaining momentum, as a matter of urgency, in many parts of the world (Ahmed & Pretorius, 2010:281). The link between tourism and water availability and quality are significant issues, often because tourists shift their water demand to other regions, which are often fresh water-scarce, like coastal zones (Gossling, 2002:284). In fact, the efforts undertaken to mitigate the negative impacts on the environmental have become a theme that is commonly associated with the hosting of mega events (Collins et al., 2009:830). As a result, sports associations and organisations are working on processes to green mega sporting events (Chernushenko & Stubbs, 2005, as cited in Collins et al., 2009:929), as, for instance, does the 2006 Torino Winter Games. Some initiatives include minimising water use in



snowmaking, to offset the carbon emissions linked to the event (Collins et al., 2009; Greenpeace, 2002, 2004). As such, six aspects need to be incorporated into preserving the legacy of an event. Their relevance lies in developing the green legacies of an event, being infrastructure, knowledge, networks, policy, and culture, in preparation for the hosting thereof, while the emotions involved depend on the momentum that the event develops (Preuss, 2007:92-97). Similarly, initiatives have been taken by some stadium managers to use sensors on pitches to prevent overwatering, while some of the cleaning systems use less water than do others, and they recycle at least 50% of the total waste (Randerson, 2007, as cited in Collins et al., 2009:832).

In contrast, land (including strategic aquatic environments) alteration is seen as the single most important component of global environmental change affecting ecological systems (Vitousek et al., 1997, as cited in Gossling, 2002:284). Direct conversion takes place for the development of the tourist infrastructure, with indirect conversion occurring through fragmentation, as well as additional land and water being used as dumping grounds for solid waste (Gossling, 2002:284).

Studies have identified impacts as occurring before, during and after an event (Hiller, 1998:48), hence pre-event environmental impacts also need to be considered, as argued by Ahmed and Pretorius (2010:287). Of the above, some negative impacts are related to noise disturbance, traffic congestion, and disruption to water services during the construction phase (Ahmed & Pretorius, 2010:287). After the infrastructure has been put in place, its subsequent use is likely to increase the amount of traffic, the size of crowds, the destruction of heritage, and the usage of other resources for maintaining the facilities concerned (Allen et al., 2010:61; Cook et al., 2010:301). The above may affect the environment in the long term. Moreover, those impacted upon are rarely able to protect their interests, as was the case in the construction of the Olympic Stadium in Rio de Janeiro. Silvestre (2008-2009:6) points to community disturbance and to public bypass, for the failure to inform residents of the planned works and their possible implications.

Schmied et al. (2007:12) indicate several proactive environmental measures for the establishment of sustainable tourism. The measures typically relate to the successful implementing of programmes and practices with minimal or no impact on the natural resources base (such as water, energy, waste and biodiversity). The life cycle of the event, from conceptualisation to finish, is, in brief, an intensely deliberative process that seeks to minimise potential conflict (South Africa. DEAT, 2010:2).

### **3.9 Summary**

Sport tourism as presented in this chapter has become a significant activity and plays a pivotal role in the economic and social regeneration of both urban and rural communities. It is further considered as a vehicle for the improvement of the socio-economic and socio-cultural well-being of local communities. This chapter has been focused on discussing the theoretical overview of major sporting events and their perceived impacts on the tourism and hospitality industry, in relation to the hosting of sport tourism events, and specifically the AFCON by Libreville in Gabon.

The following chapter, Chapter 4, provides a detailed explanation of the research design and methodology followed in the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The hosting of sport events has often been heralded by communities and other stakeholders as having the capacity to catalyse tourism and hospitality development within host communities. (swart & bob, 2009; Bama & Tichaawa, 2016). The purpose of this study was to establish the capacity of sport events as catalysts for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon. The present chapter describes the research methodology in terms of the research design, the data collection methods and techniques, the questionnaire design, the sample selection, and the data analysis which were used to collect the data from the stakeholders is discussed.

#### **4.2 Research questions**

According to Flick (2009:102-103), research questions represent a door to the research field under study, and they can be classified as to how far they are suitable for confirming such existing assumptions as hypotheses, or as to how far they aim at discovering new ones. In other words, they indicate a clear direction and scope for research work undertaken. As mentioned in Chapter One, the following research questions guided the current study:

- Which factors encouraged the city of Libreville to organise major sporting events?
- What are the challenges and opportunities of organising sport events in Libreville?
- What were the lessons learned from some of the major events hosted in Libreville for the tourism and hospitality industry?
- How can the sport event industry be strengthened to support tourism and hospitality development in Libreville?

#### **4.3 Study areas**

Gabon, which is officially known as the Gabonese Republic, is a former French colony that is located on the Atlantic coast of Central Africa. The country is bordered by Equatorial Guinea to the north-west, Cameroon to the north, the Republic of Congo to the east and south, and the Atlantic Ocean's Gulf of Guinea to the west (DGSEE, 2009:2). It has an area of nearly 270 000 km<sup>2</sup>. With 2017 figures reflecting a relatively low population density estimated at 2 058 036 people, Gabon is divided into nine provinces, namely: Estuaire; Haut-Ogooué; Moyen-Ogooué; Ngounié; Nyanga; Ogooué-Ivindo; Ogooué-Lolo; Ogooué-Maritime; and Woleu-Ntem. Gabon's capital and largest city is Libreville, in the Estuaire province. The country has one of the lowest population densities of any country in Africa (see Fig. 4.1 below). Almost all Gabonese are of Bantu origin, though Gabon has at least forty different ethnic groups, with diverse languages and cultures (University of California, Los Angeles. African Studies Center, 2012).

### 4.3.1 An overview of tourism activities in Gabon

Over the past five years, Gabon has received an average of 180 000 to 200 000 visitors annually, according to its immigration department, with the bulk of visitors coming for business purposes (59%), followed by the visitors involved with leisure activities (22%), and lastly the 8% attending meetings and conferences (WTTC, 2015). The tourism industry's activities in Gabon with regards to the country's economic prospects and those of other countries indicate that the sector has yet to become significant in terms of its share of contributions made to the Gabonese economy. Of 185 countries, the GDP contribution of Gabon's travel and tourism industry stood at 159 in 2016 (absolute), and 182 in terms of relative size comparison for the same year (WTTC, 2017). The country's year-on-year growth forecast for 2017 ranked 60, with an enhanced outlook only in terms of long-term growth projections to 2027, with it ranking 41<sup>st</sup> in such regard (WTTC, 2017:1). The annual rankings are calculated in constant values in relation to the prices and exchange rates for 2016. For the year ending 2018, the contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (% of GDP) for Gabon was 3.2 %, a downward trend from an initial high of 6.5 % in 1999 (WTTC, 2019).



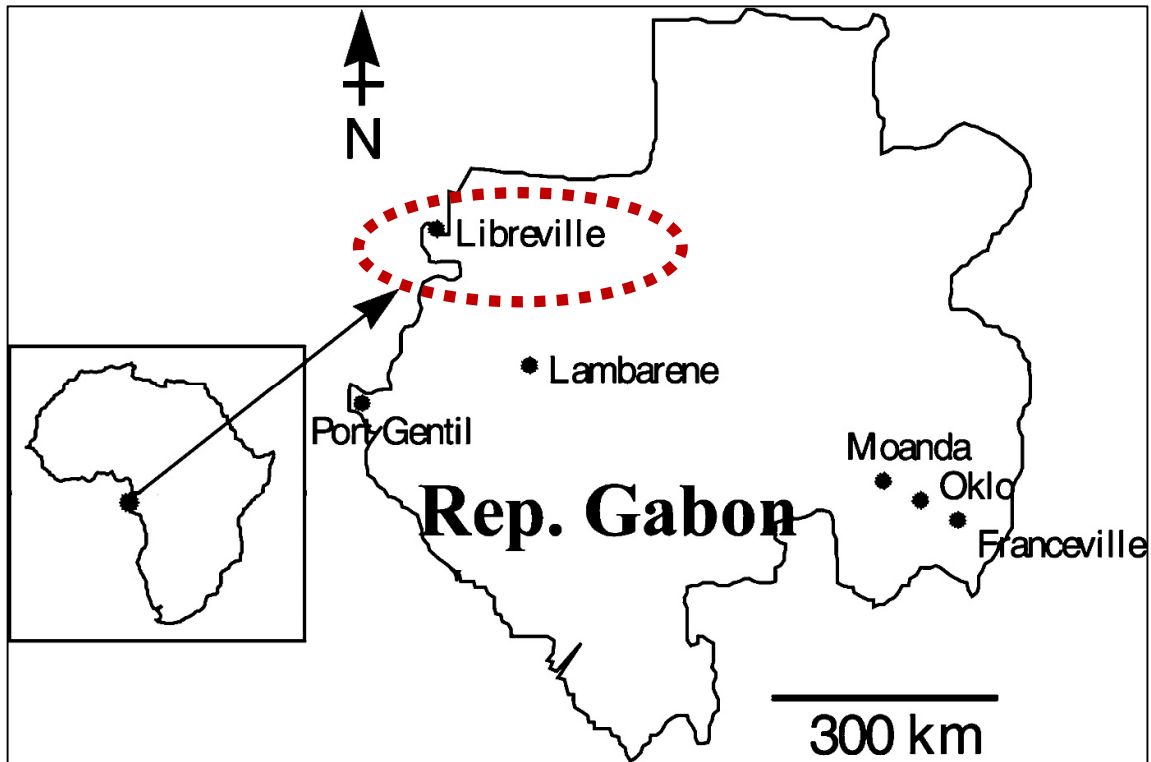
**Figure 4.1: Relative importance of travel and tourism's total contribution to the GDP of Gabon** (WTTC, 2017:1)

As part of the Gabonese government's strategy for the diversification of the economy, the PSGE, massive investment expanded the budget to the capital expenditure rate of 10% of the GDP in 2010 and 2011. The above went towards infrastructure support of critical sectors of the economy, including those spent on the hosting of the CAN 2012 (ORCE, 2011:3). However, the public spending on sectors deemed a priority in terms of the country's developmental plan seems somewhat inadequate in terms of the government policy (Economie du Gabon, 2016). The priority sectors of the government include transportation, housing, public facilities, tourism, energy, education, health, ports, and other large infrastructure projects (US Department of State, 2015:4). For budget expenses in the 2015 to 2016 period, the aforementioned sectors' allocations were set at 141.31bn and 132.93bn for education; 98.88bn and 88.78bn for higher education and scientific research; 281.95bn and 251.25bn for construction and housing; 98.92bn and 56.94bn for health; and 13.11bn and 8.01bn for agriculture (amounts quoted in billions FCFA) (Moussi, 2016).

A reflection on the employment forecast made by the WTTC in 2014 shows that the industry's employment was expected to remain constant from the year 2014 to 2015, at 3 500 jobs. The

section provides less than 1% of Gabonese total employment, even though it includes jobs in hotels, in travel agents, and in airline and other passenger transportation services, to the exclusion of the commuter services alone. The Gabonese employment forecast for 2025 is set at 6 000 jobs directly associated with the tourism sector (WTTC, 2015:4). The low contribution of tourism's related employment to the economy of Gabon can be put in perspective by considering the sector-related effects of other economies. For instance, in 2018, South Africa attracted just over 16.44 visitors with a projected a9.6 million expected by 2023 (Lock, 2020) however the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic might have skewed these statistics, and Rwanda's revenue in tourism activities grew by 25.8% in 2016 compared to 2015 (Reuters, 2016). Meanwhile, according to the Gabonese Minister of Sports, Tourism and Leisure, Mathias Otounga Ossibadjou, 60 000 people visited Gabon in 2016, which is a figure that indicates that such tourism-related activities as the hosting of major sport events can hardly be considered a pillar of the Gabonese economy (*L'Union*, 2013). The failure to address issues of training and skills development lies at the core of the lack of interest shown by the Gabonese public in being an active stakeholder in the development and preservation of the nation's cultural heritage (Diecko, 2014:3). Sustainability in tourism requires the hosts to be positively disposed towards development, so as to enhance the tourists' experience, and to contribute to the destination's attractiveness (Quinn, 2009:4).

The promotion of the country's heritage (cultural, natural and environmental) is likely to attract outside visitors only if the local community is included in developing the tourism product, leading to the actors within the tourism sector, and within the wider economy, being proud enough to own its national heritage (Diecko, 2014:4). From an anthropological perspective, tourism also enables the legitimising of heritage in the eyes of the inhabitants (Gravari-Barbas & Jacquot, 2013:6). Tourism policies and programmes should consider labour market considerations in terms of the development of human capital. In addition to training and upskilling employees to be proficient in their jobs, the industry should support career development and reward professional competence, as a way of adding value to the employment image, which, in turn, is likely to promote the destination's tourism and competitiveness. The aspect concerned should be a key motivation to seek to satisfy sophisticated travel consumers who require quality tourism services, thereby improving the employment prospects involved (Stacey, 2015:10).



**Figure 4.2: Map of Gabon highlighting the city of Libreville where the study is based**  
*Source: Adapted from Salas, Bitzer, & Ayora (2000:166).*

Figure 4.2 above presents a map of Gabon highlighting the location of the Gabon within Africa as well as the location of the study area (Libreville) within the country. As previously noted, the current research study was conducted in Libreville, a cosmopolitan city comprising people of all ethnicities, including immigrants from Central and West Africa, Europeans, Lebanese, Moroccans, and a growing Asian population. The city and surrounding area is known for its fine sand beaches, which succeed in attracting tourists and events like business conferences and economic forums on oil and gas, as well as sport and cultural events.

**4.4 Research design and methodology**

According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:52), research design can be explained as the strategy that a researcher adopts, or intends to adopt, to collect the required data from the participants in a given experiment. Benaquisto and Given (2008:761) argue that research design refers to: “the way in which a research idea is transformed into a research project or plan that can be then varied out in practice by a researcher or a research team”. When it comes to the function of a research design, according to De Vaus (2001:9), such a design contains the key information pertaining to an argument that is required to support a hypothesis. According to Birks and Mills (2010:4), a research design involves three main components: the methodology; the method; and the philosophy. The author expands upon the above by noting that: (a) a methodology involves the notions that permeate in regard to the design of research;

(b) the methods serve as techniques for creating the data; and (c) the philosophy influences how the researchers work with the participants.

The research method that was followed to achieve the objectives of the current study was purely qualitative in nature. Lakay (2005:34) states that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. The use of such a research method is aimed at improving the understanding of any situation from the researcher's point of view. The following subsection discusses the method.

#### **4.4.1 Qualitative research**

Gravetter and Forzano (2009:147) argue that, as opposed to quantitative research, qualitative research produces a narrative report that involves in-depth consideration of non-numerical data, such as the written discussion of the observations made in the research. Qualitative research is a technique or method that is commonly used in fields as diverse as: nursing (Terreblanche, Durheim & Painter, 2006:273); anthropology; education; psychology; sociology; and marketing (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013:1). According to Creswell (2007:155), qualitative research is a process whose outcome relies on the collection of rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context under study. However, Denzin and Lincoln (2005:3) provide a more detailed definition, contending:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self.

Moreover, Nieuwenhuis (2007:50) notes that qualitative research is "research that attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed and studied". In addition, Auerbach and Silverstein (2003:3) posit that qualitative research "is research that involves analysing and interpreting texts in order to discover meaningful patterns descriptive of a particular phenomenon". The next section provides insight into the research instruments and data collection methods used in the current study.

#### **4.5 Sampling procedure**

According to Parasuraman, Grewal and Krishnan (2004:356), sampling refers to the selection of a fraction of the total number of units that are of interest to decision-makers, for the ultimate purpose of being able to draw general conclusions about the population in question. In other words, a sample determines what best represents a population, so as to allow for generalisation about it. The steps in the sampling process, such as defining the target

population, selecting a sampling method, and determining the sample size, are explained below.

Babbie (2010:198) defines a sample as being an extract from the population from which it derives, if the common characteristics of the sample largely resemble most of the common characteristics of the population. Moreover, Bloor and Wood (2006:153) define sampling as the association between a study population and its wider generalised mass within the population. Furthermore, Creswell (2007:147) refers to sampling as the method by which part of the population is chosen for study. In other words, the development of sampling theories provides methods of establishing scientific samples, such as random samples and established common characteristics among the population, which can give an overview of the wider population, in terms of the findings made.

#### **4.5.1 Target population**

A target population is the entire set of units or group of relevant objects, or elements, for which the survey data are to be used to make assumptions regarding the research project (Cox, 2008:3). Bless et al. (2006:99) affirm a target population is relevant, because it possesses the information that a research project is designed to collect. Hence, it is essential to define the target population in question precisely, since failure to do so will make the solution to the research problem concerned ineffective (Zhang, 2009:103). The samples for this study were decided by means of choosing representatives from the local government, as well as regional and national government representatives from sport tourism and hospitality departments. In addition, sport organisations were included in the research, due to their participation being much valued and highly relevant in relation to the organisation of sport tourism events.

The following stakeholders were, hence, selected:

- The relevant government organisations (i.e. those related to sports, hospitality and tourism) in Gabon supplied the researcher with background information regarding the topic of the research, based on their field of expertise.
- Football officials, including match officials, administrators, club presidents and owners of the FEGAFOOT, were interviewed.
- Hotel managers, receptionists and representatives of other organisations in the different hotels that were well-informed about the different sporting events happening in Libreville were interviewed. They were able to provide, with ease, details of the impacts of sporting events on their establishments, and of the challenges that they usually encountered during the period in which an event was hosted.
- The general manager, tourism agents, and travel agencies in the Department of Tourism expressed their views on the lessons learned from the hosting of major sport events from a tourism point of view, in relation to the aspects supporting the sector.



#### **4.5.2 Sampling size**

The size of a sample can influence both its representativeness and the statistical validity of the data obtained. Lakay (2005:36) claims that, in comparison to the sampling methods employed in quantitative research, in terms of which large sample methods are required, in qualitative research the focus is on depth and on relatively small samples. According to Baker and Edwards (2012:10), the size of the sample pool might be limited by how much time the researcher in question has for data gathering.

As has already been stated, this study investigated sport events as catalysts for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon. Most of the key informants were the people involved in the hosting of the AFCON in Libreville and in other sport events organised in the capital, as well as representatives of the Department of Tourism, and the relevant stakeholders in the private sector, like hotels. Based on their knowledge of the subject under investigation, in terms of the hosting of sport events in Libreville as a vehicle for the leveraging of the tourism and hospitality industry growth in the country, the proposed sample size was 18 stakeholders, of whom each came from a different organisation, as mentioned above. Of the stakeholders, 12 were men, of whom two were members of the 2012 AFCON local organising committee, five represented the hotel establishments that accommodated visitors during the AFCON and other events, another two represented the tourism department, and the remaining three were the organisers of other sport events in Libreville. Six women, in total, took part in the interviews, with three representing the hotels located in the vicinity of the stadium where the AFCON games took place. Furthermore, two responded as the representatives and organisers of sport events in Libreville, and one responded from the tourism department.

#### **4.5.3 Sampling techniques**

De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2005:198) classify the main categories of sampling methods or procedures under two headings: probability, and non-probability, sampling methods. Probability sampling occurs where each element of the population has a known, but not necessarily equal, probability of being selected in a sample. In contrast, in non-probability sampling, not every element of the target population has a chance of being selected, because the inclusion/exclusion of elements in a sample is left to the discretion of the researcher involved. Quantitative and qualitative research demand different sampling methods (Higginbottom, 2004:13). According to Berg (2001:32) and Koerber and McMichael (2008:461), convenience sampling and purposeful sampling, as explained next, are the common techniques, or methods, for working with non-probability samples that are comparatively appropriate for qualitative research.

**Convenience sampling:** Many qualitative researchers use convenience sampling, which is sometimes referred to as accidental, or availability, sampling (Burnard, 2004:177). According to Higginbottom (2004:15), convenience sampling uses participants who are readily available, and who are easy to contact. Therefore, in terms of such a category of sampling, the researcher uses a sample that is readily available, being one that is close at hand, or which is easily accessible.

**Purposeful sampling:** In purposeful sampling, which is sometimes called judgmental sampling, the researcher selects participants who possess certain traits or qualities. Creswell (2007:125) says that the inquirer looks for individuals and sites for study, because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and of central phenomena in the study. In addition to the above, decisions need to be made about who or what should be sampled, what form the sampling will take, and how many people, or sites, require sampling. In the present study, the researcher picked respondents purposively based on their knowledge of the subject under investigation. Doing so enabled the researcher to meet the study objectives and to ensure obtaining valid responses.

Of the two methods discussed above, the current research used purposeful sampling techniques, due to the nature of the study involved. The informants that took part in the research were chosen by the researcher according to the particular quality traits that they possessed, based on what needed to be known to satisfy the established objectives of the study. After selecting Gabon as the site of the research, the researcher, therefore, set out to find people who could, and who were willing to, provide information about the researcher's specific purpose and research questions that guided the study.

#### **4.6 Research instruments and data collection**

Creswell (2007:118) visualises data collection as being a series of interrelated activities that are aimed at collecting sound information to answer emerging research questions. Kothari (2004:95) further elucidates Creswell's vision by noting that data collection begins after a research problem has been defined, and a research design devised. While deciding on the method of data collection, the researcher should keep in mind that data can generally be collected from two sources, primary and secondary. However, there are many methods of collecting data, depending on the research design and the methodologies that are employed by the researcher. The following section gives a breakdown of the data collected from primary sources, by means of the research instruments that were used in the current study.

#### **4.6.1 Secondary sources of data**

Secondary data are those data that have already been collected by someone else, and which have already been processed (Kothari, 2004:95). Accordingly, the relevant literature on sport tourism, major events, and hospitality were collected and examined to form the basis for the study. The secondary sources provided the data that had been collected, analysed and discussed by previous scholars in the field of sport tourism, and presented in such a way as to link previous studies to the research and design of the interviews in the current study.

#### **4.6.2 Primary sources of data**

The primary data are those that are collected for the first time by the researcher concerned, with the details concerned being original in character (Kothari, 2004:95). Some of the common methods of data collection involve questionnaires, interviews or observations (Lakay, 2005:14). The primary source of the data used in the current study was in-depth semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A), which were personally conducted by the researcher involved, who had one-on-one interaction with the respondents. The questionnaire was developed in English, but, so as to expand the study, and so as to ensure reliability, the questionnaire was also translated into French (see Appendix B).

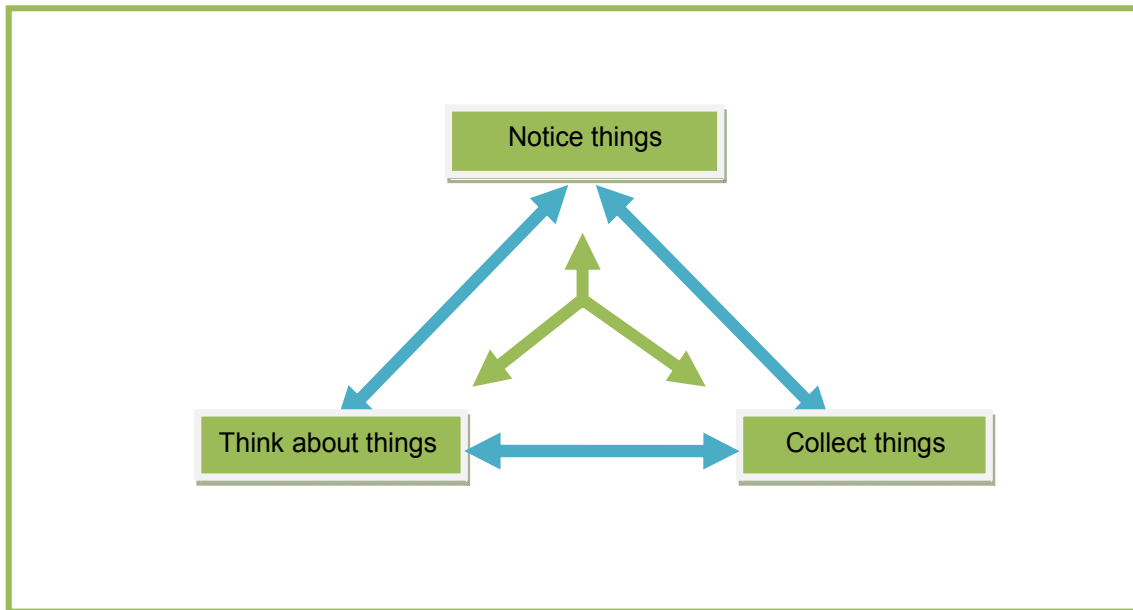
#### **4.6.3 Interviews**

Interviews were the major technique adopted for the research, due to the nature of the study, which employed personally administered questionnaires. The research interviews were aimed at exploring the views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations of individuals on specific issues. The use of interviews, in terms of qualitative methods, assists in deepening the understanding of social phenomena that can be accessed through employing purely qualitative methods (Gill et al., 2008:292). In the present study, the researcher designed an interview schedule that required asking questions that were likely to yield as much information about the development of the tourism and hospitality sector in Libreville, in relation to the hosting of sport events, as possible. The interviewer developed and used an interview guide in the months of June and July 2014 that comprised a list of questions and topics that required covering during the interview. The guide contained open-ended questions that were first tape-recorded, and then later transcribed for analysis. The informants were, therefore, given sufficient freedom to express their views in their own terms, which served to provide reliable and comparable qualitative data. The following section gives insight into the analysis of the data obtained.

#### **4.7 Qualitative data analysis**

According to Nieuwenhuis (2016:6), "qualitative data analysis is generally based on an interpretive philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data". Phrased differently by Nieuwenhuis (2007:99), qualitative data analysis tries

to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by means of analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings, and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon. The author states that, as qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative process, Seidel (1998) developed a model of qualitative data analysis, indicating such to be an intertwined process, as is illustrated in Figure 4.3 below.



**Figure 4.3: The data analysis process**

*Source: Seidel (1998:2)*

As referred to in the qualitative data analysis process in Figure 4.3 above, Nieuwenhuis (2007:100) details the interlinked process in the three essential elements: noticing; collecting; and reflecting (thinking about). The above means that, while the researcher is reflecting on the data collected, the researcher notices specific gaps in the data that require additional data. Therefore, to better analyse the current study, and to make sense of the additional data collected (in the form of interviews), the researcher adopted a particular systematic approach. The following subsection details the process of thematic analysis of data.

#### **4.7.1 Thematic analysis**

Thematic analysis is the search for important themes that emerge while describing a particular phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear & Gliksman, 1997). Braun and Clarke (2006:79) view thematic analysis as being an independent qualitative descriptive approach that is described as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes within data”. Furthermore, thematic

analysis analytically examines the narrative materials from life stories by means of breaking up the text into relatively small units of content, and submitting them to descriptive treatment (Sparker, 2005). Referring to Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006:82), thematic analysis recognises the patterns within the data, with the emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis. As a flexible and useful research tool, thematic analysis involves the search for, and the identification of, common threads that extend across an entire interview (Vaismoradi et al., 2013:400). Vaismoradi et al. (2013:400) conclude that thematic analysis provides core skills to researchers for conducting many other forms of qualitative analysis. The data analysis process of thematic analysis is described in the following subsection.

#### 4.7.2 Thematic analysis process

The process of data analysis in thematic analysis consists of reading through textual data, identifying themes that are in the data, coding them, and then interpreting their structure and content (Guest et al., 2012:15). Table 4.1 below outlines the six-phase guide to doing thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke (2006).

**Table 4.1: Processes of data analysis in thematic analysis**

No.	Analysis phases	Analysis description
1	Becoming familiar with the data	The data are transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts are checked against the tapes for accuracy.
2	Generating of initial codes	Interesting features of the data are coded in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data that is relevant to each code.
3	Searching for the themes	Codes are collated into potential themes, gathering all the data that are relevant to each potential theme.
4	Reviewing of the themes	The themes are checked to see whether they work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, together with the generating of a thematic map.
5	Defining and naming of the themes	Ongoing analysis is undertaken to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story that the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6	Producing of the report	The final opportunity for analysis enables the selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, the final analysis of selected extracts, the relating back of the analysis to the research question and the literature, and the producing of a report on the analysis.

Source: Braun & Clarke (2006:35)

In the light of Table 4.1 above, Vaismoradi et al. (2013:401) explain that the phase of familiarising oneself with the data in thematic analysis expects the researcher to transcribe the interview, and to obtain the sense of the whole through reading the transcripts through several times. After reading and familiarising himself or herself with the data, the researcher generates an initial list of ideas about what is in the data, and what is interesting about them. This phase

then involves the production of initial codes from the data. By phase three, all the data have been initially coded and collated, and the researcher has a long list of the different codes identified across the data set. In this phase, the researcher refocuses the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than just as codes. In other words, the phase involves sorting out the different codes into potential themes, and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes. Phase four, which begins when the researcher has devised a set of candidate themes, involves the refining of the themes. After obtaining a satisfactory thematic map, the researcher then defines, and further refines, the themes that will be presented for analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006:18-22). The final phase of data analysis relates to the reporting of the results of the previous stages. This phase is especially highlighted as giving the final opportunity for data analysis, and ties in with the creativity of the researcher, who presents the results in terms of a story line, a map, or a model (Vaismoradi et al., 2013:402).

#### **4.8 Validity and reliability measurements**

Many different types of validity and reliability must be identified by a researcher. Once a researcher has identified the variables, the constructs must be seen to be measurable, quantifiable, and valid. In the following section, the researcher defines, and discusses in depth, her understanding of validity and reliability in relation to the qualitative research undertaken.

#### **4.9 Validity**

A valid study is defined as one that has properly collected and interpreted data, so that the conclusions drawn accurately reflect and represent the real world that was studied (Yin, 2011:78). In other words, in research, an instrument is said to be valid if it measures what it is intended to measure, and if it accurately achieves the purpose for which it was designed (Patten, 2004). Validity in terms of qualitative research, according to Creswell (2007:206), is considered to be an attempt to assess the exactness of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants. Cho and Trent (2006:319) assert that validity in the qualitative research that is involved in determining the degree to which researchers' claims about knowledge correspond with reality (or with the research participants' construction of such) being studied. Furthermore, as stated by Adcock and Collier (2001:530), the measurement of validity is specifically concerned with whether operationalisation and the scoring of cases adequately reflects the concept that the researcher seeks to measure. Valid measurement is, therefore, attained when the scores obtained, together with the results of the qualitative classification, significantly describe the ideas contained in the related concept (Adcock & Collier, 2001:530).

De Vos et al. (2005:346) illustrate the idea of validity, based on the proposition of Lincoln and Guba (1985), two authors of the 20th century, who considered it in terms of four alternative

constructs: credibility; transferability; dependability; and conformability. In contrast, Flick (2009:392) addresses the issue of validity, as referred to by Lincoln and Guba (1985), and puts forward five strategies that more accurately reflect the qualitative concept in terms of validity, thereby increasing the credibility of the research. Thus, Flick (2009:392) proposes trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability as five such strategies. Other authors have constructed their own understanding of theories of validity in qualitative research, having divided the concept up into two different approaches, transactional and transformational (Cho & Trent, 2006:321). Cho and Trent (2006:322) define transactional validity in qualitative research as consisting of an interactive process existing between the researcher, the researched, and the collected data that are aimed at achieving a relatively high level of accuracy and consensus by means of revisiting facts, feelings, experiences, and values/beliefs collected and interpreted. The role and utility of transactional validity in qualitative research varies to the extent that the researcher believes it to represent the achievement of a level of certainty (Cho & Trent, 2006:321). In contrast, Cho and Trent (2006:321) define transformational validity in qualitative research as an onward, emancipatory process leading toward social modification that is achieved by the effort of the research itself. Such a process in qualitative research, as a critical element in changing the existing social conditions of the researched matter, involves the deep, self-reflective, considerate understanding of the researcher manifested while working therewith.

Transactional validity, which embraces some of the ideas of Lincoln and Guba (1985), assumes that qualitative research can be credible, as long as certain techniques, methods, and/or strategies are employed during the conduct of the inquiry. In other words, techniques are seen as a medium of ensuring an accurate reflection of reality (or, at least, of the participants' constructions of reality). Therefore, in seeking trustworthiness, the researchers concerned attend to issues of research credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability, as discussed below (Cho & Trent, 2006:322):

- **Credibility:** According to De Vos et al. (2005:346), credibility is the alternative to internal validity, in terms of which the goal is to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described. Credibility can also be referred as to authenticity (Flick, 2009:396).
- **Transferability:** As Lincoln and Guba (1985) say, transferability is the alternative to external validity, fittingness (Flick, 2009:396), or generalisability, in terms of which the burden of demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings to another context rests more with the investigator who wishes to make the transfer than with the original investigator himself or herself (De Vos et al., 2005:346).
- **Dependability:** As an alternative to reliability or auditability (Flick, 2009:396), in dependability the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon's chosen setting. The characteristic represents a set of assumptions that are very different from those shaping the concept of reliability. De Vos et al. (2005:346) state that positivist notions of reliability assume the existence of an unchanging universe, in terms of which the inquiry could, quite logically, be replicated. Hence, this assumption of an unchanging social world directly contrasts with the qualitative or

interpretative assumption that the social world is continuously being constructed, with the concept of replication itself being problematic.

- **Confirmability:** This construct coincides with the traditional concept of objectivity (Flick, 2009:396). Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasise the need to ask whether the findings of a study can be confirmed by those of another. In doing so, they remove the evaluation involved from some inherent characteristic of the researcher (objectivity) and place it squarely on the data themselves. Thus, the qualitative criterion is whether the data help confirm the general findings and lead to the implications involved. The qualitative criterion is appropriate.

#### 4.10 Reliability

Brink (1993:35) refers to the concept of reliability based on Selltiz, Wrightsman and Cook's (1976) understanding of it as being concerned with the consistency, stability and repeatability of the informant's accounts, as well as with the investigators' ability to collect and record information accurately. The concept refers to the ability of a research method to yield the same results consistently, over repeated testing periods. Moreover, Brink (1991), as cited in Long & Johnson (2000:32) also proposes three tests of reliability for qualitative work, namely those of stability, consistency and equivalence, as discussed below:

- **Stability** can be conceptualised by asking whether a behaviour that occurred at one time will also occur later. Lorber and O'Leary (2012:1) refer to the quality as persistence, while Long and Johnson (2000:30) state that stability occurs when asking identical questions of an informant at different times, in response to which consistent answers are obtained.
- **Consistency** refers to the integrity of issues within a single interview or questionnaire, so that a respondent's answers on a given topic remain concordant (Long & Johnson, 2000:30-31).
- **Equivalence** is tested through the use of alternative forms of a question with the same meaning during a single interview, or by means of concurrent observation by two different researchers (Long & Johnson, 2000:31). Salmond (2008:28-29) asserts that reliability tests for the equivalence of the measure, in examining the consistency that prevails between two versions of an instrument, or across different people using the instrument. If the instrument is reliable, it will not vary with such chance factors as random error or environmental conditions. Consistent, or stable, results will be obtained if the test is repeated over time, or if it is used by two different investigators.

So as to maintain a high level of reliability in the study, the questionnaire was transcribed from French to English to facilitate the respondents' understanding of the subject under investigation, as Gabon is a French-speaking nation.

#### 4.11 Ethical considerations

Due to the nature of the study, the confidentiality of all of the participants was taken into consideration. As referred to by Baez (2002:41), confidentiality deals with protecting the respondents from harm, or from violating their privacy. To the above end, the informants who took part in the current research were chosen by the researcher according to their involvement in different sport disciplines in Gabon, as well as in line with the organisation or company they represented. All of the interviews were conducted with the prior consent of the stakeholders, so as to establish an environment of trust, as well as so as to protect the respondents' privacy



and confidentiality (see Letters of Consent, Appendix C). Furthermore, the researcher obtained permission from the Research Ethics Committee of the faculty of Business and Management Sciences at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, on 4 March 2014, to conduct all the related research activities (see Ethical Clearance, Appendix D). In analysing and interpreting the collected data, the responses were associated with the stakeholder's job title and representative organisation to allow for richer and more meaningful interpretation of data rather than would have been achieved with the names of the participants would being disclosed.

#### **4.12 Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed the research design, the research methodology, including the different categories of research, the data collection method, the interviews scheduled, the sampling selection, and the data analysis. For the purpose of this exploratory research study, qualitative data were collected by means of a self-administered questionnaire. Semi-structured interviews, including open-ended questions, were used. Purposeful sampling was employed to draw a sample of 18 respondents, in the form of representatives of the local government, regional and national government representatives from the sport, tourism and hospitality departments, as well as representative from the sport organisations in the capital of Libreville, Gabon. Finally, thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data obtained.

With the methodology of the study having been determined, the following chapter (Chapter Five) presents discussions of the analysis and findings regarding the data collected. Efforts are made to provide suitable answers to the research objectives that were set out in Chapter One.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter detailed the methodological approach employed to gather the primary data and to satisfy the objectives of ascertaining the views of stakeholders in relation to how sport events act as catalysts for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon. As the literature review in the current study revealed, the destinations that host sport-related events are known to experience a range of impacts.

The aims and objectives of the study were to discover the factors encouraging the city of Libreville to organise major sporting events, as well as to depict the possible challenges and opportunities involved with organising sport events in Libreville. In the current chapter, the respondents also enumerated a few of the lessons learned from some of the major events hosted in Libreville for the tourism and hospitality industry. They gave their opinions on how to strengthen the sport event industry so as to support tourism and hospitality development in Libreville. To meet the aims and objectives involved, the researcher adopted a qualitative approach to collecting the required data.

The current chapter (Chapter Five) presents a detailed discussion of the findings obtained from the interviews conducted with the relevant stakeholders of sport, tourism and hospitality organisations in Libreville. So as to be able to identify, analyse, and provide a clear picture of the report patterns emerging from data, a thematic analysis of the findings was done.

#### **5.2 The interview count based on the stakeholders' category**

The current study began with the identification of stakeholders who possessed the necessary traits to provide the researcher with the information that the research project was designed to collect. As stipulated above, a thematic analysis was undertaken to enable the efficient analysis of a total of 18 interviews held with the identified representatives of the tourism, hospitality and sports department in Gabon. Table 5.1 below characterises all the 18 stakeholders who participated in the study, including the type of event, or the name of the establishment, which they represented, as well as their different designations, gender and organisation to which they belonged.

**Table 5.1: Details of the key informant stakeholders**

Type of event/Name of establishment	Designation	Organisation	Gender
Libreville International Moto Show	Event organiser	Sport	Female
Etoile d'Or	Receptionist	Hotel	Male
Le Meridien Re Ndama	Food & Beverage Manager	Hotel	Male
Le Nomad	Receptionist	Hotel	Female
Gabon International Marathon	Representative	Sport	Male
AFCON	Representative	Sport	Male
Héliconia Suite	HR Manager	Hotel	Male
Héliconia Garden Hotel	Accommodation Manager	Hotel	Male
AFCON	Representative	Sport	Male
Department of Tourism	Representative	Tourism	Male
Le Meridien Re Ndama	Receptionist	Hotel	Male
Department of Tourism	Representative	Tourism	Male
Department of Tourism	Representative	Tourism	Female
Tropicale Amissa Bongo	Event organiser	Sport	Female
Libreville International Moto Show	Event organiser	Sport	Male
Night of martial arts	Event organiser	Sport	Male
Okoume Palace	Sales & Marketing	Hotel	Female
Onomo	Sales & Marketing	Hotel	Female

Of the respondents who participated in the research, 12 were men, with two being members of the 2012 AFCON local organising committee. Five of the men represented hotel establishments that accommodated visitors during the AFCON and other events, while another two represented the tourism department, and the remaining three were organisers of other sport events in Libreville. Six women, in total, took part in the interviews, of whom three represented hotels located in the vicinity of the stadium where the AFCON games took place. Furthermore, two women responded as the representatives and organisers of sport events in Libreville, and one woman responded from the tourism department.

Bohmann and Van Heerden (2005:1) indicate that the hosting of major sport events (and of mega events in particular) could become an even worse investment for developing countries than it has been for the developed countries. As a result, the following section discusses the themes that emerged in response to the questions that were asked in the current study, with the themes being manually chosen, due to the small amount of data that was obtained. The respondents in the study were asked to present their views on how sport events contribute to the economic growth of Libreville.

### 5.3 Respondents' views on how sport events contribute to the economic growth of Libreville

The research question on how sport events contribute to the economic growth of Libreville was responded to by most of the stakeholders identifying the key points that inevitably benefited from the hosting of sport events, in terms of economic growth. The themes are interlinked and depend on each other. In fact, sports events have the potential to bring substantial short-term economic benefits to the hosting region and has become an argument to bid for as it generates a variety of impacts at the destination (Maennig, 2017:1, Lintumäki, Winner, Scheiber, Mederle & Schnitzer, 2020:1).

Consequently, and specifically relating to the area of economic growth and the contribution of sport events in Libreville are the economic impacts that are triggered by these events. For instance, increased spending by visitors would contribute a positive economic impact to the economy of Libreville and ultimately lead to economic growth if sustained, especially if the city receives the type of branding that encourages repeat visitations by attendees of these sport events. Figure 5.1 below illustrates the themes that emanated from the interviews.

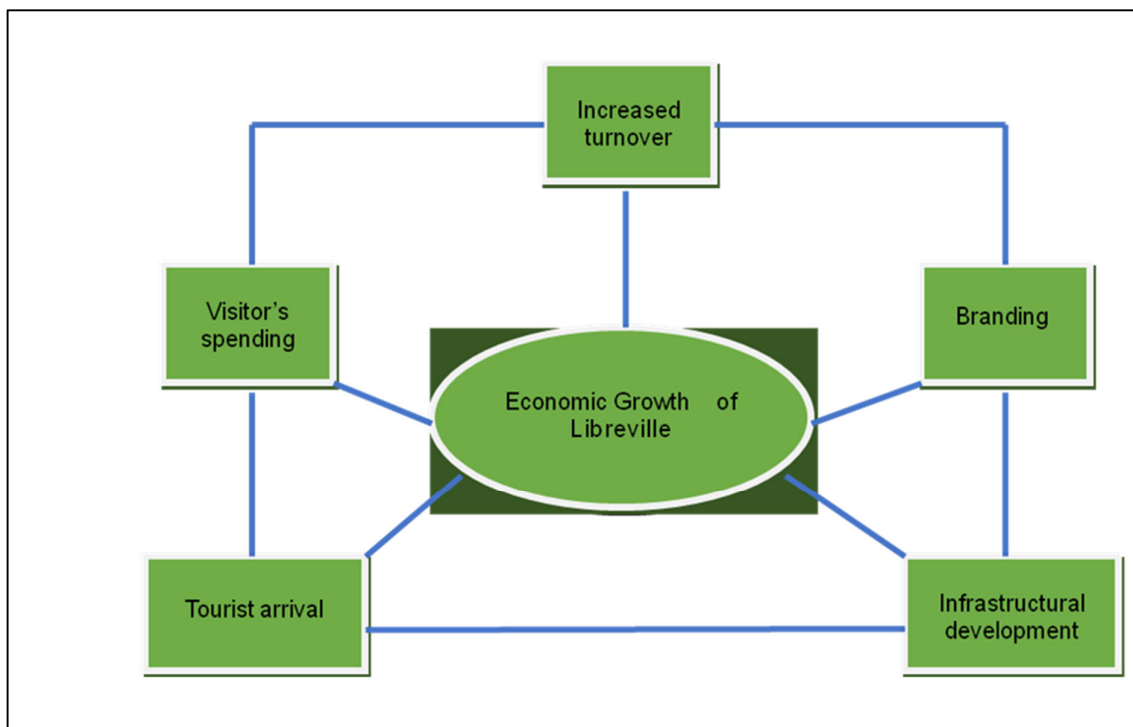


Figure 5.1: Themes pertaining to the contribution of sport events to the economic growth of Libreville

Source: Researchers construct

#### 5.3.1 Infrastructural development

The most important theme that was particularly accentuated by most of the respondents was their agreement that the hosting of sport events in Libreville has a notable economic impact, in the sense that it leads to infrastructural development. The respondents stated that Gabon's

co-hosting of the 2012 AFCON led to the development of stadiums and roads, as well as to the building of hotels, among other developmental initiatives. As such, it contributed to the development of the country. An AFCON respondent stated:

Built infrastructure, increased hotel capacity, sport infrastructure, road infrastructure, ambulance and hospital equipment advancement, security reinforcement – everything that has been built for the AFCON [has] stayed in the country.

As stated by Garcia and Miah (2005:32), the hosting of an event requires the building of infrastructure as part of urban renewal. Wäsche et al. (2013) as cited in Zhou (2015:23) mention a number of sports activity-related services that consist of transport, accommodation, marketing, collective services, the physical and social environment, and the infrastructure. A destination develops transport, sport, technological and urban infrastructure so that it can generate economic benefits from the multitude of positive impacts obtained, including job creation through construction projects (Bohlmann & Van Heerden, 2005:10), and the subsequent utilisation of the local supply chains (Smith, 2009:4). Hence, Müller (2015:635) attests that, globally, international events and major sport events are included in city policies as a strategic aspect for purposes of infrastructure development and urban renewal.

### **5.3.2 Tourist arrivals**

Another recurring theme that was mentioned by the respondents was that of tourist arrivals. They agreed that the sport tourism events that are hosted in Gabon tend to lead to an increase in the number of tourist arrivals. Many tourists arrive at the airports or train stations, stay in hotels, and use public transportation. A key respondent from one of the accommodation establishment was very enthusiastic about this theme, when stating: “In a general point of view, sporting events usually attract a lot of people. People come in mass to attend sport events in Libreville, especially the AFCON.”

The theme is strongly supported by Bargett and Gouguet (2012), who consider, generally speaking, that mega-sporting events can generate significant economic impact on the host territories, especially through the arrival of multiple tourists. As stated by Spronk and Fourie (2009), the hosting of events influences tourism, with great social and economic significance for the location or region in which they are held. Besides the tourist arrivals concerned, many of the respondents stated that the tourists who came to attend sport events also participated in a range of tourist activities. The above-mentioned phenomenon was emphasised by a representative from the tourism department, who said: “They will make use of the local products; they will spend for catering and accommodation.”

In view of the above statement, George (2004) notes that the hospitality sector provides food and shelter, like accommodation, meals and beverages, for the tourists. The sport tourists tend

to spend money on food and shopping, while attending the games, which are their main motivation for visiting the destination (Gibson et al., 2003). Further, Tichaawa, Bama and Swart (2015) emphasise that the visitors who came to attend, or to participate in, the 2010 FIFA World Cup also spent money on shopping, food and drink, and leisure. In fact, their spending ranged from that on flights and entry visas, to accommodation and catering, as well as transport and other leisure activities during their stay at the tourism destination. More direct sport event expenses included event tickets, sport memorabilia (e.g. T-shirts, caps, flags, etc.) and other event-related articles.

### **5.3.3 Visitor spending**

In the current study, the respondents highlighted the fact that those visitors who came to attend sport events also spent foreign currencies. A respondent from an accommodation establishment stated:

Foreigners are coming for the event, so obviously they bring foreign currencies and spend in the country what will boost the economy of the country, though I do not have the exact rate.

According to Oosthuizen (2010), one of the direct benefits for a destination, in terms of sport and tourism, is the cash that is made available due to the high spending nature of sport tourists. Referring to the above, another respondent from an accommodation establishment supported the opinion of the previous respondent, in stating:

People are travelling in the host country in [i.e. for] the purpose of the event. When they come, they bring foreign devices, such as [the] Euro/dollar and make use of local products.

In addition, according to Bond (2008:6), visitors spend on the entrance to events, as they also engage in secondary spending on hotels, restaurants and transport. Tourists tend to stay at hotels, and to eat at food establishments, while paying for hotel accommodation and food and beverages, as well as travel costs (Suves, 2007:22). The above means that sport events boost the local expenditure and promote an increase in retail trade, which is very advantageous for the host country's economy.

### **5.3.4 Increased turnover**

Two stakeholders, with one being from a hotel establishment and one from a sport organisation, mentioned an increase in the economic operators' turnover, namely that of hotels, catering services, car rentals, and sport bars, among others. They noted that, during the hosting of sport events, the local companies tended to register record high turnovers, which enabled them to market themselves above and beyond their usual capacities. A hotel respondent highlighted the way in which sport shows sizable economic impact in Libreville

through the organisation of sport events: “By attracting a lot of tourists, hotels, restaurants and transport sectors increase their turnover.”

According to Ntloko and Swart (2008:86), the hosting of sport events is good for local business, as it increases the local companies' turnover, since it creates jobs. Furthermore, based on the statistics from the South African Department of Sport and Recreation (2012:8), approximately 250 companies realised an additional increase of £22 million in their turnover, due to the trade development and supply-chain initiatives linked to the Commonwealth Games that were held in Manchester in 2002.

### **5.3.5 Branding**

In addition to the question of sport events as having positive economic impacts in Libreville, the current study identified another theme that emerged from two key respondents from sport and tourism organisations, who both expressed their thoughts about the relationship between sport events hosted in Libreville and the issue of branding. A key respondent and organiser of one of the major sport events stated: “The event shows the image of Gabon overseas and more people come in[to] the country and it increases its economy.”

Vasconcelos (2012) asserts that positive image creation relies on the enhancement of local features that make a city stand out from among its competitors, by means of marketing its key attributes, whether they are cultural, social, economic, or technological, and forming a brand image that can immediately be associated with the place, whenever someone refers to it. To the above end, the hosting of sport events in Gabon can market the country globally by exhibiting its various aspects. Potential investors, through branding and media channels, can create partnerships with the public or private sectors, so as to support the development of the country. Also, branding can motivate the accrued movement of people in the country for tourism, business or leisure purposes. A representative from the tourism department strongly agreed with the above in sharing a similar opinion, noting that: “The AFCON, the Marathon, the Tropical Amissa Bongo or any other sport event allows people to discover Gabon as they tour around all the provinces of Gabon...”

Despite the respondents tending to be very positive about the impact of sport events and its contribution to Gabon's economy, some were cautious about how the benefits were measured. A Libreville-based respondent from the tourism department expressed concern about the extent to which the benefits were leveraged, and the extent to which they were measured. In terms of his opinion:

We cannot confirm [that] those events have a direct or indirect effect, whether positive or negative, as long as no one has ever evaluated them. We must be able to say we

came from 0 to ..., but if we don't have exact statistics that can prove it has created impacts ... no evaluation is being done, be it in sport or in another kind of event. As a professional of tourism, we still have problems to evaluate [i.e. in evaluating] the AFCON, and what it brought...

In line with the above view, the researcher identified a few challenges related to the study under investigation, including the lack of policies or method that might assist in measuring the return on the investment made in sport events. Despite event evaluation being of paramount importance, event managers seem to underutilise the practice (Masterman, 2004). According to the Commonwealth of Australia (2000), the above-mentioned issue is even more contentious for events that are financed by public funds, as great disparities seem to exist in the approach that is used to assess economic, social and cultural impacts by the government agencies and research companies concerned, due to the lack of standardised procedure.

Swart and Bob (2007) mention the case of South Africa, where socio-economic impact studies tend only to be undertaken on an ad hoc basis at specific events, making comparisons and evaluations of events unpredictable. The inability to establish a methodology to analyse the impact of sport events in Libreville consistently inclined the researcher towards finding out whether businesses leveraged positive benefits from the sport events held there. The next subsection will focus on the respondents' opinions as to whether businesses leverage the opportunities associated with the hosting of sport events in Libreville.

#### **5.4 Respondents' views on how local businesses are involved in organising sporting events in Libreville**

Two main themes emerged from the research question as to how the local businesses are involved in organising sporting events in Libreville. The themes, being sponsorship and ancillary services, are discussed below.

##### ***Theme 1: Sponsorship***

One of the respondents, a representative of the LIMS, claimed:

Companies work as partners/sponsors with the sport event that is being hosted, here the LIMS. They work closely with us. For example, Etoile d'Or that offers their rooms, they played a very important role in the success of these events.

The sports industry is now viewed as an attractive sector for investors, as it is now valued at an estimated \$141bn (Klayman, 2009; Yousaf & Anil, 2013:160). The sport market includes sponsorships that can be defined as the payments that are made to have a product associated with a team, league or event, and the related naming rights (PWC, 2011:2). Many companies invest in sponsoring such big sports events as the Olympics, the World Cups, and popular sports games. Although being an official sponsor requires extensive financial outlay, it is



expected to create such favourable outcomes as profit increases, improved stock returns, and positive advertising effects (Kim, 2010:1).

A respondent from the Night of Martial Arts emphasised: “Regarding the Agakado, we have a lot of sponsors who are participating, and, in return, it gives them more recognition.”

Moreover, a representative of the sales and marketing department of Onomo Hotel asserted: “Sponsors, such as banks, are enterprises that usually get involved in the hosting of sport events, as well as small enterprises that try to make themselves known.”

Mullin, Hardy and Sutton (2007:315) state that sponsors use the relationship between product and event to achieve their promotional objectives, or to facilitate and support their broader marketing objectives. In the above-mentioned case, promotion is, therefore, imperative for the sponsors, as they aim to achieve as much exposure of their name, logo and other properties as is possible.

### ***Theme 2: Ancillary services***

Other industries, such as those in the hospitality sector, tend to improve the quality of the sport event being held through their input. In addition to the hospitality services, including the supply of food and beverages, there are other ancillary services that are offered to the visitors at the event destination, which are directed towards making them feel more welcome and have a memorable experience. Thus, companies such as car hire, catering companies, and hotels, by providing their services, are involved in the organisation of an event. In consideration of the discussion above, a respondent from Le Meridien Re Ndama Hotel stated: “Car rental companies have been involved by transporting particulars to the stadium and small businesses around the stadium. We’re selling sport shirts that people were buying, without forgetting the hotel sector as well.”

Moreover, a representative of the AFCON, still from the same point of view, noted: “... [the] hospitality sector accommodates the visitors ...” Also, a respondent from the Héliconia Suite Hotel commented: “... enterprises organising events ... provide us with transport, human resource assistance, etc.”

As with the previous interviewees, a respondent from the Le Meridien Re Ndama Hotel affirmed:

...in the hospitality sector, hotels are more implicated, occupancy rate hotel booking and consumption in food and beverages grows [i.e. goes] up. In the domain of transportation, more public transport companies have been added. Even people from the private sector could open their own business through the AFCON.

### 5.5 Respondents' views on whether businesses leverage the opportunities associated with the hosting of sport events in Libreville

The respondents' views on whether the businesses-leveraged opportunities associated with hosting sport events in Libreville were overwhelming in their similarity, with most of the respondents being very enthusiastic and positive about it. Their reactions to the question were grouped according to the establishment represented by them. They all agreed that businesses leveraged the opportunities associated with the hosting of sport events in Libreville. They mentioned the companies or kind of industries that secured the best possible benefits from the sport events in Libreville, and explained how this was done. The responses obtained are elucidated in Table 5.2 below, where they are presented according to the different establishments, and according to what they deemed to be the opportunities that they were able to leverage from the hosting of the 2012 AFCON tournament in Libreville.

Evidently, the staging of sport events has the power to generate benefits for different types of businesses. Local businesses have the potential to benefit greatly therefrom, because the visitors are away from their place of origin to attend a sport event, and, therefore, require food and shelter. Also, during such mega events as the AFCON, there is a need to go from the place of stay to the stadium, or to visit elsewhere. For example, in the current study, transport companies were seen to experience a high demand for shuttle services. A hotel respondent agreed with the above: "Yes, they [the local businesses] do benefit. For example, companies that print sport shirts, and transport people to the stadium, airlines as well."

**Table 5.2: Businesses leveraging the opportunities to be gained from the hosting of sport events in Libreville**

<b>Respondents' views on whether businesses leverage the opportunities associated with the hosting of sport events in Libreville</b>	
<b>Businesses</b>	<b>Opportunities gained</b>
Hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High demand for shuttle services (car rental, public buses, taxis, etc.)</li> <li>• Comparatively high occupation rate of hotels (event participants, event officials, media, etc.)</li> <li>• Airline companies</li> <li>• Travel agencies</li> <li>• Small and medium enterprises (printing and branding companies)</li> </ul>
Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International event broadcasting</li> <li>• High demand for accommodation and catering (hotels, restaurants, etc.)</li> <li>• Mass advertising (TV, radio posters, etc.)</li> <li>• Enlarged market share for local companies (telecommunication, transport, publicity, event companies, insurance)</li> </ul>
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small and medium enterprises (snack bars, guest houses)</li> <li>• Sponsors (banks)</li> <li>• Construction companies (stadiums and newly built hotels)</li> </ul>

Chalip (2004:228) defines leveraging as "the processes through which the benefits of investments are maximised". Based on the above discussion, the staging of sport events has the power to generate benefits for different types of businesses

Furthermore, considering that the event concerned takes place in Libreville, not only hotels, restaurants, guest houses and transport companies benefit therefrom, but so all other businesses as well, which can benefit from the local investment that results from the staging of sport events. The performance of retail businesses is also boosted by sporting events staged in Libreville. As a tourism department respondent mentioned:

Yes, owners of snack bars, for example, had to buy [a] big plasma screen, so that people that could not go to the stadium could watch soccer and drink at the same time. Also catering companies benefited. Small enterprises have been created a lot.

A less tangible, but yet rich and significant way, for businesses to leverage the opportunities associated with the hosting of sport events in Libreville comes from the media exposure offered by international broadcasting. The point was accentuated by a respondent from a sport organisation, who said: "Lately we have succeeded to partner with CANAL+ which is an international TV channel ... so we can promote our product through [the] media..."

Moreover, the sport events hosted in Libreville create awareness, or visibility, of the sponsors concerned, through the design of such items and products as sweatshirts, pens and bags bearing their company's logo, enabling a wide audience to be reached, for easy retention and recognition. A respondent from a sport organisation said:

Yes, especially sponsors. They use the event to give them more publicity ... they give prizes to the winners of the event, and get more recognition. Last time, we got a very nice sponsor, I will not mention the name of their company, but what they got after marketing our event was even three times more than what they spent by being our sponsor.

Hosting such successful international iconic events has assisted in elevating the image of Libreville, and in presenting it as a sport event destination. Although many companies have experienced increased utilisation during sport events, in tune with the Chalip (2004) model, tourism and sport stakeholders seem to have failed to leverage the opportunities of hosting sport events fully yet. Furthermore, even though sport events have been known to bring about positive returns at a destination, such returns have not been brought about with no costs. The following section highlights the challenges that have been faced in using sport events to increase tourism in Libreville.

## **5.6 Respondents' views of some of the challenges encountered in using sport events to increase tourism in Libreville**

The respondents were asked as to what challenges they had encountered during the hosting of sport events in Libreville. The results provide an overall description of the subject of study,

as experienced by those involved in the organisation of sport events in Libreville. Common themes were identified across the stakeholders in the above regard.

### ***Theme 1: Insufficient infrastructure***

Considering the infrastructure, the respondents stressed the importance of the existence of infrastructure. Daniels (2007) suggests that a city requires a developed economy and tourism industry so as to sustain the demands that a sport event can bring to a host city's services and economy. The inability of Libreville's airports, roads, hotels, and other utilities to keep pace with development is a major policy concern in relation to the hosting of such events. A tourism department respondent stated: "... infrastructure is not advanced ...".

So as to be able to host the AFCON under outstanding conditions, and so as to provide the country with a conglomeration of sport facilities, CAF required the provision of four stadiums for the competition, as was previously outlined. Furthermore, in anticipation of the organisation of the AFCON, the Gabonese government built three additional hotels in Libreville, as well as relying on the existing hotel facilities, as mentioned. Thus, AFCON contributed to the upgrading of the infrastructure for the hosting of mega and major sport events. However, focusing on supporting the existing infrastructure should prove to be beneficial to the tourism and hospitality industry, especially along sustainable lines.

### ***Theme 2: Skills shortage***

The success of the 2012 AFCON in Gabon depended on how well the employees of hotels and other staff members from other sectors involved in the organisation of the event performed. As was discussed in the literature review, the shortage of adequate skills and training can affect the overall service quality provided, especially in the hospitality sector in Libreville. A few of the respondents mentioned the skills gap that was hindering employers from finding the talent that they required for their workforce. Skills shortages are mostly experienced in the tourism and hospitality sector in Libreville. The candidates for professional positions and skilled trade posts, especially, are often found to lack the essential skills. Consequently, the government had to collaborate with the educators and agencies from the private sector to design and finance education and mentoring programmes to improve the human resource skills of the candidates for posts related to the hosting of the AFCON. A sport organisation respondent stated the following:

... people are not trained, [the] challenges [encountered] are human ... due to the lack of trained human resource[s], we recruited between 3 to 4 thousand Gabonese who pretended to have [a] certificate in the hospitality sector. So, we had to bring [in] international trainers to work in the seven hotels that have [i.e. had] been built for the AFCON. That was a big issue.

The lack of employee training can be seen as undermining the successful hosting of sport events, as it necessitates extra spending on having to secure a well-trained workforce, so as to be able to meet the event's expectations.

### ***Theme 3: Lack of funding***

Gabon is classified as a middle-income country (MIC), with a per capita income of around USD7 370 (Gabon. Operations Department Centre Region, 2011). In other words, Gabon is a Third World country, with a particularly weak economy. As an emerging and developing nation, it currently faces important financial challenges that can impede the hosting of large sport events. A few of the respondents noted that, to obtain maximum results in sporting events, sport associations definitely require additional funding from the government to enhance the already high level of performance, and to improve the country's sense of pride when it comes to international sporting achievements. The sport events hosted in Libreville often experience insufficient financial support from the government, which tends to undermine the sporting prowess on show. A sport organisation respondent asserted: "We want to promote martial arts in Gabon, and, for that, we need role models and we have to travel and find them."

In the above quotation, the respondent illustrates the lack of funds that makes the hosting of an event appear unprofessional, as it is very expensive to travel to Asia and to bring experts to Gabon. Seemingly, the fact of funds not being equitably distributed among the different sport events could be addressed by having a portfolio of sport events of different sizes that are selected based on the sport and tourism objectives that they set out to achieve (Swart & Bob, 2007). According to Weed and Bull (2004), establishing an interchangeable link between sport and tourism development is a way of granting access to additional funding. Furthermore, the researchers assert that, to maximise the cross-funded benefits of sport and tourism, the two agencies should collaborate. In this way, the funding for both sectors can assume a flexible and appropriate provision of facilities for both local sport and tourism use.

### ***Theme 4: Corruption***

A respondent mentioned corruption as being an important challenge encountered in Gabon, due to the country facing problems with bureaucracy. Most of the important decisions pertaining to the hosting of sport events were taken by the state officials concerned, rather than by the elected representatives of the sport events associations in Libreville, who tended not to be involved in the planning of the AFCON. Instead, another committee was created by the government for dealing with such events. Svensson (2005) suggests that corruption is rampant in the developing world, and that it is more prevalent in the developing countries than it is in the rich ones. In the case of Libreville, respondents expressed their opinions about the fact that every government department wanted to be able to mastermind the sport event budget within their own department. As stated by a sport organisation respondent:

... each department wants to have the opportunity of having the budget for a particular event in their department, but it will go [in]to people's pockets, [and] not for the project.

#### ***Theme 5: Insufficient marketing***

Gabon has the potential to be a premier international and domestic tourism destination through sport tourism, cultural tourism, ecotourism, and others. However, there is a lack of a marketing and development strategy, especially in terms of tourism product development, as well as of a strategy of entering outbound tourist markets, in addition to the development of communication and dissemination channels. The point was raised by a respondent from the tourism department, who said:

... one of the biggest challenges we faced was in terms of tourism conception. While visiting a country for a sport event purpose, visitors have the desire to see the attractions and tourism product Gabon has to offer. However, the organisers never provide enough time after the events ...

According to Getz (2008), events are highly valued as attractions, catalysts, animators, place marketers, and image-makers, with their primary objective being to promote tourism to a destination, in terms of both business and leisure travel. Apparently, in terms of Getz's opinion and the interviewee's response, the real essence of events does not make the most of its features in promoting Gabon as a tourism destination. One way of maximising the presence of tourists in the country, as per Chalip's (2004) model, is to build the host destination's brand by means of showcasing the destination in event advertising, and by promoting some of the host destination's features, so as to optimally leverage the mega events concerned in the long term.

#### ***Theme 6: The lack of involvement between departments***

Interdepartmental cooperation is crucial to an organisation's success (Oswald, 2013). For the organisation of sport events in Libreville to succeed, every department should work hand in hand with a common purpose, and come to understand their individual and departmental roles in achieving such goals. However, without adequate communication, there is insufficient understanding about what each department is supposed to do to achieve its shared goals. Hence, a tourism department respondent stated: "There is a communication problem between the departments [that are] supposed to be involved in the planning of sport events."

Furthermore, the Department of Sport collaborates with other stakeholders to secure the organising of sport events without involving the Department of Tourism, thus failing to allow for the necessary input to achieve a successful organisation. The above was confirmed by a respondent from the Department of Tourism regarding the AFCON in the following words:

No. they do not cooperate. We at the tourism department are just involved at a later stage when all the decisions have been made already, but we must all collaborate so we can see how well we can sell our country.

Swart and Bob (2007), as well as Hemmonsbey and Tichaawa (2018) assert that the growth of sport tourism can only be assured if there is collaboration and understanding between the different organisations and stakeholders involved about the sport tourism phenomenon, as well as regarding the mutual benefits and advantages of establishing alliances between the sport and tourism sectors. Successful partnerships require partners who are capable of recognising their mutual interests (Swart & Bob, 2007), with such an approach being required for the successful development of sport tourism in Gabon.

### 5.7 Respondents' views on whether events create opportunities for local businesses to benefit from their leverage

The question of whether the events that are held in Libreville, Gabon create opportunities for local business received an overwhelmingly positive response from all the respondents concerned, as can be seen in Table 5.3 below. Local businesses experience increased turnover while the events are being held. Many business sectors that are involved in the organisation of sport events in Gabon benefit from the opportunity to connect with the outside world. Such exposure might never otherwise have been attained without their involvement in the events.

**Table 5.3: Sport event organisations' views of the opportunities created for local businesses**

Type of sport event organisation	Related quotes
Libreville International Moto Show (LIMS)	Libreville International Moto Show creates a bridge between the Gabonese population and other riders. More circuits are created, so all the professionals are now called to promote bike companies.
Gabon International Marathon	Local businesses use the event like [i.e. as] a way to communicate or market their companies. Suppliers, event companies, printing companies, airlines, car rental, [the] hospitality sector, etc. do benefit from our event. Also, we rent barriers/fences to limit the race. Every company that support[s] the organisation by providing us with the products we need for the event [gains] leverage from it.
AFCON	... A shop has been built where Samsung product were being sold during the AFCON. Local people are working there now, and it has reduced [the prevailing levels of] poverty and created more jobs ...
Tropicale Amissa Bongo	Accommodation, catering companies, printing companies, local media, international media
Night of Martial Arts	We make people ... interested in sport. When they discover that Gabon is a nice country, they decide to come back, and, when they are here, they make use of the local establishments, such as hotels, and they visit tourism site[s], so local enterprises see their turnover increasing.

Sport events held in Gabon have provided a platform for local business to market their products and services to visitors, organising committees, and sponsors, alike. Sport stakeholders make use of local businesses to provide products and services required for the organisation of their events, thus providing to local businesses a business opportunity that is larger than that which





Contrary to some perceptions about Africa, as being a continent that is ravaged by war, disease, and poverty, Libreville, and Gabon at large, have developed into a safe destination, with their infrastructure being capable of hosting events in various sport disciplines. The success of previously organised events have strengthened sponsors' confidence and have continued to attract investors to the country. The view was supported by a respondent from the Tropical Amissa Bongo, who confidently said:

Yes, if every time we host the event in a very well [i.e. good] and organised manner, it will have a big impact, like the one the Tropical Amissa Bongo has. More sponsors will want to associate their image to [i.e. with] our event.

Libreville and the other host cities in Gabon work towards promoting themselves as reliable locations for business, and to become known as unique African destinations, with the necessary resources to welcome tourists and to provide an exciting holiday experience. A respondent from the Nights of Martial Arts enthusiastically stated: "Definitely, yes. People thought, in Africa, there is only war and poverty, so we have to bring another image through the hosting of sport events ..."

The respondent from the Tropical Amissa Bongo nostalgically said the following about a shift in attitude as to how Gabon was perceived, especially because it was the first hosting of the event that brought athletes from all corners of the globe to a tropical capital city, Libreville:

... 2005 was a period when everyone thought there was the endemic of Ebola and typhoid. After the event started, and professional cyclists were seen on TV, competing with one another, the world finally realised that there is nothing wrong in visiting the country. Gabon was, therefore, proven as a safe destination.

Meanwhile sport events with relatively few, or a limited number of, sponsors are restricted in terms of the frequency of organising events, due to their financial dependence on donors. Budgetary constraints, the lack of permanent and/or significant sponsors, or the requests of exclusivity from the sponsors are some of the reasons for such companies to depend on how and when their events can be organised. Such is the case of the LIMS, whose respondent explained their cautious consideration before organising events in the following way:

Except from [for] football, we seldom find federations already established here in Gabon. LIMS is a private competition that is not sponsored by the government. Yoka production, which is an event company, is our main sponsor. We must first understand the issues and what we want to achieve.

Moreover, the planning, budgeting and expected revenue need to be carefully managed, as they should be for any business venture. Mass events require the deployment of such large

resources for services as the upgrading of transport systems, the adjustment of security services, the recruitment and training of the staff supporting the event organisers, and the promotion of the host country organising the event. The construction and renovation of the infrastructure is required to host the events to the standards set by international sport bodies and sponsors, and to delivering on fans' expectations (in terms of stadiums, sport facilities, roads, hotels, airports, etc.). In the case of Gabon, a respondent from AFCON noted the difference between the country's infrastructure capacity before and after the organising of the football tournament:

Yes, it can promote Gabon as an event destination, because we came from nothing in the domain of infrastructure to [being] a country with built infrastructure. Bringing events in[to] a country improves its infrastructure. A frequent calendar of sport activities to be organised with [the] existing infrastructure will promote Gabon as a destination for [the hosting of] sport events.

In 2012, Gabon co-hosted the 28th edition of the AFCON, with Libreville and Franceville hosting 12 and 8 games, respectively, including a semi-final and the final. Organising such a tournament for the first time requires sizable government funding, so as to provide sports and leisure facilities to accommodate visitors to the event. Such a large investment requires to be justified by means of revenue from ticket sales and from expected visitors to the event, as well as by means of business participation in the success of the event. The host cities need to work closely with the organising committee, and with the Department of Sport and Tourism to ensure that the infrastructure attracts more, and, preferably, a variety of other events as well, long after the hosting of the event for which they were built, so as to stimulate the country's economic growth, and so as to maintain a viable tourism sector. Gabon has been proven to make good use of its infrastructure and past success, as the country chose to host the entire AFCON competition in 2017.

Such a warning was sounded by an AFCON respondent in the following words:

Yes, it can promote the image of Libreville, due to the hype that it has created. We can spend a lot of [i.e. on] resources, and the spin-off shows that the country's economy has been boosted. Indeed, a frequent organisation [of such events] can promote, but if the event left the country in debt, then we should not host it in the future.

The same view should be considered to ensure that the additional workforce and skills gained prior and during the organisation of the events are utilised as much as possible to avoid an increase in unemployment levels, or a complete loss of such skills, due to not putting them to good use. While the hosting of mass events brings about a feeling of pride and euphoria, the economic implications thereof are to be weighed together with the direct revenue gleaned from the event, and with the future expected investment to be gained from promoting the image of Libreville and that of the country as a whole. Sustainable planning is required for the destination

to remain competitive in regard to the outside world, in terms of the hosting of future events, and the managing of the vast potential of the promising tourism sector in Gabon.

### **5.9 Respondents' views on whether closer collaboration between sport federations and event organisers can foster Libreville's image regarding the development of tourism and hospitality**

The view of respondents regarding the collaboration between sport federations and event organisers to foster Libreville's image with regards to tourism and hospitality development shows how this concept is widely misunderstood, or simply unknown. Most of the respondents simply emphasised the need for the event organisers to collaborate with the Department of Tourism. However, the role that such a collaboration between the sport federations and the event organisers plays is paramount to having a strong marketing strategy for the successful management of the event in question, as well as contributing to sustainable tourism and hospitality development. Success in the hosting of events will surely have a positive impact on the development of the tourism and hospitality sector for Libreville, and for Gabon as a whole. However, these views are contradicted in the response that was received from a representative of Etoile d'Or Hotel, who indicated that:

The hospitality sector can function on its own. We can function apart from the other departments, but [the] union gives more strength; therefore, the main department, [being] the Department of Tourism, must meet with other departments, and discuss issues that would promote the destination of Gabon.

The respondent's view was that the hospitality sector can function without the collaboration of other stakeholders. However, he does admit that such collaboration empowers the hospitality industry, the event organisers and the sport federations, together with the involvement of the Department of Tourism. A sport that has a well-established federation has the advantage of having well-structured objectives and a vision-focused approach. However, the lack of national and regional committees representing a specific sport leaves the organiser with little local support to promote the event. The importance of having an official sport body in place is also explained by a respondent from the Night of Martial Arts, who said:

All the martial arts come together; we decided we cannot be separated, so let's just create a platform where all of us ... meet to host one event, instead of doing it as separate bodies. This is what we should do for the good of the nation – create a platform for us to meet.

Furthermore, the input of sport federations helps to organise events with the purpose of fulfilling the objectives to develop sport, to attract sponsors, and, ultimately, to contribute to the growth of the tourism and hospitality industry. A respondent from Le Meridien Re Ndama Hotel highlighted the above view in the following way:

They must first have a common interest, then communicate between all the departments involved in the running of tourism and the local sites. We cannot collaborate just like that without gaining anything, and lose money everybody wants to win.

All stakeholders should work towards a common purpose, while aiming to attain their individual objectives. In terms of the concluding words of a LIMS representative: "... We must first understand the issues and what we want to achieve."

This collaboration has an even bigger impact on the various sectors that participate by means of offering their services, firstly to increase their market share, and secondly to provide services that benefit the country's economy. Moreover, there must be the will to work together to promote the country's image as a destination of choice for sport tourism. A respondent from the Héliconia Garden Hotel expressed his wishes for greater collaboration in the following words:

Indeed, we must just be all willing to do it and [to] understand it. It will not only be for the good of our own establishment, but for the development of the whole tourism and hospitality sector and [for] the promotion of the country.

So as to boost the tourism sector, a broader and more inclusive view of the collaboration between sport federations and event organisers was elaborated on by a respondent from the Gabon International Marathon:

The hospitality and tourism industry should be reorganised and work hand in hand. Before the agency can do anything, there must have [i.e. be] a market first through partnership creation. [We must] have brochures with ... "what to do in Libreville". There is nothing like information [that] we can give to somebody that is interested in visiting Gabon.

Such collaboration is not always agreed on successfully, as various stakeholders might have different views on what needs to be done, depending on their organisation's interests. Although sport federations and organisers agree to work with the various departments to foster the country's image, and to promote Gabon as a sport tourism destination, they might not agree on the process to achieve the common goal. Having an open mind and the willingness to adapt to certain circumstances is necessary to remain competitive with the rest of the world. A respondent from the Héliconia Suite Hotel noted in the above regard:

This is a very interesting question. Here in Gabon we do not accept improvement. We must sign [a] convention with the Department of Tourism, and [with] the FEGAFOOT, though people refuse [their] responsibilities and do not understand [that] we are all here for the benefit of the whole nation and [to] ameliorate services for future generations. We must change our mentalities.

In other cases, it requires the establishment of a committee to foster the collaboration among the sport federation and event organisers, and to engage the relevant government

departments in supporting the development of tourism. Such support may vary from financial investment to the amendment of certain national legislation, or even to the creation of an agency to oversee and monitor the country's progress. The objective is to attract the relevant investors, sponsors and tourists. The Department of Tourism, thus, plays an important role in collaborating with various other departments to promote the country's image and its ability to grow the economy. Such collaboration was mentioned by a respondent from the Héliconia Suite Hotel:

Tourism gathers everything. People ignore that, in all departments, the tourism aspect must be considered. In France, for example, recently we were surprised to learn that the Ministry of Home Affairs and [the] Department of Tourism are working together. It is not because events are of sport origin that it only concerns sport events, but, above all, it is a political will – that is why an agency to promote tourism has just been created.

The need for an agency was also shared by a respondent from the Le Meridien Re Ndama Hotel, who stated:

They must create a platform within which they will decide to cooperate to promote the image of the country. If there is no cooperation, every structure will try to gain profit on its own, but if they were all trying to work together, tourism by now would [have] take[n] another turn.

The agency needs to be composed of relevant representatives from the stakeholders who are able to contribute, with their expertise and influence, to achieving its objectives. A respondent from the Department of Tourism expressed his dismay at the exclusion of an important representative from the Cocan:

For the committee that has been created, they did not involve the Director of the FEGAFOOT (Federation Gabonese de Football) for an event such as the AFCON, though it was his domain of expertise.

#### **5.10 Respondents' views on the number of tourist arrivals following on the AFCON**

The respondents to our questionnaire generally agreed that the AFCON had had a positive impact on their occupancy rate. Indeed, the seven hotels approached saw their occupancy rate rise to 100% in some cases during the event, but drop lower than 30% afterwards. However, when it comes to tourist arrivals, their responses were less extreme. None of the respondents saw any impacts of the AFCON on tourist arrivals. The occupancy rate of the hotels rose because they accommodated special delegations that were directly linked with organising the AFCON, rather than tourists. A respondent from the Etoile d'Or Hotel stated: "We did not accommodate tourists during the AFCON, but more people from the media that came especially for the event."

The hotels were mostly occupied by AFCON officials, such as media and sport delegations, organising committees, and others. A respondent from the Le Meridien Re Ndama Hotel highlighted the following:

The number of tourist arrivals was more or less very high before and during the event. Before because people came [a] few days prior [to] the event and during, it was obviously higher, and after the event it has dropped. We must point out here that the hotel has been accommodating only journalists, officials of the CAF.

In contrast, many hotels have been built for the purpose of accommodating the AFCON. Well-situated within the stadium perimeter and the airport, the occupancy rate of the hotels in the pre-event period was not possible to establish, as the hotels were not in existence prior to the event. The Le Nomad, Héliconia Garden and Suite, Etoile d'Or and Onomo hotels were all built to accommodate the delegations attending the AFCON, and other visitors. A respondent from Onomo affirmed:

Before the AFCON, the hotel was completely inexistent [i.e. non-existent]. We only open[ed] our door[s] on the 16 January, and the AFCON started on the 24[th], so the event made ... good marketing to [i.e. for] our establishment.

#### **5.11 Respondents' views about Libreville's hotel occupancy rate after the holding of major sport events**

The preceding question made the interviewer realise the impact of the AFCON as a major event hosted in Libreville, compared to other events. Indeed, most of the respondents from the tourism and hospitality sectors expressed their opinions about Libreville's hotel occupancy rate after the holding of major sporting events, by means of continuously associating their response with the AFCON, in particular. The AFCON is the most popular continental sporting event, which consists of national soccer teams competing against one another on the African continent (Amenumey & Amuquandoh, 2010). The respondents all indicated that the vast majority of Libreville's hotels peaked at near 100% occupancy during the AFCON period. A respondent from the Héliconia Suite Hotel supported the above- mentioned finding, in saying:

During those events, the occupancy rate of the hotel is 100%, due to the fact that the hotel is next to the stadium. So, most of the soccer players are always being accommodated in our establishment. In case it's full, then we recommend them to our neighbours next door.

However, the respondents also highlighted the fact that other events hosted in Libreville do not attract the same kind of attendance that the AFCON brought to the capital in January 2012. They emphasised that the AFCON and other such events, like the Marathon or LIMS, despite all being sport events, lack the same economic impact as the AFCON, due to very few people coming from overseas to attend them. A respondent from the Le Meridien Re Ndama Hotel said:

I am going to talk about the AFCON. Compared to other events that are being played in Gabon, such as the Tropical Amissa Bongo, it doesn't have much enthusiasm. At times

during the AFCON, our occupancy rate was very high, so we had to send clients to other hotel establishments, and that was the case for other hotels. I can confirm that, because we were always communicating, in case of saturation.

In contrast, the respondents from the Department of Tourism were very doubtful about the question, as there was no descriptive statistics to confirm the fluctuation in hotel occupancy rates prior to, and after, the sporting events concerned. A respondent from the Department of Tourism asserted:

I cannot really say visitors are coming during [the] period of sport events as listed above, only the people that were involved in the games, such as the soccer players and their delegations, are coming. That is due to the fact [that] the country is very expensive. A tourist in Gabon is more national than international. They come from different provinces to Libreville to attend the event being hosted.

In the light of the above, hotels can definitely be seen as experiencing higher than normal occupancy rates during a mega event. Despite being a positive and anticipated outcome for the hotel chains involved, the study revealed that the hotels built for the hosting of mega events inevitably experienced a slump in occupancy post the events. An increase in the number of hotels to meet the demand for accommodation during the events also meant an increase in the need for other resources, like human labour. However, the respondents did not elaborate on the challenges faced in the sustainable use of such resources. As in the case of Barcelona, which hosted the Olympic Games, the city saw the amount of revenue per available room tumble by almost 60% in the two years after the Games (Plumb & McKay, 2001). The above indicates that the hospitality industry can experience a drop in revenue in the months and years after the hosting of mega events. Of the hotels, those built for the purpose of such events tend to be comparatively vulnerable to the drop in revenue. The above has an economic and human resources impact that requires that the host city include a post-event plan to diversify the use of resources committed to the event, so as to remain sustainable, and so as to reduce the negative social impact that the above might have on the citizens of the host city.

#### **5.12 Respondents' views of which factors could support the development of tourism and hospitality in Libreville**

A research question was asked of the respondents in the tourism and hospitality sectors regarding what they believed could support the development of tourism and hospitality in Libreville. The researcher noticed a striking similarity in the responses received among some of the respondents, whose implication pointed in the direction that tourism in Gabon is generally unaffordable. The hotel respondents raised the point that most of their clientele came from the business and sport delegations coming to the country for a specific purpose. Business people tend to visit Libreville to attend such forums as the CEMAC, CEAC, and others. Their attendance has contributed significantly to the hotels' high occupancy rate in the past. During sport events, it is mostly the delegations of governing bodies, and the participants in the events,

that use the facilities and services offered by the tourism industry. Therefore, the main contributors to tourism are the business and sport organisations that conduct their dealings in Libreville. The respondents raised issues that could attract the other facets of tourism in Libreville and in Gabon at large, in support of development.

In the current study, the relevant themes that were raised in connection with the stimulation of tourism in Gabon were identified as follows: marketing; accessibility; affordability; infrastructure; and packages.

Leisure tourism in Gabon needs to be stimulated and marketed for consumption by foreign tourists, as well as by the local population. A respondent from the Heliconia Garden Hotel asserted the point as follows: "The more marketing is being done, the more tourists will come visit our destination, and it will, at the same time, bring more clients in[to] our establishments."

Most of the respondents asserted that tourism, in its current form, is costly and inaccessible to leisure tourism. The cost factor is the main reason for only businesses and sport delegations being the principal participants in tourism in the country. A respondent from the Okoume Palace Hotel summarised the point by saying: "Tourism is very expensive in Gabon. Gabon is indeed one of the most expensive countries of Central Africa. We must reduce the cost."

The lack of infrastructure and means to enjoy heritage sites puts the country's touristic potential beyond the reach of prospective tourists who are in the country for reasons of attending to business or sport-related issues. A respondent explained his view in the following terms:

Infrastructure, especially transport, must be more developed, because, without transport, tourism cannot be developed. I drove from Pretoria to Johannesburg and the road was very nice, and there were petrol stations and hotels every 4 km, and ATMs as well, and health structures without which tourism cannot effectively occur.

Moreover, the lack of diversity in packages tailored to different income brackets and social classes is hindering the development of tourism in Gabon. Essentially, the government should work with the private sector to create tourism circuits and to develop tourism in Libreville and in the rest of Gabon. A respondent from the Department of Tourism was one of many who emphasised the following argument:

Even if people come for business tourism, we can also have a circuit, and, after the conference they came to attend, they visit tourism sites. We must reorganise tourism in the country.



### **5.13 Summary**

Chapter Four has provided the data analysis for the study. The results, discourses and debates presented in the chapter emanated from the qualitative data collected from the respondents selected from the relevant sport, tourism and hotel stakeholders. The results provided insight into the ways in which the range of stakeholder groups understood how sport events could be leveraged as catalysts for tourism and hospitality in Libreville, Gabon.

The next chapter (Chapter Six) would focus on outlining the conclusions that can be drawn based on the observations and the analyses of the collected data. Based on these conclusions, recommendations, will be suggested and future research endeavours considered.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter presented, analysed and discussed the findings obtained from the primary investigation into the perceptions of the relevant stakeholders of the sport, tourism and hospitality department in Libreville under the headings of the research objectives concerned.

The opening chapters presented an overview of sport tourism and mega events, as well as the background to Libreville's hosting of the different sport events. Chapter Two presented the conceptual framework covering the main features of sport events acting as the catalysts of tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon. The chapter also dealt with literature on tourism, sport tourism and mega events, whose legacies and impacts were discussed in Chapter Three. Furthermore, the research methodology used in the study was presented to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings obtained.

The final chapter of the thesis summarises the study, presenting conclusions drawn from the primary and secondary findings of the study, and setting out recommendations and the direction for future research, which are aimed at planning for future sporting events to be held in Libreville, Gabon. The limitations encountered during the study are highlighted, and a future research direction is suggested.

#### **6.2 Conclusions**

Research findings were analysed with regards to the following objectives:

- to establish the motivating factors that encourage Libreville to organise sporting events;
- to analyse the challenges and opportunities related to organising sport events in Libreville;
- to explore the lessons learned from hosting events for the tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville; and
- to consider aspects that can support tourism and hospitality development in Libreville through the hosting of sport events.

The following discussions present the conclusions to the study according to the objectives outlined above.

##### **6.2.1 Conclusion on the findings regarding the establishment of the motivating factors that encourage Libreville to organise sporting events**

The first objective of the present study aimed at establishing the motivating factors that encourage Libreville to organise major sporting events. The different themes that emerged from the data were: increased turnover; spending; tourist arrivals; branding; infrastructural

development; ancillary services; and sponsorship. The results have shown that the main motive for hosting sport events is that such hosting can lead to important economic impact. The primary benefit to be gained from hosting sport events was the perceived change to the physical appearance of Libreville through the infrastructure that is required for the hosting of such sport events as hotels, roads and stadiums. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that sport events constitute a platform for entrepreneurs in terms of business opportunities linked to increased tourist arrivals and associated spending. In addition, local enterprises experienced high turnover during the 2012 AFCON, especially in terms of the occupancy rates of hotels, as well as in regard to such ancillary services as car hire and event companies. Also, the results have demonstrated that most sponsors use such an opportunity to associating their brand with the event being held, so as to create brand awareness and to gain additional recognition.

### **6.2.2 Conclusion on the findings regarding the analysis of the challenges and opportunities related to the organising of sport events in Libreville**

The second objective of the study aimed to find out about the challenges and opportunities faced when using sport events to increase the extent of tourism in Libreville. From the results obtained, it can be concluded that the organisation of sport events in the city is plagued by many challenges that require overcoming. The challenges, as shown in the above results, frustrate fulfilling the basic requirements for the hosting of any event. Having an adequate infrastructure is a fundamental requirement for bidding for, and successfully hosting, sport events. Due to insufficient or inadequate infrastructure, Gabon had to invest in the construction and rehabilitation of stadiums, hotels and roads. In addition, it was discovered that Libreville, and the country at large, lacked service-oriented skills. The tourism and hospitality sectors need trained employees to provide professional care for the needs of the delegations, officials and star athletes who expect to be supplied with the best possible services. Furthermore, the lack of event funding was perceived, especially among the sport event's organisers, as hindering the professional hosting of events. Besides the above, the results revealed corruption to be a central issue that could easily slow down the development process of tourism through the hosting of sport events in Libreville. In addition, the stakeholders pointed out the fact of not being able to develop an appropriate marketing strategy to promote tourism in the country synergistically. Finally, the results clearly show the lack of involvement between the different government departments that are responsible for the hosting of sport events. The sport and tourism stakeholders do not collaborate to bring about the necessary input for successful organisation, and the lack of strategic approach is evident.

In contrast, it has been demonstrated that companies and all economic actors in the city of Libreville have opportunities in the events that are hosted in Libreville at all levels such as insurance companies, printings, restaurants, car rentals, hotels and many more. Definitely, sport events bring more business opportunity to the local companies and which has contributed

to positive economic impact in the country. Thus, all economic actors in the city of Libreville have the potential to leverage benefit from events and are not confined to tourism businesses only.

### **6.2.3 Conclusion on the findings regarding the exploration of the lessons learned from the hosting of events for the tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville**

The hosting of mega events has, undoubtedly, presented a unique opportunity for Libreville to communicate with the outside world. Each event serves as a link, providing both an inward-bound and an outward-bound opportunity to engage with the sport community. The exchange between Libreville and the world gave birth to business ventures that were related to the sport being held, and which served to strengthen the city's preparedness to host the event again in future. Moreover, the relationship with the committees of the sport discipline has provided a commitment to growing the interest of the sport fraternity. Hosting events in Libreville was found to foster growth for the local businesses, and to provide a platform for Gabon to showcase its culture within the global village.

Moreover, the hospitality industry was greatly rewarded during the hosting of the sporting events, as the hotels and accommodation facilities testified to an increase in tourist receipts during the events, resulting in some establishments recording maximum occupancy and favourable turnovers. However, the post-event period presented some challenges, in the form of having to adjust to a relatively low demand for services. The consequences of such changes were acutely felt by the hotels that were built especially for the event, despite the publicity brought with them. Furthermore, it is evident that most sport delegations and organising representatives constitute the bulk of guests during the events held, raising the question of how many tourists attending the events were actually drawn to Libreville in the capacity of sport fans.

Similarly, the issue of fans being drawn to events varied in importance. For example, the AFCON has, so far, been the only event filling hotels to capacity. In addition, the event drew the most sponsorships and the most interest in broadcasting the event, with Gabon having the capacity to host thousands of guests. In contrast, smaller events were just as important, as they are held throughout the year, and they can also be used to sustain the tourism and hospitality industry.

### **6.2.4 Conclusion on the findings regarding the consideration of aspects that can support the development of tourism and hospitality in Libreville through the hosting of sport events**

The question of the frequency of hosting events brought with it the conviction that positive gains can be obtained from the success of previous events. In the case of infrastructure, Gabon

has significantly invested in stadiums and hotels to host future events that are similar in size to the previously hosted ones and to events that require existing facilities. As cities across the world showcase their cultural and infrastructural heritage, Libreville's hosting of events also promotes the city and Gabon's intention to gain international recognition. Hosting sporting events distinguishes Libreville as a city that finds worth in attracting investors from across the globe. The country's image has come to be respected among other host cities in Africa as it has improved. Moreover, a shift in attitude is gradually being felt, as Gabon was again entrusted with hosting the 31st hosting of the AFCON in 2017, barely five years after it co-hosted the 28th hosting of the event. However, smaller events have presented a challenge insofar as their frequent hosting goes, due to the limited funding obtained. The smaller the event hosted, the fewer sponsors it tends to attract, hence limiting the scope of the targeted audience.

Similarly, other resources that are required for the hosting of future events, besides capital, are human and technological ones. The skills gained from previous events could be used to improve the bids for future events, with technological advancement surely wiping out any disadvantage that Gabon previously had over other host nations. The political will to engage with the international community has been demonstrated in the events hosted and, in the bids, made for future ones. Such involvement is proven by the improved transport infrastructure that is mostly funded by the government of Gabon. However, little statistical evidence of the economic gains made from such expenditure exists. The researcher outlines the importance of adopting a holistic perspective in terms of the hosting of sport events, and of other events, in Gabon.

Meanwhile, the issue of tourist numbers in the country was alluded to in the preceding subsection. Insights can be obtained from the findings made in relation to what the respondents thought could support tourism and hospitality development in Libreville. The tourism and hospitality activities were perceived to be unaffordable. Nevertheless, marketing, accessibility, affordability, the infrastructure, and tourism packages can make a positive contribution to the developing of both sectors.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

The results have demonstrated that the motivating factors that encourage Libreville to organise sporting events were firstly based on reaching substantial economic impacts. Most of the stakeholders confirmed that the infrastructural development, the high flux of tourist arrivals, the high visitor spending, the increased turnover in retail businesses, and branding were their major objectives in, and reasons for, contributing to the hosting of the events. Despite the fact that the respondents were very positive about how the sport events concerned contributed to the economic growth of the country, some were cautious about how the benefits were

measured. Thus, Chalip (2006) highlights the need to use resources strategically to leverage the most desired outcomes from the hosting of such events. In the above context, leveraging is considered as the process through which the benefits of hosting mega events are maximised (Chalip, 2004; O'Brien, 2006). Based on Chalip's leveraging model regarding the enhancing of economic impacts associated with the leveraging of an event, the stakeholders of sport events in Libreville should, firstly, optimise the amount total trade and revenue gleaned from an event by means of enticing visitors to spend, by lengthening visitor stays (which also increases visitor spend), and by retaining the event expenditures (for example, by keeping the event expenditures within the local economy, and using the event to foster business networking and to enhance business relationships). Secondly, benefits can be achieved by the sport events stakeholders by means of enhancing Libreville's image through the media attracted by the event, by showcasing the city in event advertising and reporting, and by featuring the event in (some) host destination advertising and promotions (Chalip, 2004).

Furthermore, the findings provided an overall conceptualisation of some challenges and opportunities described by those involved in the organisation of sport events in Libreville. As was detailed in the previous chapter, the hosting of international sport events has assisted in elevating the image of Libreville and in presenting it as a sport event destination. Even though the hosting of sport events brings about positive returns at a destination, important costs are involved, especially when there is a lack of infrastructure to stage the events. Matheson (2013:215) argues that the hosting of sport events is a great responsibility that comes with different challenges, such as the cost of operating, organising, and building infrastructure, with it being a somewhat daunting task for most developing countries. Therefore, the city of Libreville should ensure that its hotels, roads and stadiums are renovated, and that they are modernised to meet tourist expectations, otherwise the hosting of sport events will be hampered. Thus, so as to address the lack of involvement by the departments responsible for the hosting of sport events, strong collaboration between the stakeholders is of paramount importance in developing the hospitality and tourism sector. Swart and Bob (2007) assert that the growth of sport tourism can only be assured if there is collaboration and understanding between the different organisations and stakeholders about the sport tourism phenomenon, as well as about the mutual benefits and advantages of establishing alliances between the sport and tourism sectors. Therefore, an intergovernmental agency is required to oversee and to direct projects, for the common objective of the nation. Moreover, the agency should be tasked with crafting and implementing Gabon's long-term plans, with mitigating conflict between the hospitality and the tourism sectors, and with promoting a patriotic culture, rather than individual interests.

Even though many business sectors involved in the organisation of sport events in Libreville benefit from the enlarged business opportunities made available by the events, the increase

in business volume usually necessitates that the providers hire and train additional staff to meet the market demand. In fact, the results revealed that the skills shortage is mostly felt within the hospitality industry. Therefore, so as to alleviate the shortage, the stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sectors in Libreville should improve education and training opportunities by reviewing the curricula of all educational institutions, including schools and universities, and creating awareness of the role of the tourism and hospitality industries in the country's economy.

In addition, the tourism industry consists of the activities of individuals who travel and stay outside of their usual environment for a period of time, and who take part in various activities, ranging from business to leisure (UNWTO, 2001:1). Sport events, in contrast, are planned events that revolve around a sporting activity (Bob & Swart, 2010:74). However, the results showed that tourism in Gabon is generally unaffordable. The main contributors to tourism are business and sport organisations that have dealings in Libreville, and not the locals, who can barely afford the services offered. Essentially, the government should work with the private sector, including hoteliers and all tourism role players, so as to cut down on the tourism and hospitality service levies. Furthermore, tourism in Libreville should be repositioned, with a specific budget having to be allocated to boosting the sector through intensive marketing.

#### **6.4 Future research direction**

The current study discusses the ability of utilising sport events as catalysts for the promotion of the tourism and hospitality sector in Libreville. To provide further impetus, and especially in view of the fact that Gabon seems to be becoming more engaged in the sport event sector, in the light of the recent hosting of the 2017 edition of the AFCON, there appears to be the need for broad analysis of the sport event management process. Such analysis would enable the unpacking of the challenges involved, as well as providing a relatively seamless implementation framework for the leveraging of the opportunities provided by such events. In this way, a more effective and sustainable sport tourism industry could be built up in Libreville, and in Gabon more broadly. Future research focusing on the development of a more strategic approach to the hosting of events that are beneficial to both the sport and tourism industries is required, including the adoption of a portfolio of events that can meet different strategic objectives.

The findings from the current study highlight the need for further research into the event impact assessment, which appears to have been ineffective in terms of the hosting of sport events. The importance of establishing actual gains or losses that might derive from such hosting is of paramount importance, not only to reassure the investors, but also to mitigate any potential losses therefrom. Thus, event evaluation is a key step to considering when bidding for, and

hosting, sport events, despite it being the least undertaken by the event stakeholders and the public office bearers. Therefore, the lack of a standard evaluation approach frustrates the maximisation of leveraging opportunities, with the pitfalls in sport events being hosted in Libreville requiring to be addressed. Research into sport event impact evaluation is, therefore, imperative in serving as a strategic tool for the deterring of embezzlement and the mismanagement of public funds.

The current study was based on the performance of tourism and hospitality businesses located in Libreville, Gabon. However, the 2012 AFCON event was hosted in multiple locations, as was highlighted in the current study. A similar inquiry into the other host cities should be undertaken to determine whether the different areas within the country reflect the same, or similar, trends, in terms of the developmental impetus of sport events in the promoting of economic growth.

Furthermore, a nuanced consideration emanating from the study is the workforce qualification in the tourism sector for major events which seems to suggest the need for the training of a larger workforce for hospitality and tourism for such events. There is currently no evidence highlighting whether such a gap is a general occurrence within these respective sectors, or whether they are a temporary deficit to support the demand for sporting events. While this consideration is quite important in relation to the readiness of the sector to welcome participants during such events, it did not form a part of the objectives of this study and as such would be recommended for future enquiries into sport events hosting's within destinations such as Libreville.

In addition, in the context of the global Covid-19 pandemic with a cancellation of almost all sport related events, it is important for countries like Gabon which have adopted sport events as a mean to promote local economic development to consider strategies that could be adopted in ensuring that when sport events hosting resumes, these can be done safely and thereby continue to engender positive economic impacts, leading to economic growth.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER AND KEY INFORMANT SCHEDULE



Faculty of Business  
Department of Tourism and Hospitality  
P.O. Box 652  
Cape Town  
8000

April 2014

Libreville's sport events, tourism and hospitality representatives  
Gabon

Dear representatives

**RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION TO FIND OUT WHETHER SPORT EVENTS CAN BE A CATALYST FOR TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY DEVELOPMENT IN LIBREVILLE, GABON**

**Title: Sport events as a catalyst for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon**

I, Desiree Odounga, a student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, am currently doing research in the sector of tourism and hospitality in Libreville, Gabon. For the purpose of the study, I am required to find out whether sport events can be a catalyst for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon. I kindly request you to deliberate on the attached questionnaire; an interview will be scheduled with you, based on your availability. Please note that all persons contributing to the study will remain anonymous. The information that you provide will be kept strictly confidential, and it will be used for academic purposes only.

Your assistance is highly valued in completing the relevant questionnaire. If you have any questions regarding the above, you may contact my supervisor (Prof. K. Swart) or me.

Thank you for your time and effort.

My cell phone number is: 083 312 1832  
My supervisor's telephone number is: 021 460 4242

Yours sincerely

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Ms Desiree Odounga

## KEY INFORMANT SCHEDULE

- 1. To establish the motivating factors that encourage the city to organise major sporting events**
  - 1.1 How do sport events contribute to the economic growth of Libreville?
  - 1.2 When are the sport events held?
  - 1.3 How are the local businesses involved in organising sporting events?
  
- 2. To analyse the challenges and opportunities related to the organising of major sport events in Libreville**
  - 2.1 What do you think are some of the challenges involved in using sport events to increase the extent of tourism in Libreville?
  - 2.2 Do the local businesses leverage the opportunities that are associated with the hosting of sport events in Libreville? If so, how?
  - 2.3 Do the sport and tourism stakeholders collaborate on identifying for which potential sport events to bid?
  - 2.4 If yes, mention how such collaboration is achieved. If no, what do you think can be done to foster collaboration?
  
- 3. To explore the lessons learned from the hosting of major sport events by the tourism and hospitality industry in Libreville**

*Please answer sections A, B, C, D and E only if they apply to your field.*

### **Section A: AFCON**

- A1 Did the AFCON create opportunities from which the local businesses could benefit in terms of the leveraging of the event?
- A2 Were your overall expectations met regarding the organisation of the AFCON?
- A3 Do you think that the frequent organisation of the AFCON, or similar types of event, could serve to promote Libreville's image?
- A4 How can closer collaboration between the sport event federations and the sport event organisers foster Libreville's image with regards to the development of tourism and hospitality?

### **Section B: Gabon International Marathon**

- B1 Did the Gabon International Marathon create opportunities for the local businesses to benefit from leveraging of the event?
- B2 Were your overall expectations met after organising the Gabon International Marathon?
- B3 Do you think that the annual organisation of Gabon International Marathon could serve to promote Libreville's image?
- B4 How can closer collaboration between sport event federations and sport event organisers foster Libreville's image with regards to the development of tourism and hospitality?

### **Section C: Night of Martial Arts**

- C1 Did the Night of Martial Arts create opportunities from which the local businesses could benefit in terms of leveraging of the event?
- C2 Were your overall expectations met after organising the Night of Martial Arts?
- C3 Do you think that the annual organisation of the Night of Martial Arts could serve to promote Libreville's image?
- C4 How can closer collaboration between sport event federations and sport event organisers foster Libreville's image with regards to the development of tourism and hospitality?

### **Section D: Libreville International Moto show**

D1 Did the Libreville International Moto show create opportunities from which the local businesses could benefit in terms of leveraging of the event?

D2 Were your overall expectations met after organising the Libreville International Moto show?

D3 Do you think that the frequent organisation of the Libreville International Moto show could serve to promote Libreville's image?

D4 How can closer collaboration between the sport event federations and the sport event organisers foster Libreville's image with regards to the development of tourism and hospitality?

**Section E: Tropicale Amissa Bongo**

E1 Did the Tropicale Amissa Bongo create opportunities from which the local businesses could benefit in terms of the leveraging of the event?

E2 Were your overall expectations usually met after organising the Tropicale Amissa Bongo?

E3 Do you think that the annual organisation of the Tropicale Amissa Bongo can promote Libreville's image?

E4 How can closer collaboration between the sport event federations and the sport event organisers foster Libreville's image with regards to the development of tourism and hospitality?

**Section F: Tourism and Hospitality**

F1 How can you describe the number of tourist arrivals that have taken place since the AFCON was last hosted in Gabon?

F2 What do you think about Libreville's hotel occupancy rate after the holding of such major sporting events as the Tropicale Amissa Bongo, the International Marathon of Gabon, the Night of Martial Arts, and the International Moto Show International of Libreville?

F3 What do you think can support the development of tourism and hospitality in Libreville?

F4 How can closer collaboration between the sport event federations and the sport event organisers foster Libreville's image with regards to the development of tourism and hospitality?

**Thank you for your participation in, and contribution to, the study.**

## APPENDIX B: LETTRE DE COUVERTURE ET QUESTIONNAIRE



Cape Town

Faculty of Business  
Department of Tourism and Hospitality  
PO Box 652

8000

Juin 2014

**Aux**  
**Représentants des événements sportifs de Libreville,**  
**Ministère du tourisme et du secteur hôtelier**  
**Gabon**

**OBJET: LETTRE D'INTRODUCTION ET REQUETE POUR LA PARTICIPATION A UN QUESTIONNAIRE QUI A POUR BUT DE RESSORTIR LE FAIT QUE LES EVENEMENTS SPORTIFS PEUVENT ETRE UN LEVIER AU DEVELOPPEMENT DU TOURISME ET DE L'ACTIVITE HOTELIERE**

**Mesdames, Messieurs les Représentants,**

Je m'appelle Désirée Odounga et je suis étudiante en Master 2 à l'Université de «Cape Peninsula University of Technology» au Cap en Afrique Du Sud.

Dans le cadre de la recherche que je suis entrain d'effectuer, je souhaiterais savoir si les événements sportifs peuvent être un levier au développement du tourisme et de l'activité hôtelière à Libreville au Gabon.

A cet effet, j'ai l'honneur de vous soumettre le questionnaire ci-joint, dont vous voudrez bien prendre connaissance. Une interview y relative sera programmée avec vous par la suite, selon votre disponibilité.

Je vous prie de bien vouloir considérer que tous les participants resteront anonymes. Les renseignements que vous voudrez bien fournir seront confidentiels et utilisés à des fins académiques.

Votre collaboration à la réussite de ce travail sera très appréciée.

Pour toutes informations complémentaires, merci de contacter mon superviseur de mémoire, Professeur Kamilla Swart.

Veuillez agréer, Mesdames, Messieurs, l'expression de ma profonde gratitude.

**MS. Désirée ODOUNGA**

**Mes contacts**

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+ (241) 03 43 93 56

Adresse électronique:

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**Contacts de mon superviseur:**

Téléphone:

+ (27) 021 460 4242

Adresse électronique:

[swartk@cput.ac.za](mailto:swartk@cput.ac.za)

## **QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **1. Etablir les facteurs de motivation qui encouragent les dirigeants de la ville de Libreville à organiser de grands événements sportifs.**

- 1.1 Comment est-ce que les manifestations sportives contribuent à la croissance économique de Libreville?
- 1.2 Quelle est la fréquence événementielle?
- 1.3 Quelle est l'implication des entreprises locales dans l'organisation des manifestations sportives?

### **2. Analyser les défis et les possibilités d'organiser de grands événements sportifs à Libreville.**

- 2.1 Quels défis pensez-vous rencontrer dans l'organisation des événements sportifs permettant d'accroître le tourisme à Libreville?
- 2.2 Est-ce que les entreprises locales bénéficient des opportunités associées à l'organisation des événements sportifs? Si oui comment?
- 2.3 Quels types d'entreprises profitent notablement de cet apport événementiel?
- 2.4 Est-ce que les acteurs du sport et du tourisme collaborent ensemble pour déterminer les offres d'organisation des événements sportifs potentiellement rentables au plan économique?
- 2.5 Si non, que peut-on faire pour favoriser la collaboration?

### **3. Connaître les leçons tirées de l'organisation de grands événements sportifs pour l'industrie du tourisme et de l'hôtellerie à Libreville.**

*NB : Veuillez répondre aux sections A, B, C, et D uniquement si elles s'appliquent à votre domaine de compétence.*

#### **SECTION A CAN 2012**

- 3.1 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation de la CAN a apportées aux entreprises locales?
- 3.2 Avez-vous été satisfait des attributs suivants pendant la CAN?
- 3.3 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant la CAN ont été atteintes?

### **4. Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

- 4.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente de la CAN ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter
- 4.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

#### **SECTION B**

##### **Marathon International du Gabon**

- 4.3 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation du Marathon International du Gabon a apportées aux entreprises locales?
- 4.4 Etiez-vous satisfait des attributs suivants pendant le Marathon International du Gabon?



4.5 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant le Marathon International du Gabon ont été atteintes?

**5 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

5.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente du Marathon International du Gabon ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter.

5.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

**SECTION C**

**“Nuit des Arts Martiaux”**

5.3 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation de la “nuit des Arts Martiaux” apporte aux entreprises locales?

5.4 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant la “nuit des Arts Martiaux” sont constamment atteintes?

**6 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

6.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente de la “nuit des Arts Martiaux” ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter.

6.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

**SECTION D**

**Moto Show International de Libreville**

6.3 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation du Moto Show International de Libreville apporte aux entreprises locales?

6.4 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant le Moto Show International de Libreville ont été atteintes?

**7 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

7.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente du Moto Show International de Libreville ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter.

7.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

**SECTION E**

**“Tropicale Amissa Bongo”**

- 7.3 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation de la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo" apporte aux entreprises locales?
- 7.4 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo" sont constamment atteintes?

**8 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

- 8.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente de la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo" ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez motiver.
- 8.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

**SECTION F**

**Tourisme et hôtellerie**

- 8.3 Comment pouvez-vous décrire le nombre d'arrivées de touristes avant, pendant et après l'événement?
- 8.4 Que pensez-vous du taux d'occupation des hôtels à Libreville avant, pendant et après la tenue des événements sportifs d'envergure tels que la Can, le Marathon International du Gabon, la Nuit des Arts Martiaux, le Moto Show International de Libreville et la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo"?
- 8.5 Quels sont les éléments, selon vous, qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville?
- 8.6 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie avec les organismes hôtelier et touristique afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

**2. Etablir les facteurs de motivation qui encouragent les dirigeants de la ville de Libreville à organiser de grands événements sportifs.**

- 4.6 Comment est-ce que les manifestations sportives contribuent à la croissance économique de Libreville?
- 4.7 Quelle est la fréquence événementielle?
- 4.8 Quelle est l'implication des entreprises locales dans l'organisation des manifestations sportives?

**5. Analyser les défis et les possibilités d'organiser de grands événements sportifs à Libreville.**

- 5.1 Quels défis pensez-vous rencontrer dans l'organisation des événements sportifs permettant d'accroître le tourisme à Libreville?
- 5.2 Est-ce que les entreprises locales bénéficient des opportunités associées à l'organisation des événements sportifs? Si oui comment?
- 5.3 Quels types d'entreprises profitent notablement de cet apport événementiel?
- 5.4 Est-ce que les acteurs du sport et du tourisme collaborent ensemble pour déterminer les offres d'organisation des événements sportifs potentiellement rentables au plan économique?
- 5.5 Si non, que peut-on faire pour favoriser la collaboration?

**6. Connaître les leçons tirées de l'organisation de grands événements sportifs pour l'industrie du tourisme et de l'hôtellerie à Libreville.**

*NB : Veuillez répondre aux sections A, B, C, et D uniquement si elles s'appliquent à votre domaine de compétence.*

**SECTION A**  
**CAN 2012**

6.1 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation de la CAN a apportées aux entreprises locales?

6.2 Avez-vous été satisfait des attributs suivants pendant la CAN?

6.3 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant la CAN ont été atteintes?

**7. Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

7.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente de la CAN ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter

7.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

**SECTION B**

**Marathon International du Gabon**

7.3 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation du Marathon International du Gabon a apportées aux entreprises locales?

7.4 Etiez-vous satisfait des attributs suivants pendant le Marathon International du Gabon?

7.5 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant le Marathon International du Gabon ont été atteintes?

**7 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

7.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente du Marathon International du Gabon ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter.

7.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

**SECTION C**

**"Nuit des Arts Martiaux"**

7.3 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation de la "nuit des Arts Martiaux" apporte aux entreprises locales?

7.4 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant la "nuit des Arts Martiaux" sont constamment atteintes?

**8 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

8.7 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente de la "nuit des Arts Martiaux" ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter.

8.8 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

## **SECTION D**

### **Moto Show International de Libreville**

8.9 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation du Moto Show International de Libreville apporte aux entreprises locales?

8.10 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant le Moto Show International de Libreville ont été atteintes?

## **9 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

9.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente du Moto Show International de Libreville ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez argumenter.

9.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

## **SECTION E**

### **"Tropicale Amissa Bongo"**

9.3 Quelles sont les opportunités d'affaires que l'organisation de la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo" apporte aux entreprises locales?

9.4 Est-ce que vos attentes concernant la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo" sont constamment atteintes?

## **10 Etablir les aspects qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville à travers les manifestations sportives.**

10.1 Pensez-vous qu'une organisation fréquente de la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo" ou d'un type d'événement similaire peut promouvoir l'image de Libreville? Si oui/non veuillez motiver.

10.2 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

## **SECTION F**

### **Tourisme et hôtellerie**

10.3 Comment pouvez-vous décrire le nombre d'arrivées de touristes avant, pendant et après l'événement?

10.4 Que pensez-vous du taux d'occupation des hôtels à Libreville avant, pendant et après la tenue des événements sportifs d'envergure tels que la Can, le Marathon International du Gabon, la Nuit des Arts Martiaux, le Moto Show International de Libreville et la "Tropicale Amissa Bongo"?

10.5 Quels sont les éléments, selon vous, qui peuvent contribuer au développement touristique et hôtelier à Libreville?

10.6 Comment est-ce qu'une étroite collaboration entre les fédérations et les organisateurs de manifestations sportives peut être établie avec les organismes

hôtelier et touristique afin de promouvoir l'image de Libreville en matière de développement touristique et hôtelier?

## APPENDIX C: LETTERS OF CONSENT

MINISTRE DE L'EDUCATION NATIONALE,  
DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET TECHNIQUE,  
DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE, DE LA FORMATION  
PROFESSIONNELLE CHARGE DE LA CULTURE,  
DE LA JEUNESSE ET DES SPORTS



SECRETARIAT GENERAL

Tél./Fax : 00 (241) 76 32 33 – B.P. 1007  
LIBREVILLE

N° 1083 /MENESTRSFPCJS/SG/EKM

### To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

The department of Youth and Sports certifies that Ms Joelle Desiree Othy Odounga, master student in Tourism and Hospitality management at Cape Peninsula University of Technology has been granted permission to carry out part of her field studies about Sport events as a catalyst for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon at the above-mentioned organisation for the purpose of completion of her Master Degree studies between the months of January and February in Libreville.

In witness whereof this certificate is made available To Whom It May Concern.

Done in Libreville on 04/10/2013

The Secretary General

  
Dr. Nicole Christiane ASSPLE



Department of Tourism  
Tel & Fax: +241 01 764 959  
P.O. Box: 403 Libreville/Gabon



**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter serves to confirm that **Ms Joelle Desiree OTHY ODOUNGA** has been granted permission to carry out part of her field studies at the above-mentioned organisation for the purpose of completion of her Master Degree studies.

She has previously requested permission from the establishments management indicating that her studies will be taking place during the early part of 2014 (Between the months of January and February) in Libreville.

With all ethical considerations in place the required authorisations have been granted. We hope this satisfies your requirements.

In witness where of this certificate is made available To Whom It May Concern.

The General Manager

Louis Barrys OGOULA OLINGO



## APPENDIX D: CPUT ETHICAL CLEARANCE TO PURSUE STUDIES



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P.O. Box 1906 • Bellville 7535 South Africa • Tel: +27 21 4603239 • Email: zouityf@cput.ac.za  
Symphony Road Bellville 7535

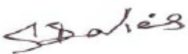
Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	Faculty: <b>BUSINESS</b>
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At a meeting of the Research Ethics Committee on 4 March 2014, Ethics Approval was granted to JOELLE DESIREE ODOUNGA OTHY (208066381) for research activities Related to the MTech/DTech: MTech: TOURISM & HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Title of dissertation/thesis:	Sport events as a catalyst for tourism and hospitality development in Libreville, Gabon Supervisor: Prof Kamilla Swart
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Comments:

Decision: APPROVED

 Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	04 MARCH 2014 Date
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_____ Signed: Chairperson: Faculty Research Committee	_____ Date
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Clearance Certificate No | 2014FBREC151



## APPENDIX E: LANGUAGE EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE

### EDITING CERTIFICATE

Kindly note that I, Lois Courtenay Henderson (BA (Honours) English, MA in General Linguistics, Higher Diploma in Library and Information Science, Higher Education Diploma (Postgraduate)), language edited the thesis entitled "Sport Events as Catalysts for Tourism and Hospitality Development in Libreville, Gabon", submitted to the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences, Cape Peninsula University of Technology in fulfilment for the degree of Master of Technology: Tourism and Hospitality Management by Joelle-Desiree Odounga Othy. My SATI registration number is 1002688.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lois Henderson", written in a cursive style.

Lois C. Henderson (Ms)