










THE STATE OF PLAY BETWEEN MANAGING MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: A SCOPING REVIEW

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This scoping review integrates literature from diverse perspectives to better understand when and how management of major sport events promotes or harms human rights. The authors critically review 130 peer-reviewed English language articles to identify conceptual contributions to research and practice. The findings reveal that politics and political reform, legal frameworks, and organizational actions are crucial influences in when and how management of events promotes or harms human rights. The most frequently considered rights in the literature are: equality, human trafficking related, sport as a human right, worker rights, and freedom of residence. Activism for human rights stimulates change within relevant stakeholders via collaboration, naming and shaming, in-public debates, and media coverage. The committed, transparent, and inclusive consideration of human rights in all stages of managing sport events (from bid preparation, bidding, planning, and hosting to postevent leverage) may increase the likelihood that the event has social benefits.

Key words: Equality; Freedom; Human trafficking; Sport; Worker rights; Inclusivity

Introduction

Over the past century, the planning, hosting, and postevent leverage of major sport events have frequently produced negative conditions for humans

and unbearable scenes of human rights abuses. For example, the deaths of migrant workers in the lead up to the Qatar 2022 FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) World Cup is evidence that major sport events can lead to people

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losing their lives if their interests are not protected. *The Guardian* (“Revealed: 6,500 Migrant Workers Have Died,” 2021) reported that, since the awarding of the FIFA World Cup, about 6,750 South Asian migrant workers have died—among which between 400 and 500 are directly linked to the construction of stadiums for the FIFA World Cup according to Hassan al-Thawadi, the Secretary General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (MacInnes, 2022). In other cases, forced evictions of elderly, homeless, and other vulnerable populations were reported to make room for events (Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2007, 2008; Rolnik, 2009; Suzuki et al., 2018).

Human rights, as defined by the United Nations (1948), are the rights that all humans have, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. They are mentioned in the 30 Articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948). Also, they play a crucial role in the context of sport (e.g., Cunningham et al., 2021; Donnelly, 2008) and sport events (e.g., Caudwell & McGee, 2018; Chappelet, 2022; Heerdt, 2023)—the latter being the focus of the present article. We are concerned with human rights that are conceptually or empirically understood as at risk of being abused, or to be promoted, in the context of managing major sport events.

Recently, major sport events have been awarded to states with poor human rights records. In the sport event context, bribery and other corrupt practices have been observed, particularly in order to secure winning bids (Olmos et al., 2020). Corrupt states have low levels of protection of human rights (Landman & Schudel, 2007; see also Peters, 2018, who argues that corruption itself can be considered as an international human rights violation). Thus, corruption and human rights are closely linked. Indeed, the lack of accountability of event-related stakeholders provides a fruitful ground to corrupt and abusive stakeholders in the major sport event context (Byrne & Ludvigsen, 2022; Engle, 2014).

To date, there is a lack of synthesis of existing evidence regarding the ways in which management of major sport events enables advancement of human rights or harms human rights. Such insights are needed to better protect and promote human rights based on scientific findings. Thus, the aim of this article is to review the event management

and adjacent literature to identify conceptual contributions to existing claims, frameworks, and theories, and to outline pathways for researchers to investigate human rights topics at major sport events. In what follows, after a brief description of the major sport event cycle, we conduct a scoping review of the literature and identify relevant and timely research gaps and how they might be filled. We contribute to existing research in multiple ways: we (1) provide a synthesis of the literature that describes when and how management of major sport events promotes or harms human rights, (2) identify research gaps that have not been addressed before, and (3) propose research directions building upon both positivist and interpretivist paradigms, potentially stimulating multidisciplinary and multi-method empirical work in the area.

Management of Major Sport Events and Human Rights: From Bid Preparation to Postevent Leverage

Bid Preparation

Several event awarding bodies have formulated the implementation of human rights commitments as bid requirements, such as the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) bidding requirements for the 2024 European Championships, the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)’s Human Rights Policy and 2022 Games Candidate City Manual, and FIFA’s Human Rights Policy and bidding requirements for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Also, the Olympic Host City Contract (HCC), which includes human rights provision, must be agreed beforehand by the bid committee. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has specifically looked at the human rights record of Australia when it considered Brisbane’s bid for the 2032 Olympics (IOC, 2021). Potential hosts that prepare bids today are pressured to plan to assess whether, and how, they can promote and secure human rights as well as mitigate risks.

Event Bidding

From an ethical point of view, one would expect that those event stakeholders that promote and secure human rights best have high chances

to be selected as a host. However, ironically, we have seen many cases where states that perform poorly in terms of promoting human rights have been awarded major sport events. Maennig and Vierhaus (2017) examined 147 variables to predict successful Olympic Games (summer edition) bids—including variables such as freedom status, political rights, civil liberties, democracy scores, as well as political terror and corruption scales—and found that all of them except political rights did not matter. Yet, their analysis only considered hosts up to 2020. Since then, many bidders have included human rights strategies in the bid (e.g., bids from Germany and Turkey to host the EURO 2024, with requirements to culturally embed human rights and proactively address human rights risks; bids from Paris and Los Angeles to host the 2024 and 2028 Olympic Games; bids from Morocco as well as Mexico, Canada, and the US to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup). Thus, human rights considerations can be expected to play a greater role in future bidding processes.

Event Planning

Human rights have been addressed in most major sport event host venue contracts that are issued today—that is, the binding agreement between the awarding body and the host. This contract determines practices during the event planning and hosting stages. For example, the IOC (2017) has included an explicit reference to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and has enshrined these within the HCC since 2017 (for Paris 2024 and beyond). Also, human rights are closely connected to fighting corruption and promoting sustainable development (Landmann & Schudel, 2007; Peters, 2018). Interestingly, there is evidence for an increase in corruption in major sport event host states, beginning with the election date. The effect lasts and reaches its maximum about 2 years before the event, decreasing the Control of Corruption index by about 4% (Olmos et al., 2020). Chappelet (2022), focusing on the Olympic Games, commented that, “it is easy for the IOC to justify not taking action on the grounds that it cannot mitigate situations the UN itself cannot resolve” (p. 17). This statement highlights that the mitigation of human rights abuses is often difficult

to achieve despite potential enshrinements in policies and strategies of the key stakeholders.

Event Hosting

When a major sport event is hosted, typically for not more than 4 weeks, human rights issues can relate to various event participants and matters, such as journalists and their rights to report about the event, as well as spectators and host city residents and their rights of freedom of assembly and expression in the host city space (Horne, 2018). In the event hosting context, the good governance adhering to implementation of human rights-based policies as well as timely and appropriate responses to any issues, and the need for remedies become relevant. As Heerdt (2018) noted, there are big differences in regard to how different event awarding bodies deal with remedies. For example, while UEFA does not specify the obligation to remedy violations, FIFA’s approach is extensive in terms of included actors and attached obligations. Collaborative remedy based on shared responsibility is a concept that has been proposed to improve the situation (Heerdt, 2023).

Postevent Leverage

There is a distinction between event impact (short term in nature) and event legacy (long term in nature; Preuss, 2007) or leverage (focus on host destination’s assets to be used; Chalip, 2006). Legacy and leverage refer to the postevent period and they are often evaluated against sustainability-related needs. Sustainability, per definition (“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”; Brundlandt Commission, 1987), looks at time windows between generations. Thus, studies that consider postevent leverage should ideally be conducted over the course of generations. Although it is not entirely clear whether, when, and how changes in human rights are particularly due to the management of major sport events, forthcoming leverage assessments should include rigorous evaluations of human rights outcomes regarding, for example, human trafficking, children’s rights, or inclusion of minority groups. Koenigstorfer et al. (2019), in a review of previous empirical studies

of mega-sport event legacies, showed that particularly vulnerable stakeholder groups are often left out in assessments. Yet, there are a few examples of how human rights are included in such assessments outside of academia (e.g., Association of Summer Olympic International Federations, 2021; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2021; Talbot, 2021).

Although there are literature reviews on the legacy of major sport events (see Koenigstorfer et al., 2019, for a summary), to our knowledge, none of these reviews consider human rights. Thus, as of now, researchers and practitioners remain poorly informed about (1) what rights were studied in the literature, (2) what populations were studied, (3) what events were considered, and (4) what the synthesis of the findings are. The present article aims to partially fill this research gap and conducts a scoping review on the literature that considers when and how management of major sport events promotes or harms human rights.

Scoping Review Methodology

Implemented Steps

A scoping review is a type of review that aims to provide “an overview of a broad field” rather than providing answers to very detailed questions (Moher et al., 2015, p. 1). A scoping review is relevant and helpful in our context to synthesize heterogeneous themes in relation to the topic, identify research gaps, and inform future research agendas (Tricco et al., 2016, 2018). This method has been used in several reviews in the area of sport management (Baxter et al., 2023; Dowling et al., 2018; Shaw & Cunningham, 2021) and human rights (Montel et al., 2022).

In our research, we followed the classic steps of a scoping review (McGowan et al., 2020; Tricco et al., 2016): we defined a protocol, formulated our research question (when and how does managing major sport events promote or harm human rights?), defined eligibility criteria, developed a search strategy, searched databases, engaged in data abstraction practices of the relevant literature, appraised their quality, and reported and discussed the synthesis of the findings, with a focus on the future development of the field (i.e., giving recommendations for future

empirical studies). Also, the reporting of this scoping review was guided by the standards of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) extension for scoping reviews (McGowan et al., 2020; PRISMA Statement, 2019; Tricco et al., 2018; the PRISMA-ScR Checklist for the Scoping Review of the State of Play between Managing Major Sport Events and Human Rights is available from the authors upon request).

Literature Search

The eligibility criteria included English language peer-reviewed journal articles that focus on human rights issues in relation to major sport events in general, or among one or more of the following events: Olympic or Paralympic Games (Summer or Winter edition), FIFA World Cup, UEFA Euro, Asian Games, and Commonwealth Games. We identified two key terms and their variations, that is, *human rights* (“human right*”) AND *sport events* (“sport* event*” OR Olympics OR “Olympic Games” OR Paralympics OR “Paralympic Games” OR “Olympic Summer Games” OR “Olympic Winter Games” OR “Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games” OR “Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games” OR “FIFA World Cup” OR “UEFA Euro” OR “Asian Games” OR “Commonwealth Games”). Three multidisciplinary databases (Scopus, Web of Science, and SPORTDiscus) and one sociology database (SocINDEX) were searched for titles, abstracts, keywords, and, where existing, topics or subjects, refined by English language journal articles. The database-specific search strings are provided in Table 1. In addition, we identified additional relevant literature by scanning the reference list of included articles and searching via Google Scholar (e.g., Tricco et al., 2016).

Screening Procedure

Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flowchart for the article screening procedure (PRISMA Statement, n.d.). Based on the four-database search, we identified 315 articles plus 37 articles from reference lists and Google Scholar. After removing duplicates, 220 articles were screened for titles and abstracts (159 of them were assessed in full text). After the screening and eligibility checks

Table 1
Database-Specific Search Strategy

Database (Hits)	Search Strategy	Filters/Fields
Scopus (121)	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("human right*") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("sport* event*" OR "sporting event*" OR "FIFA World Cup" OR Olympics OR "Olympic Games" OR Paralympics OR "Paralympic Games" OR "Olympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic Winter Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games" OR "UEFA Euro" OR "Asian Games" OR "Commonwealth Games")	Fields: (TITLE-ABS-KEY) Document Type: Article Language: English
Web of Science (63, nonduplicates)	"AB" can be replaced with AK, TI, and TS. [AB=("human right*")] AND AB=("sport* event*" OR "sporting event*" OR "FIFA World Cup" OR Olympics OR "Olympic Games" OR Paralympics OR "Paralympic Games" OR "Olympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic Winter Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games" OR "UEFA Euro" OR "Asian Games" OR "Commonwealth Games")	The search was performed four separate times according to the following filters ($n = 132$ with duplicates): • AB (Abstract): $n = 45$ • AK (Keywords): $n = 11$ • TI (Title): $n = 13$ • TS (Topic): $n = 63$ The four hits were then combined and duplicates were removed, resulting in the final number of papers in this database. LA = (English) AND DT = (Article)
SocINDEX (49, nonduplicates)	"AB" can be replaced with SU, TI, and KW. [AB=("human right*")] AND AB=("sport* event*" OR "sporting event*" OR "FIFA World Cup" OR Olympics OR "Olympic Games" OR Paralympics OR "Paralympic Games" OR "Olympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic Winter Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games" OR "UEFA Euro" OR "Asian Games" OR "Commonwealth Games")	The search was performed four separate times according to the following filters ($n = 84$ with duplicates): • SU (Subject Terms): hits = 24 • TI (Title): hits = 11 • AB (Abstract): hits = 41 • KW (Author-supplied keywords): hits = 8 The four hits were then combined and duplicates were removed, resulting in the final number of papers in this database. Language: English
SPORTDiscus (82, nonduplicates)	"AB" can be replaced with TI, KW, and SU. [AB=("human right*")] AND AB=("sport* event*" OR "sporting event*" OR "FIFA World Cup" OR Olympics OR "Olympic Games" OR Paralympics OR "Paralympic Games" OR "Olympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic Winter Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Summer Games" OR "Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games" OR "UEFA Euro" OR "Asian Games" OR "Commonwealth Games")	Source types: Academic Journals The search was performed four separate times according to the following filters ($n = 131$ with duplicates): • TI (Title): hits = 15 • AB (Abstract): hits = 61 • KW (Keywords): hits = 9 • SU (Subjects): hits = 46 The four hits were then combined and duplicates were removed, resulting in the final number of papers in this database. Language: English Source types: Academic Journals

Note. Last search date: November 11, 2022.

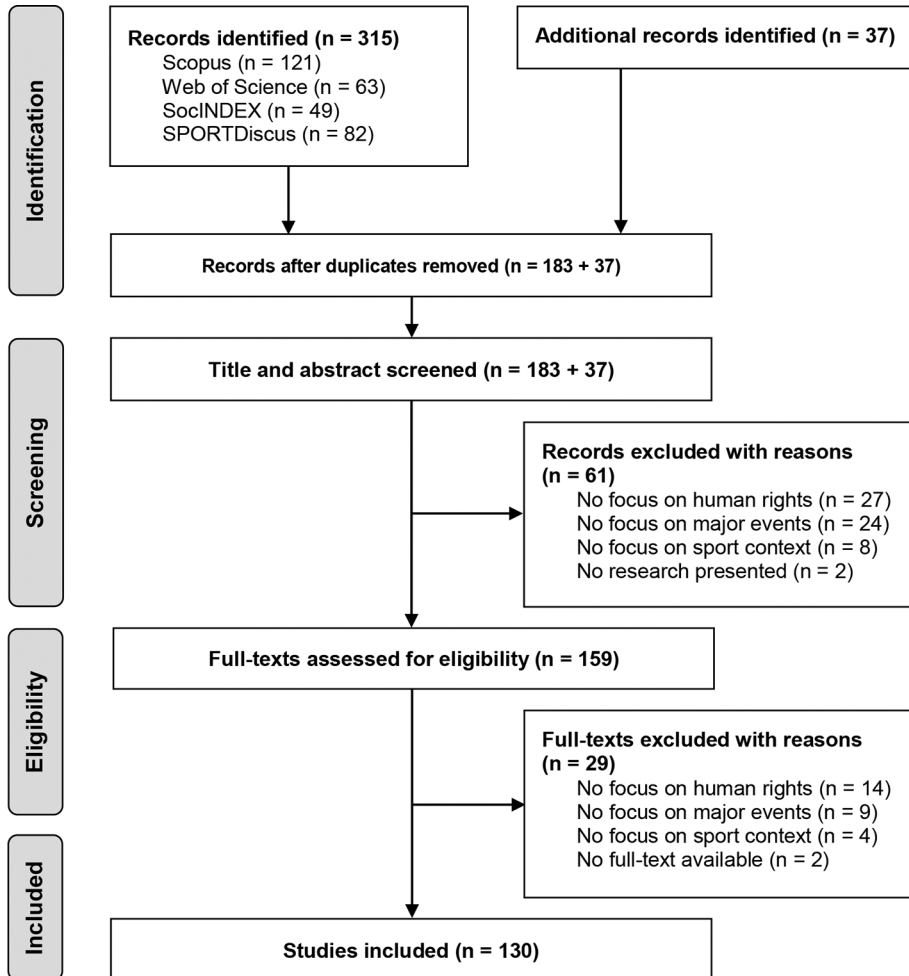


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart for the scoping review on major sport events and human rights.

of the 220 articles, we excluded 41 articles that did not focus on human rights, 33 articles that did not consider major events, 12 articles that did not consider sport contexts in general, and two articles that had no research purpose (i.e., one editorial and one study case for teaching purposes). This resulted in 132 full texts to be assessed, of which two were not accessible in full text. Thus, in total, 130 articles were included in this scoping review. In the findings, we will also reference news articles and publications issued by event-related stakeholders (mostly considered as gray literature) to describe major sport event management practices.

Literature Charting

We extracted information from each of the 130 articles into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, which was prereviewed and agreed within the review team. The charted data included: article basic information (i.e., authorship and country of affiliation, title, journal name, publication year, volume, issue, and page), main purpose, key results/findings, population whose human rights were considered, research method, study context, types of human rights, research themes, sport event stages, and risk of bias. The data extraction file is available from the authors upon request.

Risk of Bias Assessment

Due to the large number of included articles, we used a simple measure of risk of bias assessment (1 = *low*, 2 = *medium*, 3 = *high*; Koenigstorfer et al., 2019). The mean rating was 2.21 ($SD = 0.70$), indicating medium-to-high risks of biases, due to the lack of empirical evidence for claims, the lack of reporting of sampling strategies, and the absence of conflict-of-interest statements, among others. Any discrepancies regarding risk of bias ratings were solved by finding a consensus within the review team.

Data Analysis and Conceptual Framework

An inductive content analysis approach as suggested by Marshall and Rossman (1999) was used to analyze the data. First, two authors read all the included articles to identify patterns that emerged from the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Through open coding, they independently developed codes to describe the key findings and the various concepts related to human rights in the context of managing major sport events, as addressed in the articles.

Fifty-six initial codes were identified. Next, initial lists of codes were compared, discussed, consolidated, and finally refined until no new codes emerged and no existing codes were eliminated. All members of the research team engaged in this process and the final coding was agreed upon to describe best whether, when, and how management of major sport events promotes or harms human rights (based on the research findings described in the articles). We defined the refined codes (46 codes in total). We then revisited the articles to further identify broader themes of findings and related the themes to each other. Six broader themes were identified. During this process, we clustered codes into the respective themes, which were named and defined. Table 2 presents an overview of the themes and codes.

Findings

What and Whose Rights Were Considered?

Of the articles, 41.1% related to human rights broadly, while 58.9% related to specific rights,

Table 2
Themes and Codes Identified in the Analysis

Themes	Definition and Codes Belonging to the Themes
Politics and political reform to promote human rights	Governmental activities with the aim to promote human rights (codes: political reform, peace, safety from environmental hazards, international relations, soft power, sportswashing)
Legal frameworks to promote human rights	Lawmaking with the aim to promote human rights (code = theme; no further codes were identified)
Organizational actions to promote human rights	Managerial activities with the aim to promote human rights (codes: policies and United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, change management, security planning)
Activism and publicity for human rights	Public engagement with the aim to promote human rights (codes: activism, collaboration, name and shame, in-public debates, media coverage)
Vulnerable population groups	Guarding susceptible societal groups with the aim to promote and protect their human rights (codes: host country or city residents, house owners or tenants, workers or migrant workers, sex workers, women, children and adolescents, disabled persons, Black people, indigenous people, LGBTQ people, transgender, athletes, no particular focus on certain groups)
Human rights to be protected or promoted	Human rights considered in the studies (codes: human trafficking, security, equality, recognition, sport as a human right, peace, safety, citizenship rights, freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of residence, right to own property, right to just and favorable conditions of work, education [primary and secondary], no particular focus on certain rights)

Note. There were three codes that were not assigned to, or considered as, themes: conceptual model building (three articles identified), methodological advancement (one article), and the special role of Olympic Games for the promotion of human rights (four articles).

Table 3
Populations Considered in the Articles

Populations	Frequency	References
No particular focus on certain groups	41.5%	Adams and Piekartz (2015); Alfrey et al. (2022); Amis (2017); Amusa et al. (2013); Baklouti and Namsi (2013); Black and Bezanson (2004); Bonde (2009); Bowersox (2016b); Boykoff (2011); Brannagan and Giuliano (2014); Bredikhina (2019); Brownell (2012, 2013); Burchell (2015); Burchell et al. (2015); Byrne and Ludvigsen (2022); Casaglia (2018); Chappelle (2022); Coaffee (2015); Corrarino (2014); Corthorn (2013); Cox (1998); Daanen (2022); Edwards (1984); Fruh et al. (2023); Gauthier (2014); Grell (2018); Grix and Lee (2013); Heerdt (2018); Hellmann et al. (2018); Hess and Bishara (2019); Horne (2018); Horton (2008, 2010); Hwang (2010); Ishida and Wada (2017); Jayawardhana (2016); Jiménez Botta (2017); Keys (2018); Kidd (2010); Kirschner (2019); Lai (2010); Liu (2007); MacAloon (2016); Martin and Hernández (2021); Mastrocola (1995); McGil-livray et al. (2019, 2022); Müller (2015, 2017); Næss (2019, 2020); Naidoo and Grevenberg (2022); O'Rourke and Theodoraki (2022); Park et al. (2021); Patsantaras (2013); Roche (2002); Rook et al. (2023); Schwab (2018); Terret (2008); Tulli (2016)
Workers or migrant workers	8.2%	Al Thani (2022); Dorsey (2014); Duval (2021); Engle (2014); Erfani (2015); Ganji (2016); Millward (2016); Nogueira (2019); Onarheim et al. (2021); Regueiro (2020); Shantz (2011); Timms (2012) [Shanti (2011) and Timms (2012) considered workers (not necessarily migrants)]
Host country or host city residents	7.5%	Burnie (2020); Graeff et al. (2021); Kilgour and Porteous (1999); Koenigstorfer (2023); Ross and McDougall (2022); Schofield et al. (2018); Smith and McGillivray (2022); Shim and Li (2013, considered Chinese migrant residents); Steinbrink (2013); Talbot and Carter (2018); Vannuchi and Crieckingen (2015)
Sex workers	7.5%	Bonthuys (2012); Bowersox (2016a); Dagistanli and Milivojevic (2013); De Lisio et al. (2018); Ewen (2015); Hayes (2010); Matheson and Finkel (2013); Mitchell (2016); Richter and Massawe (2010); Richter et al. (2014); Tavella (2007)
Athletes	6.8%	Devine (2022); Elsberg (2020); Faut (2014); Howe and Silva (2018); Koenigstorfer et al. (this issue); Lemmon (2019); Mendonca et al. (2017); Mitten and Frkovic (2022); Schneider (2020); Stevenson (2018)
House owners or tenants	5.4%	Dos Santos Jr and Dos Santos (2013); Freeman (2014); Gaffney (2016); Kilgour and Porteous (1999); Nogueira (2019); Suzuki et al. (2018); Talbot and Carter (2018); Watt (2013)
Children and adolescents	4.8%	Aina et al. (2021); Bonthuys (2012); Brackenridge et al. (2015); Dowse et al. (2018); Kennelly and Watt (2012); Mendonca et al. (2017); Van Blerk et al. (2019)
Disabled persons	4.8%	Braye (2010); Braye et al. (2013); Carty et al. (2021); Ferez et al. (2020); Goh (2020); Howe and Silva (2018); Kim (2011)
Women	4.1%	Devine (2022); Lemmon (2019); Liberti and McDonald (2019); Mendonca et al. (2017); Schneider (2020); Stevenson (2018)
Black people	2.7%	Blackman (2019); Edwards (1979); Liberti and McDonald (2019); Waller et al. (2012)
LGBTQ	2.7%	Davidson and McDonald (2018); Mitchell (2016); Travers and Shearman (2017); Van Rheenen (2014)
Indigenous people	2.0%	Kilgour and Porteous (1999); O'Bonsawin (2015); Rowe (2012)
Transgender	2.0%	Devine (2022); Mitten and Frkovic (2022); Schneider (2020)

particularly equality (11.9%), human trafficking-related rights and worker rights (each 7.9%), right to own property (6.0%), freedom of residence (5.3%), sport as a human right (4.6%), security and citizenship rights (each 3.3%), peace (2.6%), freedom of expression (2.0%), safety (1.3%), recognition and the right to education at the primary and secondary level (each 0.7%).

Table 3 provides an overview of the affected populations. Of the articles, 41.5% did not consider specific populations, while 58.5% referred to specific groups, particularly migrant workers, host city or country residents in general, sex workers, athletes, house owners or tenants, children and adolescents, disabled persons, women, Black people, LGTBQ, indigenous people, and transgender (see Table 3).

Which Research Themes Were Considered and What Were the Methodological Approaches Taken?

Within the reviewed article's findings, six research themes were identified: (1) politics and political reform to promote human rights; (2) legal frameworks to promote human rights; (3) organizational actions to promote human rights; (4) activism and publicity for human rights; (5) vulnerable population groups; and (6) human rights to be protected or promoted. Interestingly, most of the authors studied the topics using a purely descriptive approach, without describing any specific methodologies (64.6%). Qualitative interviews (10.8%), ethnography (7.7%), document analyses (6.9%), and quantitative surveys (3.8%) follow (methodological procedures < 33% can be seen in the data extraction file made available from the authors upon request). Single events under consideration were the following: specific editions of Olympic Games (37.7%), FIFA World Cup (17.7%), Paralympic Games and UEFA Euro (0.8% each). Of the articles, 43.0% considered more than one event. In what follows, we describe the main themes that emerged from the analysis, and how they relate to each other (Fig. 2).

Politics and political reform, legal frameworks, and organizational actions are important *macro- and mesolevel factors* that are influential for the promotion of (vs. harming) human rights. They are indicated in gray and provide the environment in which human rights issues might arise. Politics

and political reform are made visible via the following practices: promoting peace, safety from environmental hazards, international relations, soft power, and sportswashing. Legal frameworks refer to the national and international laws relevant to events and human rights. Organizational actions are the strategy-level decisions with relevance to the promotion of human rights that are made by actors: policies and their (lack of) alignment with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) as well as change management and security planning. Relevant actors are event governing bodies such as the IOC, FIFA or UEFA, local event organizing committees, sponsors, and broadcasters, among others.

The *affected groups* within societies range from host country or city residents to athletes (see above). The *human rights* of these vulnerable groups are often infringed by management of major sport events. The groups, or their advocates, can engage in *activism* to name and shame human rights abuses, collaborate with relevant stakeholders to improve the situation and eventually seek remedy, initiate and influence in-public debates, and increase awareness via media coverage. The activism is directed and communicated toward relevant event stakeholders (mostly the event governing bodies and the event organizing committees) or the general public. These practices mostly aim to promote human rights in particular event contexts. Events and vulnerable individuals are the microlevel actors within the conceptual frame developed in the present study.

In what follows, we describe the facilitators to, and barriers of, the promotion of human rights in the context of managing major sport event, referring to these themes and their interrelations. We also describe findings that indicate that managing major sport events may lead to serious human rights abuses.

Politics, Political Reform, and Human Rights

Rook et al. (2023) stated that:

Controversial decisions to award MSEs (mega-sport events; *the authors*) to states perceived to be high-risk in human rights terms (for example Russia, China, and Qatar) has created a crucible where the frameworks that govern sport and that govern the human rights responsibilities of non-state actors have now collided. (p. 89)

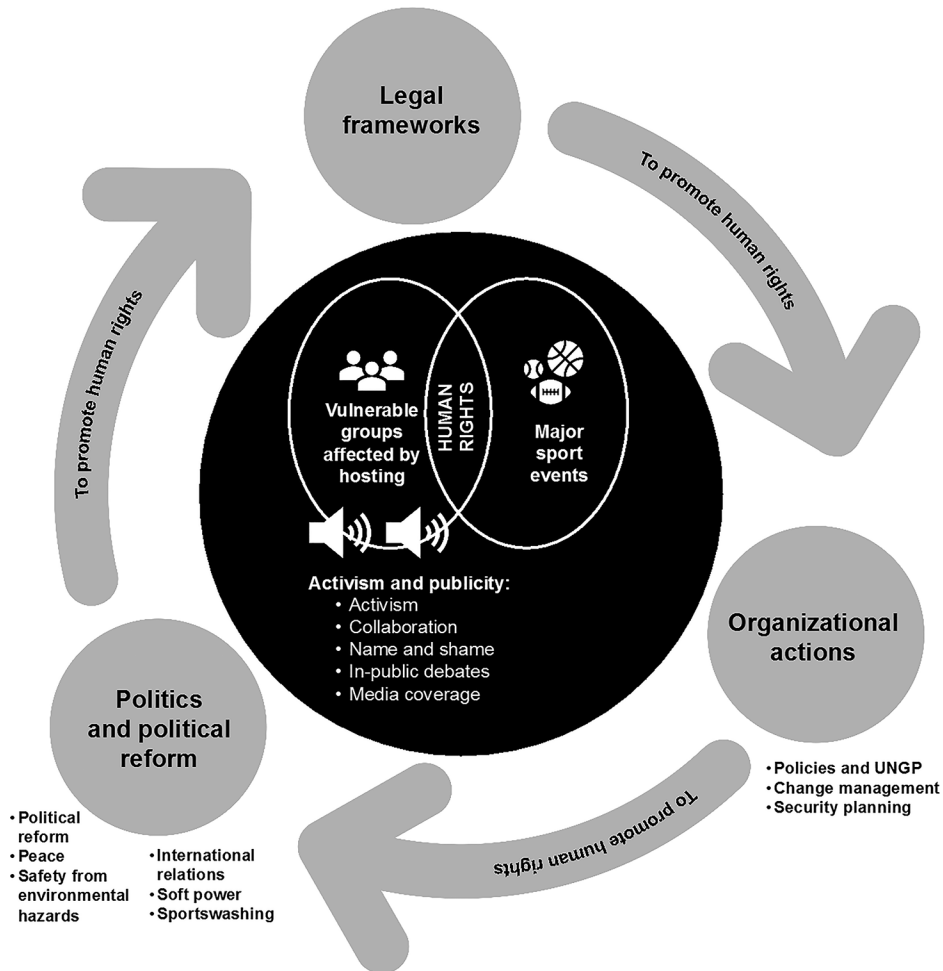


Figure 2. Conceptual frame for promoting human rights in the context of managing sport events as identified in the scoping review. Macro- and mesolevel factors are shown in gray circles; their interrelation can be seen in the gray arrows. Microlevel factors are presented in the black circle: management of major sport events affect human rights of vulnerable population groups; the groups themselves or their representatives can engage in different forms of activism and publicity.

Indeed, politics and political reform concerning rights-based issues primarily center around the role of major sport events as a critical discursive platform between states, citizens, activists, event owners, and organizers (MacAloon, 2016). Major sport events shed light on event-induced and every day social injustices (Smith & McGillivray, 2022), aided by the proliferation of traditional and social mediums to expose, amplify, and help tackle what social problems are to be addressed, and how (Horton, 2008).

Although not exhaustive, political means used by states, activists, and citizens to protest and resist social injustices are creative and varied. Some of these include (1) state-led and citizen-led boycotts (Tulli, 2016; Van Rheenen, 2014); (2) leveraging the event as a platform to challenge other non-event-related human rights issues (MacAloon, 2016), such as ethnic conflicts, monoculturalism, and far right-wing populism; (3) mobilizing celebrities to speak out against and amplify social injustices (Horton, 2008); and (4) hard power plays

(e.g., sanctions) and soft power tactics (e.g., diplomacy) (Lai, 2010).

Contemporary debates around protecting human rights have become entwined with the concept of social legacy (Rowe, 2012). To achieve social legacy-related aims, management of major events has been reported to help connect disparate stakeholders. Engagement in the 1980s, continuing thereafter, played a critical role in pushing for reform—not just in situ but transnationally also (see <https://olympicswatch.org>; Black & Bezanson, 2004). Organizations such as Amnesty International critically evaluate rights-based legacy promises by hosts, assessing what is rhetoric and what is reality (Horton, 2008).

Although cause–effect relationships are difficult to study in these contexts, some authors claim that the power of managing major sport events is that the events can open up a nation’s propensity and readiness for social change to compete with other developed nations (Lai, 2010). For example, South Korea’s shift toward a more democratic electoral system, opening questions of civil liberties, as well as freedom rights falls in the time around the Olympic Games (Black & Bezanson, 2004).

States often utilize major sport events for political reform. Still, these can be temporary as governments change and political winds shift. Therefore, rights protections can be rescinded—they are not always guaranteed in the long term (Black & Bezanson, 2004). Interestingly, change seldomly occurs because of anything specific that the event itself or the event management do, but indirectly, based on public and political pressures on relevant stakeholders after winning the rights to host and in anticipation of staging (Black & Bezanson, 2004).

Lai (2010) took a philosophical perspective, describing the way events create a thesis and an opposing antithesis, which, after negotiation, produces a synthesis that generates new ways of thinking and doing—both in terms of the way the state and the state’s institution work. The key for social change is in the symbiotic relationship between event owner agendas (e.g., the Olympic agenda) and state agendas, where owners iteratively learn from, and respond to, what occurs at each host, and each host learns from the constantly evolving expectations, norms, and mandates set by the event owner. Simply put, event agendas are northern stars

that serve as hard power tools to local changes to respond to rights-based issues as well as soft power tactics to change a host’s and state’s perspective on a particular social injustice (Black & Bezanson, 2004).

If states fail to respond and reform, they are named and shamed, exposed for a specific rights issue, producing negative perceptions (Black & Bezanson, 2004; see activism and publicity in Fig. 2). This showcasing effect, either positively or negatively, is one of the primary political and social pressures placed on hosts to conform to international rights standards (Horton, 2008; MacAloon, 2016). However, events also represent carnival masks—a diversionary tactic to avert the world to rights violations inside hosts. Bonde (2009) argued that “we leave our critical senses parked outside the stadium, when the greatest show on earth begins” (p. 1569). Indeed, the idea that sport has nothing to do with politics is a defensive and diversionary tactic as sport and politics has been, and will always be, intertwined, increasingly with the intense mediation of major sport events (Bonde, 2009).

Major sport events hold a mirror to society at large and of a particular political, social, and cultural context, to reflect on policies and practices pertaining to rights (Bonde, 2009). Some states have a history of tackling structural problems associated with rights violations, others less so. Also, states often prioritize rights in different ways. For example, states with severe economic disparities may prioritize tackling economic injustices before fully tackling social injustices (Lai, 2010).

Legal Frameworks and Human Rights

When major sport events are hosted, legislation in the host state is often changed to meet the requirements of the event governing bodies. Areas of concern are laws on Olympic Delivery Authority, antiambushing, copyright protection, ticket resales, alcohol consumption, street trading, housing rights, worker rights, LGBTQ rights, Black people’s rights, and freedom of speech (Engle, 2014; Erfani, 2015; Faut, 2014; Gauthier, 2014; Kilgour & Porteous, 1999; Regueiro, 2020; Van Rheenen, 2014; Waller et al., 2012).

Gauthier (2014) argued that the event-specific legislation is insufficient to address the typical

human rights problems posed by emerging states as hosts of sporting mega-events. This might be due to the lack of a strong tradition of the rule of law generally, or in particular legal areas. One solution to overcome this hurdle is shared responsibility, mostly between the event governing body, the host state, and the home state of the event governing body (often Switzerland; Regueiro, 2020). Yet, because nonstate actors are involved, such as event governing bodies, the enforcement of shared responsibility is mostly ineffective (Regueiro, 2020). This has also been shown for the case of the FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar and the largely ineffective protection of migrant workers' rights (Engle, 2014; Erfani, 2015).

Corrarino (2014) used the 2016 Olympic Games as a case and argued that major sport events involve the reliance on rhetorical strategies and transnational alliances to create an environment of policies and governance, in which legal exceptionalism is acceptable and encouraged. According to the author, the related legal changes can undermine accountability and contribute to the exclusion of citizen voices. This is particularly due to fast-track decision making, systematic exclusion of citizens, and lack of participation. In such a legal environment, rights can be violated.

Organizational Actors, Change, and Human Rights

Arrangements made between the event owner and the host city can override local legislation and contribute to the exacerbation of human rights infringements related to labor, housing, freedom of assembly, and expression (McGillivray et al., 2019). Influential organizational actors like the IOC and FIFA are asked to do more to ensure that management of major sport events promotes human rights, rather than negatively affects them (Hess & Bishara, 2019; O'Rourke & Theodoraki, 2022). Focusing on the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, Aina et al. (2021) showed that although the Japanese authorities signed up to international child rights conventions and embedded some child participation strategies in Games-related activity, there was little evidence that they had developed or implemented robust policies, principles, or practices to respect, protect, and promote child rights in Games planning.

Chappelet (2022) commented on the IOC's requirement for host cities to adhere to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The IOC has also recently published a new Strategic Framework on Human Rights, which seeks to strengthen its human rights provisions. Grell (2018) showed how the IOC finally agreed to introduce explicit human rights obligations to the Paris 2024 HCC. FIFA also required potential candidate cities for the 2026 edition to provide a detailed human rights risk assessment as part of the bidding process. As Alfrey et al. (2022) showed, FIFA introduced bidding requirements that any state or region wishing to bid to host a World Cup has to conduct a human rights risk assessment and outline how they intend to mitigate each of the risks identified. The winning bid for the 2026 World Cup included a proposal that the cities within each state would follow their own competitive process to host matches, which included the requisite human rights assessments. These requirements led to candidate cities initiating stakeholder engagement, with the effect that "the cities that appear to have comprehensively engaged with a wider set of stakeholders have examined a broader range of issues, identified more 2026 World Cup-specific risks, proposed more comprehensive measures in mitigation and suggested more legacy opportunities" (Alfrey et al., 2022, p. 313). Heerdt (2018) welcomed a clearer focus on human rights obligations from awarding bodies in recent years and Naidoo and Grevemberg (2022) showed how the CGF has successfully introduced governance and legal changes that have empowered athletes to be part of the CGF leadership and act as agents of change for human rights within that organization.

However, questions remain for awarding bodies as to their role, along with other actors as change agents for human rights. Næss (2019) expressed concern at the absence of direct human rights terminology and ways to enforce recommendations in United Nations, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and European Commission strategies. Additionally, Chappelet (2022) argued that the IOC still needs to clarify "which rights, for who, how should they be addressed and how far do its humanitarian responsibilities extend" (p. 17). Grell (2018) concurred, suggesting that the revised Paris 2024 HCC failed

to specify which human rights should be respected and protected, appearing to uphold only those human rights that are applicable in the host state. Heerd (2018) expressed concern at the absence of deliverable remedy measures for those affected by human rights infringements in the initiatives introduced by the IOC and FIFA. Similarly, Alfrey et al. (2022) recommended that FIFA needs to define operational and functional roles to enable clarity to rights holders and all stakeholders as to who has responsibility and accountability for managing which potential risks, and how these can be integrated into partnerships and value chains associated with the 2026 World Cup. They also called for benchmarks specific to the event to track progress, capture outcomes, and identify contributions to a human rights legacy. Byrne and Ludvigsen (2022) proposed that due diligence and human rights impact assessments should become an organizational mainstay of FIFA's and IOC's event-related operations, positively altering the culture of decision making in both organizations. They conclude that human rights mainstreaming should become an operational priority for event awarding bodies.

Answers to the human rights problem can only be provided when collaborations between host cities and host states take place to change systems for the society at large and sustainable development (Chappelet, 2022). Amis (2017) argued that knowledge sharing on human rights matters within and across competitions has, until recently, been minimal. However, they suggested that there is evidence of change with sporting, business, legal, and other policy actors working together more effectively with awarding bodies to foreground human rights concerns and build coalitions to address them systematically.

When Activism Is (In)Effective

Protests and dissent connected to major sport events have been present, and increasing, in the modern era of sports (Boykoff, 2011). Sport events have been seen as vessels to lift human rights issues, because they receive massive media coverage not only when the event is held, but also in the buildup to the event (Burchell, 2015). Activist groups have historically raised human rights issues connected to, for example, indigenous rights, civil liberties,

discrimination, and LGBTQ rights (Boykoff, 2011; Burchell, 2015; Talbot & Carter, 2018).

Schwab (2018) focused on athlete activism and identified three types: individual activism, collective activism, and institutional activism. A reoccurring theme of individual activism in the reviewed literature is when athletes use the podium or arena to protest. A famous example is the protest by Tommy Smith and John Carlos at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City to raise issues of discrimination and racial injustice (Blackman, 2019; Edwards, 1979; Elsborg, 2020; Liberti & McDonald, 2019). Such activism can lead to a political awakening (O'Bonsawin, 2022) and more representation in sport institutions for minorities (Edwards, 1979). However, it has also inclined sport governing bodies to prevent such expressions, like in the rule 50 of the Olympic Charter (Elsborg, 2020). An example of collective athlete activism is female professional football players demanding equal pay at FIFA World Cups, pressuring FIFA to include gender equality in the statutes (Schwab, 2018). Finally, institutional athlete activism "aims to drive the reformation of global sports law by embedding internationally recognized human rights in the governance and legal framework of global sports" (Schwab, 2018, p. 172). A successful example is the work by Sport and Rights Alliance to influence the likes of IOC and FIFA to embed human rights clauses in bidding criteria and policies (Schwab, 2018).

Another form of activism is when grassroot or social movements use the platform of major sport events. Talbot and Carter (2018) pointed at the importance for grassroot protests to catch the attention of international human rights nongovernmental organizations (such as Amnesty or Human Rights Watch) to lift a cause. Boykoff (2011), studying the anti-Olympic activists in Vancouver, discussed framing. Instead of fronting issues of neoliberal capitalism or global warming, the activists gathered around the "right to the city" and addressed indigenous rights, economic concerns, and civil liberties, which was more tangible both for the activists and the public. The result, according to Boykoff (2011), was a more participatory and equitable way for urban development processes in Vancouver. In the context of the 2016 Olympic Games, the issue of police brutality received great media attention and

was perceived to a more explicit violation of human rights than house evictions (Talbot & Carter, 2018). Casaglia (2018) and Kim (2011) studied two different activist groups (disabled and social centers) in their efforts to promote human rights connected to the Olympics. Both found that the groups might not have been successful in the short term, but the collective effort and organization of protests led to improved networks and knowledge and spurred activism in the long run.

How Human Rights of Vulnerable Groups Are Best Protected and Promoted

Human rights extend to groups that experience marginalization and/or do not have the power to advocate for themselves (e.g., children, disabled). The issues are particularly pertinent to those whose safety is at risk due to culturally unaccepted lifestyles (e.g., LGBTQ, sex workers). The spaces of liminality created via management of major sport events leaves open the opportunity for exploitation of the disadvantaged and voiceless. Similar to other social and cultural institutions, management of major sport events has the propensity to disproportionately impact some of society's most vulnerable populations, including children.

Host City Residents, House Owners or Tenants, and (Migrant) Workers. The host city context is important to consider when assessing management of major sport events and human rights. Although there are human rights issues relating to visiting athletes, out-of-country sponsorship practices, and spillover effects to other places (Xinjiang and Tibet for Beijing 2008 and 2022, for example), human rights infringements have a great impact in the host city as well. It is in the host city that major investments in transport and venue infrastructures, in particular, are made. There is evidence that infrastructural developments have exacerbated labor infringements and led to housing evictions as urban regeneration has taken precedence over the protection of citizen rights (Millward, 2017). Talbot and Carter (2018) and Suzuki et al. (2018) documented housing rights infringements in Rio de Janeiro and Tokyo respectively, while the labor-rights situation of migrant workers in Qatar has received

international attention and condemnation (Al Thani, 2021). To improve the situation for migrant workers, particularly in relation to their health and social needs, Onarheim et al. (2021) suggested collaborative efforts by governments, international sports bodies, and industry.

In the host city, as a result of hosting major sport events, the rights to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression (people's right to the city) come into play (Heerd, 2018; Horne, 2018). Boykoff (2011), focusing on the Olympics Games, demonstrated how people's right to protest and express opposition to the effects of the event on host cities have been curtailed in both the Vancouver 2010 Winter and the London 2012 Summer Olympics. Coaffee (2015) associated the curtailment of citizens' freedom to the organizers' objective to reduce or eliminate threats in the Olympic city. This, he argued, led to the increasing use of surveillance technologies and fixed cordons to create secure space.

These restrictions to freedom of assembly and expression are inseparable from the business and governance models operated by major sport event owners. Müller (2015, 2017) suggested that major sport events are often seen as a fix for a particular problem. For example, in the context of the Olympic Games, the IOC facilitates revenue generation through agreeing a HCC with the successful host city, confirming the revenues and share of costs borne by each partner. The HCC also sets out the obligations upon hosts to create and protect the conditions for commercial exploitation of the world-recognized Olympic brand. Gaffney (2016) showed how transferring power and influence to elite interests makes human rights abuses more likely as the event provides a license for commercial interests of powerful actors to assert their own power within national politics and "a pretext for enacting policies advantageous to local elites" (Corrarino, 2014, p. 189; see also Comitê Popular da Copa e Olimpíadas do Rio de Janeiro, 2015, for the consideration of a particular context [Rio de Janeiro]). Practically, after winning the rights to host the Olympic Games, successful candidate cities are contractually obliged to pass exceptional legislation that overrides existing local or national legislative arrangements (Müller, 2015).

The Olympic host city is affected pre-, during, and even postevent by the effects of Rule 50 of

the Olympic Charter (IOC, 2022), which serves to protect the commercial interests of the IOC and The Olympic Partners (TOP) by disallowing any counteradvertising or publicity within or around sport venues, but also within other urban areas deemed part of the event (Elsborg, 2020). Urban spaces previously accessible for everyday access and use are (temporarily) reimagined as sites of commercial and touristic consumption (Duignan et al., 2022; Smith & McGillivray, 2022). In human rights terms, the focus of attention in the event city focuses on facilitating tourism and presenting the best impression while making some areas and populations across the host city invisible (Steinbrink, 2013). In the context of Rio de Janeiro 2016, Steinbrink (2013) highlighted tactics used by organizers to ensure favelas were effectively wiped from maps and hidden behind walls to avoid visitor attention being directed towards them. Finally, the effects of major sport event hosting continue to impact urban dwellers in the longer term. Smith and McGillivray (2022) showed how major and mega-sport events can act as Trojan horses that allow new systems and practices for the management of public space to be implemented under the convenient cover of the event, and are retained postevent.

Athletes. Part of key considerations about the frameworks for human rights is the critical perspective of where athletes' rights are enshrined in the event agenda. Many of the articles that focus on athletes center upon particular issues such as trans or women's rights in sport. Thus, we offer insight more generally about the athletes' perspectives here and specific insights about articles that address the more nuanced ideas of rights in the next section. Of note is the tension between human rights and legal conventions because these might differ. Faut (2014) demonstrated this in an analysis of the IOC's stance on political action in the Olympic Games by athletes. Another key issue in existing research is the focus of understanding community perception in the postevent stage. Devine (2022) argued that event legacy should be about sport for all perspectives that are enshrined in a rights-based framework, and the overemphasis on elitism misses out on truly supporting a community rights approach. Similarly, the arguments that Howe and Silva

(2018) made about the Paralympic Games being about more than athletes' rights, but also about disability rights, echoes the commentary on the need to consider the legacy of hosting. In a similar vein, when human rights issues come to the fore around events, consumers become weary of supporting the event. As Koenigstorfer (2023) highlighted, human rights issues in host states have negative effects on consumer evaluations of the Olympic Games. Even though consumers might still follow the event, value perceptions and ethical concerns are highly salient and can impact the outcomes of how the Olympic Movement is managed.

Female and Transgender Athletes. Not only do female athletes engage in the fight for human rights such as equal pay, but simply participating in sports can empower women and increase access to rights, such as education and bodily autonomy. Sport participation is thus an integral part of women's fight for equal human rights. The articles in this review address the broad reaching issues of women's fights for equality in sport through major sport events, and the more recent debates about trans rights in competition. For example, Lemmon (2019) outlined the historical trajectory of women's involvement in sport from a human rights perspective. They argued that "female athletes have fought for human rights such as equal pay, health benefits, and inclusive legislation" (p. 255). However, most female athletes would likely not see themselves as fighting for human rights, as many might not see the clear connection to the more general idea of equality and respect. But it is important to recognize that equality and respect are hallmarks of human rights and thus the fight for women in sport events should showcase the characteristics promised to every person in international human rights. Mitten and Frkovic (2022) furthered this discussion by addressing the evolution of the rules in the IOC aimed at supporting gender equity. They argued that, to offer a true human rights perspective in today's landscape, the IOC's (2021) Framework on Fairness, Inclusion and Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity and Sex Variations needs to be combined with the Chand/Semenya Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) Legal Framework (CAS, 2014, 2018) to appropriately balance an

athlete's human rights with preserving the competitive equity of sport. This offers a nuanced approach to consider gender equity as a human right in the context of the Olympic Games.

Specific cases reveal different facets of women in sport and human rights. Mendoca et al. (2017) demonstrated how the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro offered the space to focus on the low rates of female participation in sport and highlighted the important role that professions such as physical therapy can have in developing women's sporting opportunities as a key human rights issue. Stevenson's (2018) work used the case of the first Saudi female athlete Attar to exemplify how human rights lenses can mask the deeper sociopolitical discourses of human rights. The study reveals that sometimes only certain women are empowered and that some actions do not necessarily serve the broader agenda of a rights-based understanding of women in sport. Liberti and MacDonald's (2019) historical account of Black US sprinter Wyomia Tyus's efforts to make visible the intersectional spaces they occupied as a Black woman are perhaps most clearly articulated via their actions and comments in regard to the Olympic Project for Human Rights (OPHR) in 1968. Their story highlights the failure of hegemonic efforts to completely silence their resistive efforts that aimed to challenge racial and gendered lines of power, thus ultimately offering a unique form of sport resistance. Schneider (2020) used the Caster Semenya case to discuss the frameworks for human rights being applied to athletes in the Olympic Games, arguing that in the search for equity and fairness, human rights violations may also be occurring in more subtle and nuanced ways. Their work highlights one of the more critical and missing pieces in this part of the review, that is, the perspectives of women in this space to make ethical and moral decisions about eligibility as a human right. The voices of female athletes and athletes more generally are largely absent from the scholarly works around human rights in sport. This is also true for the area of transgender rights (Devine, 2022; Schneider, 2020). They have become a topic of concern over the last decade that, at its core, faces the challenge to balance human rights with competitive equity in sport and at sport events (Mitten & Frkovic, 2022).

Sex Workers. Managers and related stakeholders of major sport events may create an environment ripe for human traffickers to exploit. This may take the form of trafficking to fulfil labor shortages in building event facilities (see above) or sex trafficking to fulfil the need for such services driven by the large influx of people attending the event (Matheson & Finkel, 2013). Both scenarios usually involve a situation whereby a third party benefits from the work of people who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to defend or invoke their own basic human rights (Richter et al., 2014).

The ambiguous nature of prostitution legislation and enforcement around the world, and the fact that former major event host cities have ranged from those that completely oppose sex work to those partially tolerant and those open or supportive of it (De Lisio et al., 2018) make these events a potentially lucrative proposition for organized crime and sex traffickers. Conversely, Bonthuys (2012) and Dagistanli and Milivojevic (2013) argued that the moral panic around sex trafficking and major sport events undermines important debates related to the protection and legal status of sex workers, resulting in the increased harassment of sex workers. Labor exploitation may involve abuses such as wage theft, unsafe working practices and living conditions, and a lack of access to state-guaranteed social services, and most often affects migrant and foreign workers (U.S. Catholic sisters against Human trafficking, n.d.).

Children and Adolescents. Dowse et al. (2018) pointed out that there was little information, data, or research showing the extent to which major sport events impact children and adolescents, despite advocacy organizations such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and Terre des Hommes calling for children to be meaningfully included as stakeholders within the event process. In regard to management of major sport events potentially causing harm or infringing upon children's rights, Brackeridge et al. (2015) identified four main categories of risk. These include issues related to child labor, children being displaced because of forced evictions due to infrastructure development, child sexual exploitation, and human trafficking.

The issue of exclusion and child rights infringement is not specific to major sport events, as

children have historically been partly excluded from policy, political, and societal processes. However, the increased focus of major sport events and their impact on human rights combined with the involvement of influential advocacy organizations has resulted in key stakeholders such as corporate sponsors and the general public scrutinizing these events more closely. Examples of major sport events causing mass displacement and loss of housing (e.g., Brazil 2014 FIFA World Cup and Rio de Janeiro 2016 Olympics, South Africa 2010 World Cup), as well as the death and lack of payment to migrant workers (e.g., Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup), has often disproportionately impacted children. Conversely, there is the recognition that managing major sport events can provide benefits to children, such as access to social facilities, enhanced quality of life, and more inclusive protections (Dowse et al., 2018). Despite this, research examining issues of children's rights from the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games found that there were no embedded child rights commitments in the bidding or planning documents, resulting in few measures to implement or report child rights abuses (Aina et al., 2021).

Disabled Persons. The rights of disabled persons are enshrined in the United Nations (2006) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and are further supported by policy enactments in countries around the world. But as McGillivray et al. (2019) pointed out, there is little accountability for event stakeholders to adhere to internationally recognized standards such as the UNCRPD. Major sport events typically function on a model of ableism that privileges the perspectives, structures, and opportunities of those who live without impairment or disability. Little attention is given to alternative understandings, such as “cripping” major events, which focuses on seeing the event develop from the perspective of disabled persons, rather than the event simply accommodating them. This shift in perspective would centralize a human rights approach where strategies such as universal design of facilities, equipment, and the event program do not privilege a non-disabled perspective. Managers of major sport events are attempting to move in this direction as we have seen from the Olympic and Paralympic bid for Paris 2024, which focused on inclusion and accessibility

for all (Comité d'organisation des Jeux Olympiques et Paralympiques de Paris 2024, 2019). However, the challenge remains to enact the promises set forth in the bid, particularly in places where impairment and disability rights are poorly understood. For example, the French laws on subway renovation made it almost impossible to make single (but not all) stations in Paris accessible to wheelchair users. Overall, very few stations are fully accessible by wheelchair. Indeed, several authors (Braye, 2016; Braye et al., 2013; Goh, 2020) highlighted how disabled people themselves are often highly critical of the claims made for enhanced inclusion as a result of hosting the Paralympic Games. Other authors highlighted how the kind of imagery (Kim, 2011) or the language and terminology of those involved in promoting a possible legacy such as the media (Carty et al., 2021) can adversely affect the intended use of the Paralympic Games as an educational tool aimed at increasing understanding of disability issues among the nondisabled community (see also Howe & Silva, 2018). Kim (2011) emphasized how some governments actually use the Paralympic Games as a smokescreen to hide how badly disabled people are actually treated in their countries (as a form of sportswashing).

Black People. Blackman (2019), Edwards (1979), Liberti and McDonald (2019), and Waller et al. (2012) focused particularly on racial discrimination against Black people in the US in the context of the Black Power salute by John Carlos and Tommie Smith at the 1968 Olympic Games 200-m medal ceremony in Mexico City. They showed how such forms of protest can impact structural racism, despite attempts to punish and ignore them by those in power. Waller et al. (2012) warned Black, particularly male, athletes to not “become enslaved to the economics of their celebrity” (p. 265). Liberti and McDonald (2019) focused on an associated story of the US female track medalist from Mexico City 1968, Wyomia Tyus, who tried to show support for Carlos and Smith in order to challenge “racial and gendered lines of power” (p. 796) in the US and was similarly ignored and ostracized. The studies highlighted the connection between politics, the Black Power movement, and athlete activism.

Indigenous People. Although this rule could potentially apply to many other marginalized

identities, O'Bonsawin (2015) claimed, using the example of an Australian Aboriginal boxer at the London 2012 Olympic Games who was punished for adorning their shirt with the Aboriginal flag of Australia as he entered the ring, that the IOC Olympic Charter rule 50:

categorically sustains the illegal missions of colonizing settler governments that attempt to rule over Indigenous people and their lands. Within the Olympic domain, Indigenous athletes are forced to assume the identity of the colonizing settler citizenry, thereby further validating the political authority of an illegally imposed governing structure. (pp. 200–201)

Kilgour and Porteous (1999) highlighted, again in an Australian context, how those in power entrench the marginalization of Aboriginal groups within their countries, in this case with respect to resident's housing rights, and how this raises concerns about the lack of legislative protection for the local community against human rights violations. Rowe (2012), however, showed how differing perceived levels of human rights abuses can be used to the advantage of bidding cities and claims that Sydney, Australia, had an advantage over its closest competitor in the 1993 bidding process, Beijing, China, as perceived human rights abuses of indigenous people in the former were seen as not as bad as in the latter.

General Discussion

Based on our scoping review of the literature, we can state that managing major sport events can have both beneficial and detrimental effects on human rights. Effects are not intrinsic to events, but depend on how events are managed and how they are embedded into social, political, and economic policy debate and action. We synthesize how, and when, managing major sport events does good or bad based on the findings from previous studies. In general, *not* managing events for (and from the perspective of) marginalized groups typically harms their human rights.

The insights add to previous reviews on the post-leverage of major sport events (often under the term legacy; Koenigstorfer et al., 2019). In particular, our scoping review reveals what rights have been

assessed, what populations have been considered, and what contexts have been researched. Also, we reveal how authors researched the topics from a methodological standpoint. Interestingly, descriptive work dominates the field (64.6%). The void in empirical research has important consequences for both research and practice: a large number of claims remain unsubstantiated; there is uncertainty about validity, cause–effect relationships, and the underlying mechanisms; and managers are left uninformed about what works in what context, and what does not. To inspire researchers to partially fill this void, we present three pathways of how human rights topics at major sport events might be investigated in future studies.

Pathways to Investigate Human Rights Issues

Table 4 presents an overview of pathways that are of interest. We detail three pathways that are worth studying empirically and relate to both positivist and interpretive research designs—in an attempt that the two perspectives complement but not replace, or separate from, each other (see Weber, 2004, who commented that, to advance a field, “we need to have a deep understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of different research methods and data-analysis techniques” [p. xi]). In what follows, we describe how these insights might be useful for further research.

First, given the five-stage lifecycle of managing major sport events, one avenue is the consideration of differences in stakeholders' engagement between the stages. Often, stakeholders make strong claims in the preparation and bidding stages, but fall back to old habits (e.g., serving the elite beneficiaries, deciding based on time and financial constraints, reducing transparency in decision-making) when it comes to contracting companies, hosting the event, and planning the event leverage. The consideration of when, and how, the promotion of human rights can be sustained across the five stages would be informative to both research and practice in major (sport) event management. Furthermore, the inclusion of independent organizations that advocate for human rights might be a predictor of the creation of social benefits related to human rights (McGillivray et al., 2022). Thus, future studies should consider how collaborative partnership with these

Table 4
Gaps in Human Rights-Centered Research on Major Sport Events and How They Might Be Filled

Research Area	Research Question	Proposed Directions of Research (Examples)
Human rights promotion during different stages of the event	What measures are effective in promoting human rights throughout the five stages?	<i>Positivist approach:</i> Hypothesis: The higher the (a) topic engagement, (b) philanthropic motives, and (c) collaboration with independent advocacy organizations throughout event planning, the higher are human rights-based social benefits postevent planning. Design: Monitor stakeholder engagement, motives, and degree of collaboration over time in a longitudinal study; measure relevant human rights-based benefits and costs. <i>Interpretivist approach:</i> Question: What are the motives of the different event stakeholders when planning for events, and what motives interfere with philanthropic motives that might promote human-rights based social outcomes? Design: Interviews with key informants.
On-site surveillance of human rights-related event leverage	How can human rights be integrated in existing legacy frameworks of city planners so that social benefits are maximized?	<i>Positivist approach:</i> Hypothesis: Legacy frameworks with strong inclusion of human-rights issues will relate positively to the (a) monitoring human rights-based social benefits and (b) possibility to hold event organizers accountable for human rights violations. Design: Develop evidence-based legacy frameworks that are accepted by relevant stakeholders and implemented; then assess monitoring efforts and actions to hold stakeholders accountable in a longitudinal study. <i>Interpretivist approach:</i> What are the burdens, and how can they be overcome, to implement findings from human rights-related research into binding legacy agreements between event awarding bodies and event hosts? Design: Role play as a design method; interviews with key informants.
Human rights of vulnerable groups	What strategies and operative processes are needed to consider human rights of vulnerable groups?	<i>Positivist approach:</i> Hypothesis: The more the voices of vulnerable population groups within the host city are considered and integrated into event-related decision making, the higher are human rights-based social benefits. Design: Identification of all relevant stakeholders and development of truly participatory approaches, which reduce the likelihood that any stakeholders' perception is neglected and reduce power inequalities between stakeholder groups; measure power and inequality in power across stakeholders; measure the degree of integration of vulnerable groups; measure human rights-based benefits and costs. <i>Interpretivist approach:</i> What are the characteristics of human-centered approaches that embed rights-based frameworks from the inception to postevent leveraging? What does the inclusion of vulnerable groups in event processes look like from an organizational lens? Design: Stakeholder mapping, asset-based event mapping, reflexive interview frameworks.

organizations can be set up to best increase the likelihood of positive social outcomes.

Second, there is a scarcity of studies that actually consider postevent human rights leverage over the course of generations (see also Koenigstorfer et al., 2019). Thus, it remains largely unknown to what degree human rights were strengthened or weakened during the postevent era, and to what degree this could be attributed to the hosting of the event and the way it was managed. This highlights the urgent need for surveillance of human rights after the event hosting. From a managerial standpoint, guidance is needed on how to include surveillance tools into legacy frameworks and how to secure funding to monitor these rights over a long-term period.

Lastly, there is uncertainty about what strategies and operative processes are needed to consider the human rights of vulnerable groups in decision-making processes. The needs of vulnerable groups differ. For example, while some groups may desire changes in national laws to be better protected in some countries, others may wish to have a rather informal say in the development of infrastructure in the context of event planning. Based on the findings from previous studies, it appears that policies and adherence to the UNGP, as well as proactive change management are needed in organizations to implement what is desired by all (Chappelet, 2022). Within this context, the committed, transparent, and inclusive consideration of human rights issues of all relevant affected groups along all five stages of major sport events is needed. Due to the close relationship between fighting corruption and protecting human rights (Peters, 2018), strategies and operative processes might be aligned with each other.

Limitations and Outlook

This scoping review is not free of limitations. First, there are more major sport events than those considered in the present study, and human rights might also matter in the context of other major as well as small-to-medium scale sport events. We did not review studies on such events. Second, we focused on human rights as a search term. Considering the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations (1948), one might have used all the specific rights that are mentioned in the declaration in addition. Lastly, due to the lack of high

evidence-level studies, no clear statements can be made about cause–effect relationships, processes, and boundary conditions. Future studies may use the insights gained from this review to develop research designs that fulfill these goals.

Conclusion

With this article, we aim to inspire both researchers and practitioners to assess how and when management of major sport events promotes or undermines human rights. This is needed, because it must be acknowledged that major sport event considerations are driven by financial and egoistic value-driven interest, but the costs are often borne by the host and within the host by the general population (e.g., via tax subsidy), and particularly vulnerable population groups. If, at the same time, major sport event stakeholders are accused of corrupt and unsustainable practices, the financing of major sport events can hardly be justified. The committed, transparent, and inclusive consideration of human rights issues along all five stages of major sport events may increase the social benefits of hosting such events.

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