



Developing a multicultural sports event concept for non-governmental organisation

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The aim of this thesis is to develop a multicultural sports event concept for Monaliiku that enhances networking opportunities and promotes integration into local society for event attendees from diverse backgrounds. The purpose of this thesis was to gain a better understanding of Monaliiku's participants' profiles and preferences and create a sports event concept that aligns with the organisation's goals of promoting inclusivity and cultural sensitivity for migrant women participants. The commissioner, Monaliiku, is a non-governmental organisation that promotes the social inclusion and well-being of multiethnic women through physical activity.

The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of the theory of sports events and the event concept process, along with considerations of the target audience, cultural diversity, and event experience. Furthermore, the discussion includes the event's purpose and objectives, event stakeholders, and exploration of the social impact of events.

The thesis was conducted in a combination of qualitative and quantitative research. The research methods used in this thesis were an online survey and a semi-structured theme interview. The survey was conducted to study the organisation's members, their sports preferences, and their desire to participate in future sports events. The interview examined the Monaliiku representatives, and the purpose was to get to know the organisation better and to gain insights into the participants and developments from the organisation's perspective. The survey was open for two weeks and received 14 responses. The interview was conducted with 3 organisation representatives.

The two main outcomes of the thesis were a persona profile and a sports event concept. The profile created from the research data describes a typical Monaliiku sports event participant and their expectations of the event. An event concept was created to help develop an inclusive and engaging multicultural sports event that meets the unique needs of Monaliiku's diverse members.

The commissioner considers this thesis useful and plans to use the results of the study to effectively plan and implement sports events. Moreover, was noted the usefulness of new ideas and methodologies that allow the organisation to look at known things in a new way.

Keywords: cultural diversity, event concept, migrant women, sports event

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1 Introduction

Nowadays, in the multicultural world, sports are something that unites people across cultural differences, promotes diversity and inclusion, and helps people integrate into society. Peotta, Inkinen and Laine (2022, 18) note that the well-being and physical activity of immigrants are important for integration and equality. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) use sports events to engage their communities, raise awareness of the social challenges and achieve their missions. However, designing a sports event for an NGO requires careful consideration of the target audience, stakeholders' selection, overall attendee experience, social impact and cultural diversity. In this thesis, the term non-governmental organisation (NGO) refers to the non-profit activities organised at the national or international level (United Nations 2024).

The aim of this thesis is to develop a multicultural sports event concept for Monaliiku, a non-governmental organisation, that enhances networking opportunities and promotes integration into local society for event attendees from diverse backgrounds. In addition, provide Monaliiku with insight into their target audience by developing a detailed persona profile. This thesis focuses on the sports events and the event concept process, along with considerations of the target audience, cultural diversity, and event experience. Furthermore, the theory includes the event's purpose and objectives, event stakeholders, and exploration of the social impact of events.

The research part of this thesis was conducted by implementing an online survey of Monaliiku members and semi-structured theme interviews with Monaliiku representatives. Based on the research results and theoretical framework, a persona profile and concept for a multicultural sports event were created.

The thesis consists of five chapters, where the first chapter introduces the thesis, and the second chapter presents the commissioner Monaliiku. The theoretical delves into the literature by defining the key topics and concepts. The research part describes the planning and implementation of the two research methods, analyses the collected data and presents the two outcomes. The last chapter, the conclusion, summarises the entire content of this thesis.

2 Monaliiku

Monaliiku - Monikansallisten naisten hyvinvointi ja liikunta Ry is a Helsinki-based non-governmental organisation that was founded in 2009. Monaliiku aims to promote the inclusion of migrant women and girls in local society through physical activity. (Hossaini 2022.)

Monaliiku provides a safe and supportive community for women with migrant backgrounds to connect with others, practice healthy habits, and build relationships (Monaliiku 2024a).

Monaliiku goes beyond a typical sports club. The core activities are divided into different categories: projects, groups, and campaigns (Monaliiku 2024a). The organisation offers a range of weekly sporting, dancing, and wellness sessions in Helsinki and Espoo areas. The sports activities include swimming courses, Zumba, Football, Shadowing Thai boxing, Yoga, and much more. The sports activities are free of charge for participants (Monaliiku 2024b). In 2023, Monaliiku sports groups were joined by over 6000 participants (Month Newsletter 2024). Moreover, Monaliiku organises sports events several times a year for women and their families (Monaliiku 2024c).

As a non-governmental organisation, Monaliiku strives to develop multiculturalism, equality, and integration. Traditionally, NGOs are formed to support social or political causes and to operate at an international, local, or national level. Despite the independence of national governments, NGOs receive funding and are supported by their vital work from the government. (Gordon 2021.) Monaliiku's activities are mainly funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Social and Health Support Centre STEA, the City of Helsinki (Jäntti 2021).

3 Cultural sports event concept

This chapter provides a theoretical framework for developing a sports event concept. Before developing an event concept, it is important to study the definition of an event, as well as the theory of sports events and methods for developing an event concept. In addition, this chapter also discusses the relationship between event concept and theme, as well as the purpose and objective of an event. The chapter then explores the social impact of the events, the target audience and how to identify them. Finally, the chapter concludes by identifying and discussing the role of experience and cultural diversity in an event concept development process.

3.1 Sports events

The definition of the term "sport" can be a complex task, even for those with expertise in the field. When analysing sports terminology, four key criteria are identified: physical conditions, physical skills, institutionalisation and competitiveness, as well as external and internal motivations for participation. Physical effort refers to using our body and physical abilities to play sports. The set of skills should include things like balance, coordination, speed, strength, endurance, and mental sharpness. Sports have standardised rules that are monitored by official governing bodies, and players receive formal instruction to develop their skills. People participate in sports for different reasons, including fame, money, and other external factors that motivate them. (Ritchie, Adair, Ritchie, Adair & Adair 2004, 15-16.)

Finland is a European country where physical activity plays an important role. Finland has four distinct seasons, as well as unique nature, and the right to visit forests. These factors inspire Finns to lead active lifestyles and participate in sports. Finland offers many outdoor activities such as hiking, trekking, cross-country skiing, and many others. Over 90% of the population under the age of 18 participate in sports. The most common sports are football, ice hockey, floor hockey and gymnastics. 90% of adults exercise two or more times a week. The most popular activities are running, going to the gym, and taking exercise classes. (This is Finland 2021.)

Sports promote personal, social, and cognitive development as well as social inclusion and integration through values such as tolerance, solidarity, and inclusion, and provide opportunities for individuals from different groups, such as people with a migrant background and those at high risk of discrimination, to engage and integrate with other social groups. (European Commission, 2024.) Social inclusion through sport involves developing personal, social, and motor skills while promoting ethical principles and values associated with sports. Good practice and formative physical education can benefit school-aged and discriminated children and youth. (Marivoet 2014.)

According to Greenwell, Danzey-Bussell and Shonk (2014, 11-15), sports events can be grouped according to their size, scope and target audience. The authors have identified several types of sports events, such as mega-events, multi-sport events, multi-location events, multi-cultural events, international events, events for young people, events for people with disabilities, events for the elderly, family-oriented events and extreme events. Many sports events are international in nature, and each type has its own specific strengths and weaknesses. (Greenwell et al. 2014, 11-15.) Moreover, Bladen, Kennell, Abson & Wilde (2023, 243) note that sports events can be small or large and attract different levels of participation and media attention. The size of a sports event can range from public events with a small number of spectators to international competitions watched by billions of people. Regardless of the event's size, its success depends on factors such as the number of participants, the cost of sponsorship, the event management type, event cost and how far attendees have to travel in order to participate. (Bladen et al. 2023, 243.)

Mallen and Adams (2008, 3-5) classify sports events as niche events as they do not require the participation of representatives of a governing body with established regulations and time-tested rules. It is also indicated that such events are designed and tailored to a specific sporting, recreational or tourism audience. In addition, sports events may have identifiable elements of traditional events, or they may have a non-traditional format. Niche events can take many forms. These events include festivals, gala dinners, conferences, press conferences, charity events and many other events. They can be easily applicable to accommodate various cultural norms, target audiences, and other relevant factors. (Mallen & Adams 2008, 3-5.)

Sports events are a diverse category that includes a wide range of activities, from professional athletics like the Olympics to local youth sports festivals. There are many different formats, including those based on participant level (professional vs. amateur), venue type (indoor vs. outdoor), and scheduling (regularly scheduled leagues vs. one-time exhibitions). The media has created new events that are focused on the spectators, which include elements of celebration and have become very popular. The industry has grown significantly as a result. (Getz & Page 2020, 89.)

Greenwell et al. (2014, 7) highlight the similarities between in conducting of sports and non-sports events. Even though the content is different, both require careful planning and execution. Sports events involve physical competition, and the main characteristic is that they evoke strong emotions. If a sports event is held outside, external factors such as weather may affect the experience of those attending the sports event. (Greenwell et al. 2014, 7-8.) Based on Allen et al. (2011, 154), special events share fundamental characteristics with projects. Like projects, special events are time-limited activities designed to achieve specific goals. They are different in the sense that they require unique planning and execution. Additionally, special events are limited in time, budget, and scope. (Allen et al. 2011, 154.)

According to Getz and Page (2020, 71), it can be difficult to distinguish between activities and events. Although events consist of a set of activities, not all activities can be considered events. The term 'activity' refers to a state of action, movement, or a specific endeavour, whereas events are planned activities that have a particular theme or purpose. The activities of an event are often directly related to the theme, such as musical performances at a concert. However, events also include spontaneous personal actions of the participants, such as talking or applause, which contribute to the overall experience. These actions are influenced by the setting, program, and interaction with others. (Getz & Page 2020, 71.)

3.2 Event concept and theme

The development of the event concept is one of the first steps in the pre-planning stage of each event. A clear concept is beneficial to the event organiser, as it saves time and resources for a successful event that achieves the purpose of an event. (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 24.) In order to plan a successful event, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the environment in which an event will take place, as well as the factors that influence the concept and execution of the event. (Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell 2011, 126.) In this case, an event organiser could use the "5Ws" method (Figure 1). The "5Ws" method is a fundamental method for developing an event concept for any content-based or production-driven event. This method includes five questions that need to be answered before the event planning phase. The questions are: Why does this event need to be conducted? Who are the stakeholders? What happens at the event? When will the event take place? Where will the event take place? (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 24-25; Bladen, Kennell, Abson & Wilde 2023, 55-56.)

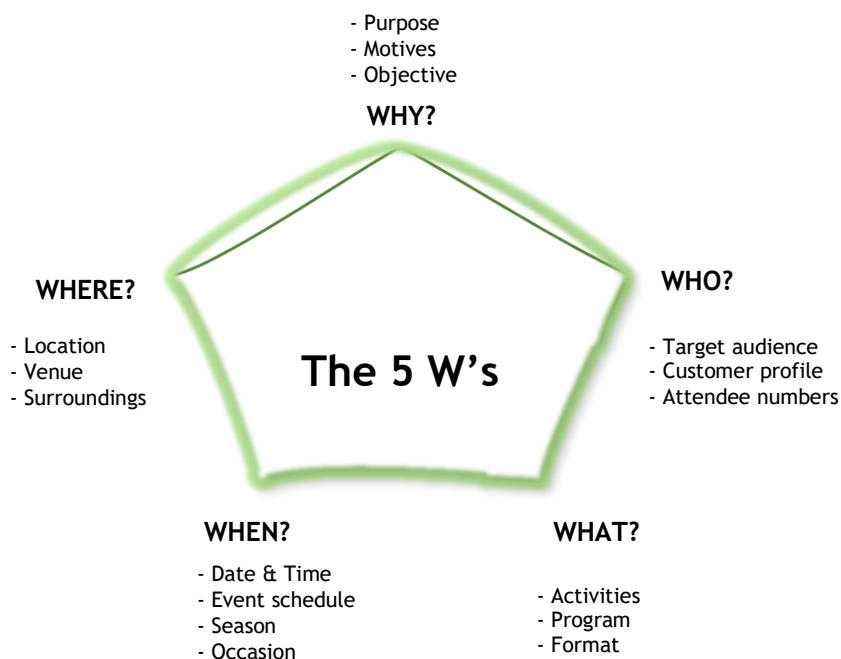


Figure 1: Five W's for developing an event concept (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 25).

Once the questions presented in Figure 1 have been answered, it is possible to move on to the next step and link it to the theme of the event and plan other details of the event (Bladen et al. 2023, 57). One way to visualise an idea is to create a mood board for an event. It is a visual tool whose purpose is to capture or convey the concept of an event. (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 25).

Moreover, Getz and Page (2020, 309) and Ferdinand and Kitchin (2017, 68) reveal the concept through the theme of the event. Furthermore, Getz and Page (2020, 215) argue that people are more likely to connect to themes than to facts. Events can create more powerful and memorable experiences for audiences if universal belief systems are used for the development of an event theme. While developing the theme is not about developing entertainment or decoration, it is more about a strategic approach to communication. The main objectives of an event theme are to increase attendee satisfaction, leave a positive long-term impression and encourage repeat visits in the future. (Getz & Page 2020, 215.)

An event theme can be visual, sensory, activity-based, emotional, or intellectual. The event theme is the connection between the event program, the attendees and all aspects of the event. It is a great opportunity to engage attendees during the event and build interest in the lead-up to the event. Ideally, every element of the event program should reflect and support the chosen theme. (Getz & Page 2020, 309.)

When developing a theme for an event, it is important to consider cultural differences. This will prevent misunderstandings and make sure that everyone is comfortable. This includes things like food, entertainment, decorations and the overall design of the event. It is also important to familiarise with the social norms and values of different cultures, non-verbal communication styles, religious beliefs and any legal regulations regarding cultural or religious practices. (Ferdinand & Kitchin 2017, 72-73.)

3.2.1 Event purpose and objective

An accurate and complete definition of an event's purpose is a good starting point for defining the concept of an event (Allen et al. 2011, 138). Additionally, a clearly defined purpose guarantees an event's success. This purpose should be supported by specific, measurable goals that are in alignment with the overall objective. However, defining the purpose of an event can be challenging. (Wagen & White, 2018, 260-261.) Yeoman, Ali-Knight, Drummond, McMahon-Beattie, Robertson, Yeoman, and McMahon-Beattie (2004, 17) suggest using SMART goals when setting event objectives. This means the objectives should be relevant to the event, quantifiable, aligned with participants, appropriate with available resources, and tied to the event schedule.

Yeoman et al. (2004, 16) categorise event aim into four major types: economic, social, cultural, and political. These authors argue that most events, including not-for-profit events,

have economic objectives, although these may not always be the first priority and may only aim to break even. Despite this, Wagen and White (2018, 260-261) claim that not all events are profit oriented. Fundraisers, educational conferences, and community gatherings all serve valuable purposes beyond financial gain. These objectives can include attendee numbers, sponsorship contributions, or educational outcomes, among others. By using these objectives to measure success, event planners can make necessary adjustments in organising future events. (Wagen & White 2018, 260-261.)

According to Greenwell et al. (2014, 24-25), events can have multiple purposes depending on the goals the organiser wants to achieve. These purposes may include promoting sports, generating competition and income, promoting a specific topic, raising funds for a cause, improving an organisation's image, promoting tourism, etc. In addition, it is essential to have a clear sense of the diverse stakeholders that are involved in an event. This will help event organisers determine their needs and align them with the event's overall purpose. (Greenwell et al. 2014, 24-25.)

Greenwell et al. (2014, 25-26) note that an event's purpose is also influences the choice of an event format. Depending on the event's objectives and the stakeholders' needs, the type of event can vary from a large mega-event to a small local event. In addition, the authors suggest that when choosing an event format to consider the following factors such as the target market, the preparation time, the duration of the event, and the location and venue. It is also important to consider what resources are available, such as time, money, equipment, people and location. (Greenwell et al. 2014, 25-26.)

As the world becomes more diverse and intercultural, event organisers must take into account everyday customs and practices when planning and hosting events. They must consider various factors, such as language barriers and differences in communication styles, which can affect the success of an event. Cultural values are also becoming increasingly important for event planning. Therefore, event managers should be aware of cultural differences and consider the following factors when organising an event: beliefs, early socialisation and family structures, small group behaviour, public behaviour, leisure activities and interests, celebrations and ceremonies, morality, food and eating habits, work ethics, educational systems, traditions, history and social class structures. (Allen et al. 2011, 50-52.)

3.2.2 Event stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals or organisations who have an interest in the outcome of the event and contribute to its development and implementation (Wagen & White 2018, 259). When organising an event, it is important to take into consideration social, political and environmental factors to avoid conflict. It is also necessary to balance the needs of local residents, guests and event organisers. Collaboration with all stakeholders can help minimise problems and create a win-win situation for all who are involved. This can be achieved

through partnerships and maintaining ongoing communication about the event. This, in turn, can benefit both the local community and the participants. In addition, it is beneficial for everyone as it promotes a sense of shared experience and encourages repeat visits. (Yeoman et al. 2004, 35-36.)

Allen et al. (2011, 126) described six key groups of event stakeholders (Figure 2).

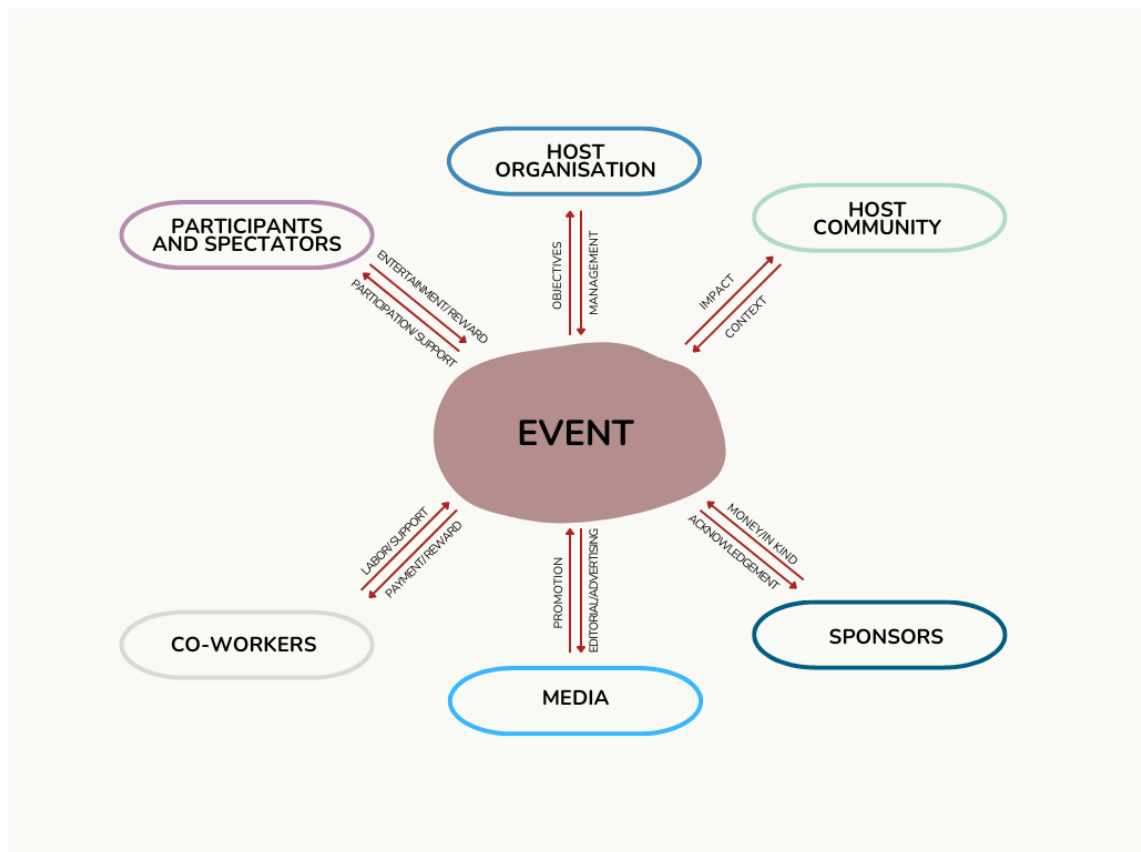


Figure 2: The relationship of stakeholders to events (Allen et al. 2011, 127).

Figure 2 shows the stakeholders involved in the event, including the host organisation, host community, sponsors, media, co-workers, and participants (Allen et al. 2011, 127).

In order to identify the host organisation, Allen et al. (2011, 127-129) suggest determining the sector from which the event originated. The three main sectors that the authors highlight are government, corporate and community. Government events are organised by government departments or councils, who often have a mixed role, not only organising events but also regulating and coordinating them. Corporate events are typically organised by companies, corporations or industry associations, with event managers employed directly or as contractors. Community events are organised by clubs, societies or committees, and they often rely on the volunteers' support. The host organisation is a main stakeholder, and it is fundamental to define its purpose for hosting the event. (Allen et al. 2011, 127-129.)

Additionally, the host organisations are responsible for managing events effectively for the

community and other stakeholders. This includes handling risks, finances, human resources, accountability, and marketing. (Yeoman et al. 2004, 35.)

Successful events require two things: understanding the current trends and involving the local community. By understanding the host community's needs, it is possible to create an experience that resonates with attendees and benefits the community. This means that an event's organisers must collaborate with stakeholders like residents, businesses, and local authorities. Everyone must also adapt to changing trends such as climate change, technological advancements, and globalisation. (Allen et al. 2011, 129-131.) Further, Yeoman et al. (2004, 33) note that if an event occurs naturally, it is perceived as positive and valued by the host community and avoids the feeling that the event has been imposed from outside. In addition, about 70% of all sponsorship funds are spent on sports. Although many sports events are not aimed at making money, financial support is crucial for these events. Both corporate and government sponsors can provide financial support for sports events. (Niekerk & Getz 2019, 134.)

Corporate sponsorship has increased significantly over the past few decades, leading to a shift in the way sponsors sense events. Many companies now value sponsorship as a key promotional tool in their marketing mix to increase brand awareness and push sales. (Allen et al. 2011, 131-132.) The primary purpose of sponsors' participation in an event, according to Greenwell et al. (2014, 25), is to achieve marketing and sales objectives.

The evolution of various media, such as cable, satellite television and the Internet, has increased the demand for media products and changed the way events are managed. Social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and others have made communication and interaction more personal. Integrating social media into event websites allows attendees to provide feedback, share opinions and even participate in event design and planning. The media can act as a sponsor, a partner or even a producer of the event. Thus, it is worth to consider the needs of different media groups and engaging with the media as the primary stakeholder in an event. (Allen et al. 2011, 132-134.)

The success of an event depends a lot on the team that organises it. Each team member, from top managers to cleaning staff, has a key role to play. (Allen et al. 2011, 134.) According to Greenwell et al. (2014, 61), sports events could not happen without volunteers. Additionally, Mallen and Adams (2008, 54) highlight that many sports events have to rely on volunteers because of a lack of resources to hire a large number of paid staff. Greenwell et al. (2014, 61-62) point out that not only the number of volunteers but also their quality are important since they affect an event's success. Therefore, when hiring volunteers, several factors must be taken into account. The first is to understand the volunteer's motive. The motives of volunteers may vary. For example, a volunteer may be motivated by selfish, humanitarian, leisure or career considerations. Secondly, need to identify individual fans and

participants who might want to attend the event by volunteering. Thirdly, ensure that volunteers are placed in roles that match their skills and abilities. Finally, the key to success in volunteer work is their training before the event. (Greenwell et al. 2014, 61-62.)

Participants and spectators are one of the most important stakeholders in any event. Through understanding the event's audience, organisers can tailor events to meet their needs. In order to make an event special, it is necessary to create an emotional connection with the audience and to meet their needs and first take into consideration their comfort, safety and security. Considering the content of the event programme, access to food and drink, amenities, entry and exit are all key to creating an enjoyable event. Simple factors, such as whether a team wins or loses do not always influence success rates. Secondary factors, such as social opportunities, corporate hospitality, and venue upgrades, also influence the participants' experience. (Allen et al. 2011, 135-135.)

Ensuring a well-organised event depends on ongoing dialogue and information sharing with stakeholders. Internal stakeholders, as well as external stakeholders, have valuable knowledge that can minimise potential risks. Internally, past experience allows internal stakeholders to identify risks and develop solutions to resolve them. Similarly, external parties can provide useful data for evaluating the potential probability and impact of these risks. (Ferdinand & Kitchin 2017, 215.)

3.2.3 Target audience

According to Allen et al. (2014, 259), it is fundamental to identify the target audience in order to plan and deliver the event in a way that addresses their specific needs and requirements. Moreover, for an event to be successful, it is necessary to identify the target audience as early as possible (Yeoman et al. 2004, 236). Each event has a different target audience, and it is fundamental to acknowledge that not all events appeal to everyone. Therefore, identifying consumer segments is key for event planning. (Allen et al. 2011, 278.) Besides that, consumer segments can be used to develop different promotional tactics, select suitable marketing activities, and deliver messages designed to correlate with each segmentation (Greenwell et al. 2014, 108-109).

Bladen et al. (2023, 177) recommend to use a similar segmentation of event participants based on the principle of market segmentation, which will also indicate the motivation for participation. Customer segments must be measurable, and characteristics such as status, age and others must be taken into account. Additionally, they should be large enough to be easily identified and accessible through marketing channels. Another important factor in determining segmentation is understanding how the customer decides to participate in the event. (Allen et al. 2011, 278.) Additionally, Getz and Page (2020, 365) believe that segmenting target audiences can provide a better understanding of their needs, motivations, and benefits.

Allen et al. (2011, 278) break down the segmentation of event target audiences based on demographics, geography and psychographic characteristics. In addition, Getz and Page (2020, 364) identify further segmentation parameters, such as socio-economic characteristics and more advanced parameters, as desired benefits and attendance patterns, and visitor motivations. Furthermore, Greenwell et al. (2014, 109) underline that audience segmentation needs to include defining how often and how much consumers use events and what they look to benefit from them.

In the opinion of Bladen et al. (2023, 177), basic demographic information is the starting point for the segmentation of target groups. In addition, Kotler, Opresnik and Armstrong (2021, 206) point out that demographic segmentation is the most popular foundation for segmentation, as it is easier to measure than others. Allen et al. (2011, 278, 280) provide an overview of demographic segmentation built based on age, gender, occupation, income, education and cultural group. In addition, the visitor life cycle and a socio-economic scale based on profession could also be included (Allen et al. 2011, 278, 280). In contrast, Getz and Page (2020, 364) classify income and class characteristics as separate socio-economic segments, and their demographic segmentation includes age and gender. When using demographic segmentation, it is important to avoid stereotyping, as age is often a poor measure of a person's lifestyle, health, work, family status, needs and consumer ability (Kotler et al. 2021, 206).

As explained by Allen et al. (2011, 278), geographic segmentation is based on the location of event attendees. Based on Kotler et al. (2021, 205), geographic segmentation can be divided into countries, city regions, neighbouring areas, population density and even climate. In some cases, the geography of the target audience could be broad if an event has the potential to attract international visitors and tourists. These are usually major global sports events such as the FIFA World Cup or the Olympic Games. (Allen et al. 2011, 278.)

Psychographic segmentation could be described with characteristics such as lifestyle, values, benefits sought and attendance lifestyle. This segmentation type helps to identify and understand the specific experiences that different target groups receive. However, measuring lifestyle characteristics can be challenging and can pose limitations for those who want to use these characteristics. (Allen et al. 2011, 278, 280.) Kotler et al. (2021, 207) note that people belonging to the same demographic segment do not guarantee they will share the same psychographic characteristics.

In order to identify the target audience and collect data on event participants, it is necessary to conduct an audience survey (Yeoman et al. 2004, 264). Such studies help to understand the true reasons and motives for attending events. Additionally, define the factors that can affect participation include perceived risk and financial limitations. (Bladen et al. 2023, 178.)

3.2.4 Social impact

Events are significant occurrences in the lives of most people. At all times, when people arrive at organised events, they usually expect to have meaningful and rewarding experiences that will have an impact on their lives. The experiences by events are often related to knowledge, learning, understanding new things, and social interaction. (Getz 2007, 197-198.) What makes the event a memorable experience, the core is the interaction between people and sharing it with others with a sense of community, shared values, and visions (Alroy, Ben-Shushan & Katz 2022, 6,131). Marques (2013, 85) highlights that events are unique opportunities and moments for community formation through which people build social connections and social identities.

As being said, events are gatherings of people which are markers of significant life events and part of the fabric of everyday life (Bladen et al. 2023, 413). In general, public events are either local gatherings organised by and for local people or large-scale events held in host communities specifically selected because of their unique interest in and connection with the event's theme. In every stage of human society, there has been identified some form of festivals and events. Considering and incorporating the community perspective into these event planning processes is incumbent upon event managers. Even in many rural towns, the regional town festival is the main social event of the year. (Bladen et al. 2023, 413.)

Over the years, the social meanings of events have changed, and events themselves have evolved over time. Although people's connection to traditional religious and social norms and beliefs has diminished today, we still need relevant social events to shape the rhythms of our lives. (Ferdinand & Kitchin 2017, 20.) The wealth of social interactions that are part of the process of creating the event contributes to the creation of social capital and to the well-being and bonding of the community (Allen et al. 2011, 47). The Ministry of Employment and the Economy's publication sees the link as well between events and urban development as a qualitative impact largely related to social responsibility and community. Through events, people experience new things in their lives, learning, sharing knowledge and meeting people. Cities need to develop platforms for encounters in order to create and develop qualitative impacts. (Kuusisto, Sahlstedt, Välimäki & Westerholm 2023, 74.)

According to Ferdinand and Kitchin (2017, 60), a comprehensive plan for identifying, managing, and documenting the full range of an event's impact is crucial to event managers. However, researching the social impacts of events remains relatively understudied compared to economic and environmental impacts that abound (Bladen et al. 2023, 414). Allen et al. (2011, 60) claim that the social benefits of events may be better described in a narrative way rather than a statistical approach, but however they are essential part of calculating the overall impact of an event. Quin and Wilks (2013,16) observe that the events and their social and cultural implications are often analysed and identified through the concept of social

capital. Social capital refers to the network of relationships that exist between people with common goals and interests (Richards, De Brito & Wilks 2013, 231). Events accumulate social capital when organisers involve the local community and businesses in the organisation of the event, thereby enabling a stronger sense of community (Lassila, Lindroth & Rantanen 2013, 33).

Allen et al. (2011, 60) mention that it is important to consider both positive and negative social impacts when assessing and balancing the impact of events, as both occur in event management. Ziakas and Getz (2023, 160) note that negative impacts on the local community include residents having to cope with overcrowding, congestion, noise, and lack of access to their usual amenities such as cafes, parks and bars. In addition, Allen et al. (2011, 61-62) supplement that events can also generate negative social impacts such as community alienation, exploitation of the community, tarnished community reputation, misbehaviour, substance dependence, and social dislocation. However, as Korhonen, Korkalainen, Pienimäki, and Rintala (2015, 7) explain, events are short-term social gatherings that always involve certain risks, such as reputational or security risks. Therefore, an event organiser has a major responsibility to prevent incidents and accidents and to ensure the smooth running of an event. Careful planning is the key to minimising risks and negative impacts and ensuring a successful event. (Korhonen et al. 2015, 7.)

Events encourage to social interaction and the shared experiences in events forge a sense of belonging (Alroy et al. 131). Fernandes (2013, 190) finds that event plays an important role in strengthening community spirit and enhancing social capital. Events can improve community functioning, increase the willingness of community members to participate, create or strengthen cooperation between local businesses and increase communication within the local community. The social networks and practices created and strengthened in this way contribute to the productivity of the community and are clear manifestations of social capital. (Fernandes 2013, 190.) As an example, studies based on Stephen Frawley (2013, 97) show that hosting a major sports event can increase community interest in sport and actually increase participation in sport in the hosting communities. Sports events help to escape from uncomfortable situations and can provide an opportunity for social interaction, which can help build social skills and a sense of belonging. (Hendriks & Toepoel 2013, 112-114.) Speaking of positive and negative social impacts of events, Bladen et al. (2023, 415) outline and summarise the social impacts of an event in a six-part model (Figure 3). The model includes inconvenience, community identity and cohesion, personal frustration, entertainment and socialisation opportunities, community growth and development and behavioural consequences.

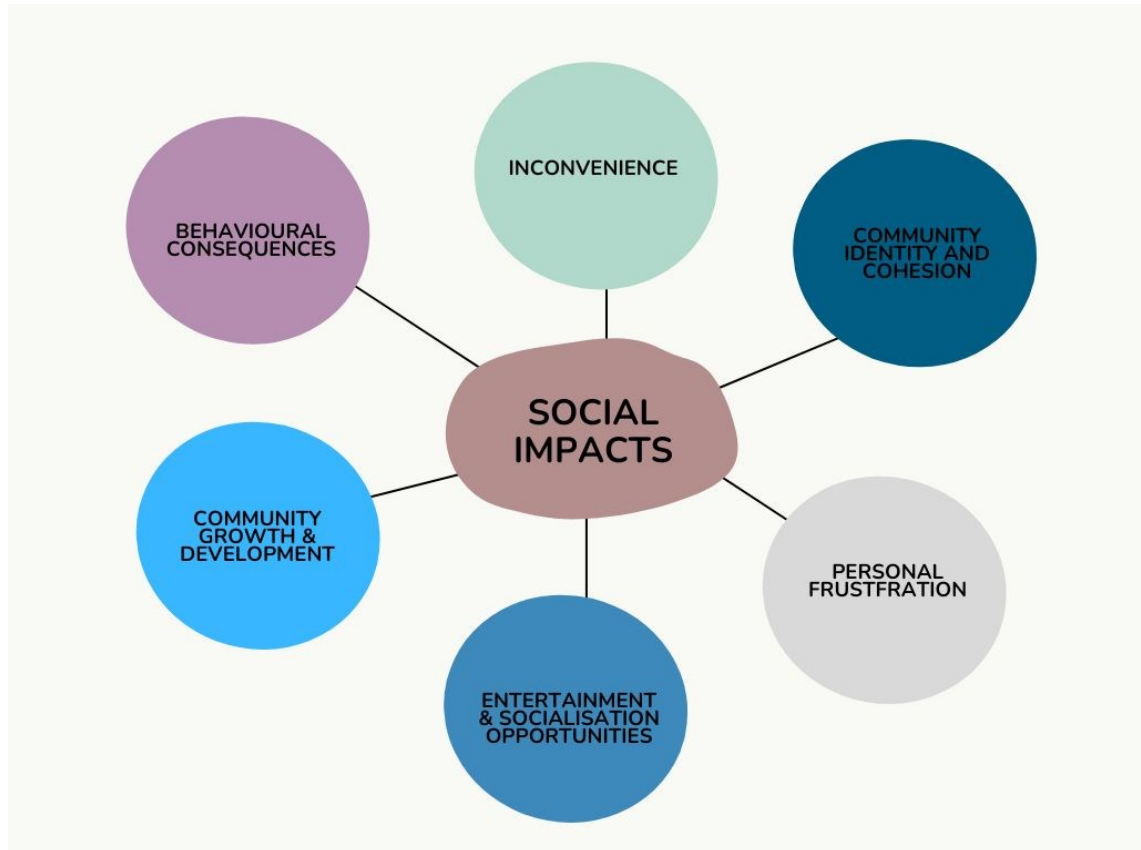


Figure 3: Small's social impact model (Bladen et al. 2023, 415).

The Small's six-factor model (Figure 3) was specifically created for studying festivals' social implications, but all in all, it provides a useful structure for event organisers to examine and analyse a range of event's social impacts (Small 2007, 54). The issue of the disruption of event causes described earlier by Ziakas and Getz (2023, 160), also refers to Small's model (2007) to the factor of inconvenience. It represents the issue of problems associated with the hosting of an event that causes inconvenience to members of the local community (Bladen et al. 2023, 415). Similarities of inconvenience in social impacts can also be found in the factor of personal frustration. It refers to the impacts, such as dissatisfaction or even resentment towards the event itself by local residents (Bladen et al. 2023, 415). These factors bring inconvenience and frustration to the local community since their normal routines are disrupted through the presence of an increase in visitors (Small 2007, 52).

Many studies have focused on the positive impacts that events can have, for example, on communities and the personal level. As seen in Figure 3, Small (2007) also identifies factors related to positive aspects, such as opportunities for entertainment and socialisation. This means that the event brings more entertainment and socialising opportunities for residents, both through direct participation and through the indirect effects of the event, such as increased tourism (Bladen et al. 2023, 415). Allen et al. (2011, 61) highlight as an example of this that the impact of an event can be very simple. For example, it can be the shared experience of entertainment that a sports event or concert provides (Allen et al. 2011,61).

The factor of community identity and cohesion in Small's social impact model refers to the sense of ownership and feeling of togetherness at an event, which is a source of pride for local people (Small 2007, 50). Related to this, Gezt and Page (2020, 279) also outline how events strengthen the identity of the place by providing activities open to all and a platform for communities to share values and experiences with visitors. This helps people discover the unique character of a place and understand what is important to the community (Getz & Page 2020, 279). Like Ziakas and Getz (2023, 160) supplement, events have significant social impacts on local communities. The social impacts can also be identified based on Small's model, by the factor of community growth and development impacts, which include the development of new skills and other opportunities for the community through hosting the event (Bladen et al. 2023, 415). In addition, Allen's (et al. 2011, 130) aligned view of involving the host community significantly impacts the failure or success of the event.

Small (2007, 53) also points out that some types of impacts can be experienced in a personal level, and in events there may occur some negative effects on human behaviour. The factor behavioural consequences recognise inappropriate behaviour such as vandalism or other criminal conduct (Bladen et al. 2023, 415). However, as outlined by Allen et al. (2011, 62), events generate excitement and long-term benefits that communities anticipate and thus communities are willing to tolerate temporarily disruptions caused by events. But in the end, it is the event manager who is responsible for assessing and balancing these impacts of events, both negative and positive (Allen et al. 2011, 77).

Small's Six dimensions underlying the social impacts of events is simply, structured way of summarising the social impacts based on events and community festivals (Small 2007, 54). However, there are many ways to examine the range of social impacts which occur in events (Ziakas & Getz 2023, 160). Nevertheless, like Ziakas and Getz (2023, 161) state, it is vital to event organisers to bear in mind that both negative and positive impacts should not be ignored. Regardless of type, all events, not just cultural ones, take place in a social and cultural context that varies depending on the specific event and its location. An understanding of the social implications of a location is key to the successful management of an event's impact. (Bladen et al. 2023, 414.)

3.2.5 Cultural diversity in events

According to Getz and Page (2020, 458), it is important to consider the impact of globalisation when planning events, especially with the rise of mass media and social networks. It is critical to understand all the components and processes involved in studying events across cultures, including countries, ethnic and interest groups, and subcultures. When making comparisons between cultures, it is likely that personal and social constructs will differ, resulting in different levels of importance being attached to events in a political

context. (Getz & Page 2020, 458.) As noted by Allen et al. (2011, 273), culture has a profound influence on the way events and festivals are designed, marketed, and consumed.

Based on UNESCO's 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2016), culture is more than artistic works. It also includes the values that define a particular society or group. Additionally, culture can take many forms, such as traditions, lifestyles, belief systems, goods, and services. UNESCO recognises the importance of cultural diversity and promoting intercultural dialogue and exchange (UNESCO 2016).

According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010, 6), culture is something that we get through the social environment where it was learned, and it consists of unwritten social norms. Maude (2011, 4) argues that culture reflects traditions and beliefs that are passed down from generation to generation. Furthermore, culture is defined as a system of beliefs, values and habits that allow us to solve universal problems, such as the relationship between men and women, the relationship between the younger and the elderly generations, and other aspects that every culture solves in a unique way. It is not always possible to differ between cultures from a religious, geographical, or historical point of view, as these categories do not accurately represent the diversity and uniqueness of each culture. (Maude 2011, 4-5.) Based on Kotler et al. (2021, 154), the cultural groups, such as geographic regions, nationalities, religions, and races, may be classified as subcultures.

In order to ensure integration between people from different countries, it is necessary to create an environment where representatives of different cultural groups can meet and communicate on equal terms. These places may be sports clubs, universities, labour organisations and armies. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 388.) Creating common rules in the culture is a fundamental requirement for group survival, even if they have never been written down. Moreover, the authors argue that everyone learns the culture's values in childhood when there is a process of understanding what is acceptable to do and what is not. No group can get away from culture. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 9-10, 12.)

In multicultural cultural communication, different native languages are often used, which in some cases might contribute to incorrect cultural perceptions (Hofstede et al. 2010, 389). Moreover, based on Maude (2011, 17), in multicultural societies, there may be challenges, such as communication problems and difficulties in understanding and adapting to values and behaviours of different cultural groups. Diversity can be considered in communications, like Kaartinen and Linnapuomi (2015, 2-4) point out that, for example, in events' publications, many different languages can be used but at the same time. However, it is important to avoid generalisations and stereotypes about different cultures (Kaartinen & Linnapuomi 2015, 2,4). Greenwell et al. (2014, 12) highlight that cross-cultural events can offer valuable opportunities for people from different cultural backgrounds to connect and learn from each other. In order to organise such events effectively, it is essential to have an in-depth

understanding of the cultural norms of both the participants and the location. It is also important to recognise that cultural differences that exist in one country may be different from another, including differences related to religion. (Greenwell et al. 2014, 12.)

As demonstrated by Kaartinen and Linnapuomi (2015, 4), in an event that respects diversity, all visitors are welcome and treated equally. By embracing diversity, event organisers demonstrate their open attitude and values, creating a sense of security and inclusion. From a multicultural perspective, when organising an equal event, it is essential to seek to remove any cultural barriers that may hinder participation. Another essential aspect of this is to make sure that no one feels excluded or unwelcome as a visitor, employee or performer because of their cultural background (Kaartinen & Linnapuomi 2015, 2). Overall, multicultural events are an opportunity to engage residents from different cultures and give recent immigrants an opportunity to demonstrate their presence and sense of belonging (Ferdinand & Kitchin 2017, 20).

Many countries have developed multicultural social policies as a result of mass migration, and this is an important aspect of diversity (Maude 2011, 16). According to Statistics Finland (2023), immigration levels continue to rise, and in 2022, the number of immigrants to Finland was at a record high of 49,998. Lummepero (2023) describes that Finland has always been a linguistically and culturally diverse society and in a state of constant change. These changes should be addressed and require a broader recognition and consideration of different phenomena. The Ministry of Education and Culture has made an operational programme named “Taide, kulttuuri ja moninainen Suomi” to promote and take better account of diversity in the field of culture and arts. It was mentioned that cultural services that promote well-being and health strengthen the inclusion of disadvantaged groups. They provide spaces and opportunities for self-expression, creativity and community, which improves quality of life and boosts self-confidence. This action’s plan one of the key objectives was to create a more diverse and inclusive arts and culture scene that would strengthen the social inclusion of people, especially those with foreign backgrounds. This was done by promoting their participation in the practice and experience of arts and culture themselves. At the same time, the aim was to promote dialogue and integration between different population groups by using art and culture as a common language and to create situations in which all residents could feel involved and find common ground with each other. (Lummepero 2023.)

3.2.6 Event experience

It is commonly said that an event must include experiences and be experiential. What makes this challenging is that each person experiences and perceives things differently: everyone has a different experience according to their own way of thinking and feeling. Experience is a multi-sensory and unforgettable occurrence that can be transformative for the experiencer. (Wallo & Häyrynen 2016, 139.) Getz (2007, 18-19) supplements that the things which make the

experience transformative and unique are the attendee's moods, attitudes, and the expectations they are making when attending to an event. Pine and Gilmore's (2020,15) description of an experience is a staged, memorable set of events that is full of sensations, engaging the participant in a personal way. Pine and Gilmore (1999, 30) also examine experiences from two perspectives: the level of consumer involvement and the consumer's relationship to the experience.

Räikkönen (2007) refers in his work "Matkalla koettuja elämyksiä ja elettyjä kokemuksia" to Pine and Gilmore's explanation (1999) that the richest experience includes features from four different dimensions: entertainment, learning, aesthetics, and escapism. Learning experiences thrive on active engagement, and this requires the activation of the mind and body. In experiences that include entertainment, the senses passively receive experiences. Escapist experiences involve a stronger immersion and participation than entertainment and learning. Aesthetic experiences thrive on immersion insights and atmospheres, but the experiencers have only a little control over them. (Räikkönen 2007, 37.)

Tuulaniemi (2011, 74) outlines that services are centred on satisfying the customer and the experience. Everything a company offers, from advertising and other first contacts to the quality of customer service, features, ease of use and reliability, affects the customer experience (Tuulaniemi 2011, 74). According to Peppers (2016, 108), experiences create value and require taking the features into consideration by connecting the information and processes across various touchpoints. Alroy et al. (2022, 127) describe that a successful event experience leaves a long-term impression by encompassing every touchpoint, beginning with attendee's initial online interaction to their experience of the venue (virtual or physical) and is shaped beyond the event itself through the content and community that keeps them engaged.

Ziakas and Getz (2023, 31) outline that designing and executing meaningful event experiences is crucial for every event. Alroy et al. (2022,129-131) emphasise the key factor for strong experiences is the high level of personalisation, and the real value lies in the delivery of products and services to the user. But as being said, it is not straightforward to classify and execute events solely on the basis of experience. There are so many possible experiences that can occur in an event, and experiences can be delivered in many ways (Getz 2012, 47.) Getz (2012, 47) also adds how seemingly different events, such as sports events and festivals can evoke similar experiences and emotions, from joy and celebration to self-fulfilment and excitement despite their contrasting formats and purposes.

The best experience is the right combination of active participation and a close relationship with the event environment and the event itself (Pine & Gilmore 2020, 39). Failure to deliver experiences does not necessarily result in negative experiences but only in a lack of experience (Räikkönen 2007, 30-31). Allen et al. (2011, 146) state that the success of an

event depends on the organisers' ability to create a holistic experience that engages participants on an emotional level and serves the needs of all stakeholders. In the end, Geus, Richards and Toepoel (2016) summarise that a sense of belonging and other people's interpersonal reactions and exceeded expectations are key prerequisites for events to generate memories that sustain the experience economy.

4 Developing a sports event concept

This chapter describes in detail the theory, implementation and results of the research methods used in the thesis. The thesis aims to develop a concept for a multicultural sports event for Monaliiku. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were chosen in this thesis to gain in-depth knowledge about future areas of development concerning Monaliiku's events. The quantitative research method was conducted in the form of an online survey, and the qualitative research method was conducted in the semi-structured theme interview format. This chapter will present the survey results in figures and provide a comprehensive analysis of these findings. The interview results will be presented as a content analysis. Based on the research findings, two outcomes were developed, and the final chapters explain and present these outputs, the persona profile and an event concept.

4.1 The survey theory

The first research method was chosen an online survey for participants in the sports activities of the Monaliiku. The online survey is an effective quantitative research method that allows to reach many respondents at once, collects a massive amount of data and is relatively easy to administer (Adams & Lawrence 2019, 104). In quantitative research, responses are obtained through numbers and percentages among respondents (Vilkka 2021, chapter 4). Online surveys are now a popular method of survey distribution due to their global reach, low administration costs and flexibility in question types (Mason 2022, 83-84). The online survey was chosen as the research method because the aim was to get an idea of who participates in the organisation's sports activities, and which sports they like. This helps to get a better understanding of the motivation of Monaliiku participants and their preferences.

Moreover, the advantage of using the survey as a research method is the collection of a large amount of research data, where many people anonymously can be asked several different questions related to the research topic. However, by conducting online survey need also take into consideration the disadvantage of a survey. It is often impossible to assess how seriously respondents took the study, how appropriate answers to their answers are, and how well they are familiar with the survey topic. (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti 2009, 108.) Mason (2022, 83-84) notes that the disadvantages of the survey are also low response rates, technological differences, and lack of personalisation. In addition, privacy concerns can arise due to the possibility of information being used for marketing or illegal activities (Mason 2022, 83-84).

At the beginning of the questionnaire, a cover letter (Appendix 1) was included, providing participants with response instructions and information about the study. The cover letter tells the respondents the content of the survey, and it helps them to form an opinion on whether they want to take a part of it or not. Additionally, the cover letter is one of the most important elements of the survey. (Moilanen, Ojasalo & Ritalahti 2022, 166.) According to Moilanen et al. (2022, 167), the cover letter should contain the following information, such as

a description of this survey, as well as the reason and aim, information that the survey is conducted anonymously, the survey duration, the names of the authors and the commissioner, and other important details.

When forming the questionnaire, it can be based on multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, mixed-choice questions, or questions based on scales (Vilkka 2021, chapter 4). Moilanen et al. (2022, 164) outline that in the questionnaire, there should have only the type of questions that are necessary for the achievement of the objectives of the work. Multiple-choice questions are based on the fact that the respondent is given a set of predefined, numbered response options from which the respondent chooses one or more that apply. (Vilkka 2021, chapter 4.) In scale-based questions, respondents are presented with statements and have to choose how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement. For example, scale-based questions can be implemented on a scale of 1 to 5. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2010, 194-195; Vilkka 2021, chapter 4.) According to Mason (2022, 11), the closed type of questions may include not only questions that can be answered “Yes” or “No” but also questions with more complex answers, among which respondents need to make a choice. When developing complex closed questions, it is necessary that each of the proposed answers be mutually exclusive (Mason 2022, 109). On the contrary, answers to open-ended questions are given exclusively in their own words. This type of survey can be used in cases where it is impossible to classify responses and predict respondents' responses. (Mason 2022, 111.)

Overall, as Valli (2001, 29) describes, the structure of the questionnaire and the questions should be formulated in such a way that the respondent's interest is maintained until the end of the questionnaire and the information needed for the research objective is collected. In addition, questions should be phrased in a neutral way and should not be leading or suggestive. So, when designing the questions, the formulation of questions must be precise, it must be done in such a way as not to create the possibility of misunderstanding on the part of the respondent. (Valli 2001, 29.)

Once the survey responses and the collected data have been reviewed and gone through, the analysis of the survey results begins. The data is processed by examining the values of each question and calculating various indicators, such as percentages. (Heikkilä 2014, 138, 169.)

4.1.1 The implementation of the survey

The online survey was chosen for this thesis because the survey form could be easily distributed to many different channels, making the data collection efficient and extensive. A wide group of people can be reached, and it does not require anyone's physical presence. Once the research objective and the research questions were clearly defined, the design of the questionnaire begun. The survey was implemented on the Google Forms platform.

A link of the online survey was sent by email to contact person of Monaliiku to share it on Monaliiku's channels, for example, in WhatsApp groups consisting of their members. The online survey was conducted from March 11th to March 24th, 2024, and the responses were collected anonymously. The reminder about the survey was sent on March 14th. In addition, during each interview, the interviewees were asked to convey a reminder to complete the survey to Monaliiku's participants.

The survey was designed to be accessible to a wider audience by offering both English and Finnish versions. The English version can be seen in Appendix 2. In total, the questionnaire consisted of 15 questions. 11 out of 15 questions were closed-ended questions, which provide a specific set of response options and four was open-ended questions which means that the respondents answered using their own words and could leave longer explanation. Ten of close-ended questions were mandatory to answer, and all four open-ended questions were optional. The structure of the survey was divided into four sections. The starting point of the questionnaire consists of attached cover letter (Appendix 2).

Then the survey continues to the first part which was the general information about the respondent, such as gender, age, and nationality. These selections of general information were chosen by the necessity to gather comprehensive information about Monaliiku's participants and develop a customer profile. The second part of the survey asked participants in general terms about their habits in sports and activities to identify their interest in that area. The third section focused on respondents' preferences for events and how they wanted to participate in the event alone or with their families. In addition, questions were asked about diversity and inclusion, as well as how important it is for them when they participate in the event. The last section consisted of questions regarding information about where they would like to receive information about upcoming events in the Monaliiku organisation. Along with possible factors that may prevent them from taking part in a sports event. In the last section, respondents could leave a longer comment about their preferences and suggestions for future sports events they wish to participate in (Appendix 2).

4.1.2 Results of the survey

This sub-chapter discusses the survey questions and results in detail, question by question. Before starting the analysis, all possible data must be translated into numerical form. After that, for a visual form, complex end-closed questions can be visualised by using pie and bar charts, as well as various graphs. This method was chosen because it conveys a large amount of information in a small amount of space and provides the reader with a multi-level understanding of it. The results of the questionnaire illustrate statistical information about Monaliiku's participant's background, sports habits and preferences and perceptions of inclusivity attributes.

According to Mason (2022, 208), the first step in quantitative analysis is to convert the responses into numbers and present the results in a percentage format. However, in the analysis, due to the small number of respondents, the results are presented in terms of the number of responses. The answers to the open-ended questions were analysed by identifying similar answers. This was done due to the fact that the open-ended questions did not contain answer options that could be analysed by measuring how many respondents chose the same answer.

In total, 14 responses were received in the questionnaire. The survey was conducted in both English and Finnish languages. Therefore, the first question on the survey was asked whether the respondent wished to answer the questionnaire in English or Finnish. As a result, half of the respondents chose the language of the survey, English, and the second half, Finnish. Before analysing the results, all responses were translated into English language. (Appendix 2.) In the first part of the survey, was collected information about gender, age and nationality. This part consists of both close-ended and open-ended questions. The survey was conducted only on women and do not consist of information about underage respondents.

The second question of the survey asked the respondent's age. The answer options related to the age of the respondents were divided into the following groups: respondents aged 18-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, and people over 55 years old (Figure 4).

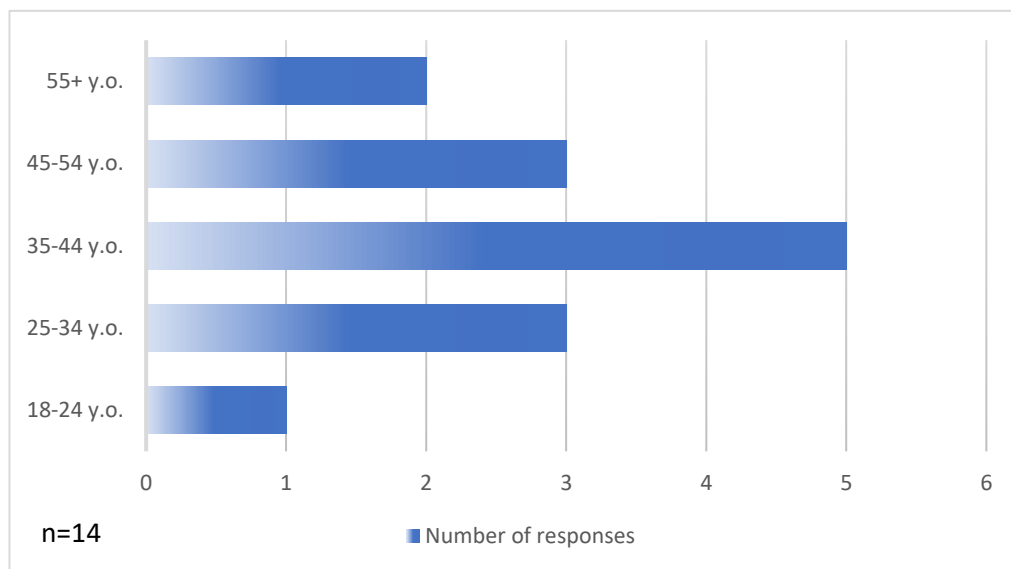


Figure 4: Responses regarding the age of participants. (n=14)

As show in figure 4, the majority, 5 people of the respondents, are from age 35 to 44 (Figure 4). In addition, age groups such as 25-34 years old and 45-54 occupy a response rate of 3 responses each. 2 people were more than 55 years old, whereas one respondent was from the age segment of 18-25. (Figure 4.)

The third question was to find out the nationality of the respondent. This question was an open-ended question, and respondents wrote the answers by themselves. Figure 5 shows that major of respondents are from different nationalities.



Figure 5: Responses regarding the nationalities of the respondents. (n=12)

Out of 12 responses, 4 respondents identified as Finnish or other citizens, meaning by that 2 respondents identified themselves as Finnish. One respondent noted “Finnish and other” as her nationality, and the other one identified herself as a” Finnish/ Kurdish”. The remaining 7 respondents represented different nationalities. The respondents were South African, Russian, Iraqi, Indian, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Brazilian, one from each country. 2 of 12 respondents did not indicate their nationality. (Figure 5.)

After the nationality question, the second section of the survey began, asking about interest in sport in general and interest in participating in Monaliiku events. The first question of the second part was to find out how often the respondents participate in any sports or physical activities. In Figure 6 below, the results of the question are presented in the form of a pictogram.



Figure 6: Responses regarding the regularity of participants in sports activities. (n=14)

This question shows that the majority with 9 responses participates in sports or physical activities regularly, 4 respondents do sports occasionally, and one respondent never do any sports or other physical activities (Figure 6).

The second question in section two was to find out what sports activities’ respondents enjoy most. In this question the respondents could choose several options, all that apply. The respondents also had a chance to write their own answers if the given options didn’t match with their preferences. Figure 7 below shows the results of the question in the form of a bar

chart. There were six closed response options and one open response option, which was “something else”.

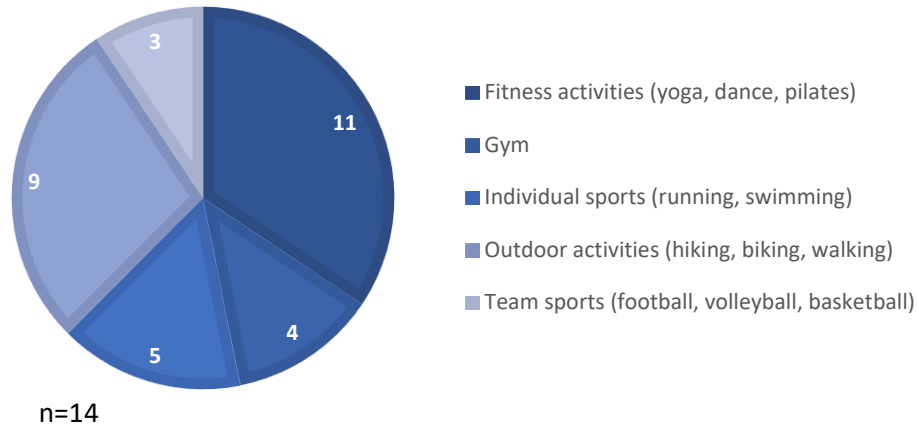


Figure 7: Responses regarding preferences in sports activities. (n=14)

As Figure 7 shows, the majority of respondents prefer fitness activities such as yoga, dance and pilates since it was the most popular answer with 11 responses. Following closely, outdoor activities, such as hiking, biking, and walking, were the second most popular, with 9 responses. 5 respondents mentioned individual sports like running and swimming as the most enjoyed form of a sport or activity. 4 of the collected responses indicated the gym as an enjoyable sport, and lastly, 3 respondents stated the enjoyment of team sports such as football, volleyball, and basketball.

The last question of this second section was to find out whether the respondents would be interested in participating in a sports event organised by Monaliiku. If the answer to this question was yes, the respondent moved on automatically to the third part of the questionnaire. The respondent automatically proceeded to the final section of the survey if they answered no. 13 responded “yes”, and only one respondent answered “No”. The last part of the questionnaire consisted of communication and other factors, for example in relation to the organisation of Monaliiku.

As being said, 13 of the respondents moved automatically to the third section of the survey since they answered “yes” in previous question. The third section covered the topic of event preferences and consisted of five questions. The first question was to find out that what level of physical activity the respondent prefers in Monaliiku sports event. Below are the responses formed in a pie chart to illustrate the question (Figure 8).

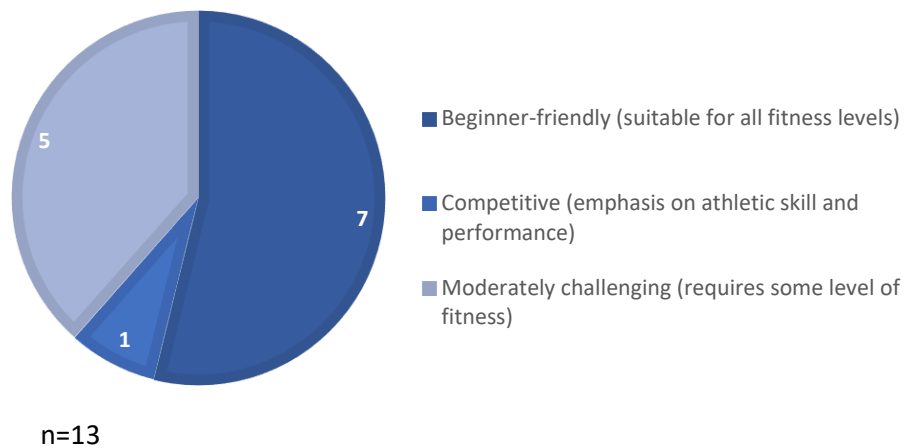


Figure 8: Responses regarding sports level preferences. (n=13)

Figure 8 shows that half of the respondents prefer beginner- friendly level activities. 5 respondents indicated that they would prefer to engage in moderately demanding physical activity that requires some level of fitness. 1 respondent expressed a desire to engage in competitive activities emphasising on athletic skill and performance. One respondent did not provide a response to the question.

The second question of the third section of the questionnaire was to find out how respondents typically and preferably take part in sports events. Respondents had a choice to choose from several options, by selecting all that apply. The results are displayed in a pie chart in Figure 9.

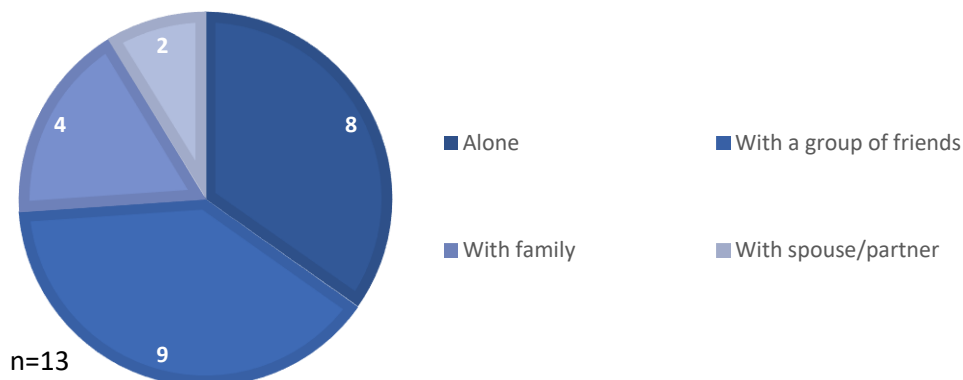


Figure 9: Responses regarding sports event participation preferences. (n=13)

As shown in Figure 9, the respondents were asked how they typically prefer to participate in sports events. The main preferred way of participation was with a group of friends with 9 responses. Following closely, 8 responded, preferring to attend a sports event alone. Participating in a sports event with family received 4 responses. Lastly, two respondents associated their responses to attend sports events with their partner/spouse.

Figure 10 explores respondents' ratings of the importance of inclusivity and diversity in sports events, and it displays the rating as a bar chart.

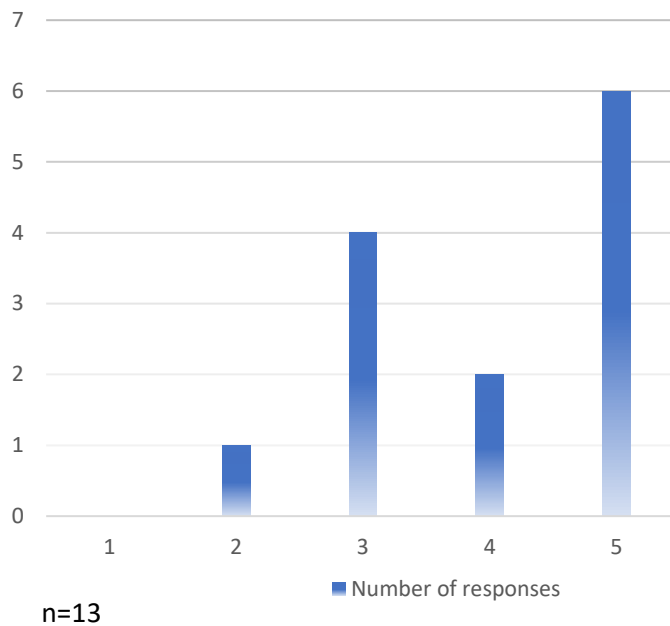


Figure 10: Responses regarded rating the importance of inclusivity and diversity in sports event. (n=13)

As shown in Figure 10, on a scale of 1 to 5, respondents were asked to rate their preference of how important inclusivity and diversity are in sports events. Most respondents, accounting for 6 people, gave the highest number, 5 out of 5.

2 respondents emphasized the importance of diversity and inclusivity for sports events as a number 4. Followed by 4 responses, rating of 3 out of 5 was given and lastly, one rated 2 as a response. None of the respondents chose option 1.

The ratings provided by the respondents reflect their perception of the importance of diversity and inclusiveness in events. In addition, after the rating, an open-ended question was created to follow the previous question and to give an opportunity to the respondent to clarify and share what "inclusivity and diversity" means to them in the context of sports. The question was optional, and the respondents were allowed to answer it with their own words. 7 respondents express themselves in their own wording.

Few of the responses emphasised inclusivity as an act of taking everyone into account in sports and providing something for everyone. Relatively, diversity in sports events was considered as "different ways of moving", providing different sports, and it was outlined that these exercises should be modified according to participants' own fitness and physical capabilities. In addition, how the theoretical framework was also outlined, the culture aspect

was highlighted in the participant's responses as well. Sense of belonging, diverse languages, togetherness and promoting the right to sport for all were noted by the respondents.

These findings collectively underline the importance of inclusivity and diversity and noted that it should be taken into account when developing a sports event concept. It also indicates that advancing social inclusion through sport appears to be a significant concern for the respondents.

Followed by the previous open-ended question, there was another optional question related to sports events where the respondents were allowed to write their own responses. The question was to find out if respondents could attend any sports event and what kind of event it would be. 5 responses were received, where the respondents highlighted the activities in which they prefer to attend in the sports event. Activities related to relaxation and mind, such as yoga, pilates and meditation, were mentioned a couple of times in the responses. Respondents also expressed their wish of activities such as taekwondo, swimming technique, badminton and boxing and these could be categorized as a sport that focus on developing a skill. In addition, team activities such as Zumba and football were noted.

This question showed the respondents' wishes and suggestions to sports event activities, and it is evident that most respondents likely recommend providing a variety of sport activities in the sport event. The response of this question provides ideas and insights to the designing of event and the provided qualitative data from both previous open-ended question will be contributed to the outcomes of this thesis.

Moving to the final section of the questionnaire, where one respondent was automatically directed, and the other respondents moved on to this section after the third section. The last section comprised three questions and the topic were communication and other factors. The common channels preferred by respondents to receive information about events are shown below, and the results of the question can be found in Figure 11. Respondents were allowed to select multiple applicable options. The question was made to determine where Monaliiku can enhance their online visibility to effectively promote their events to reach larger audience, including their past, current and future members and participants.

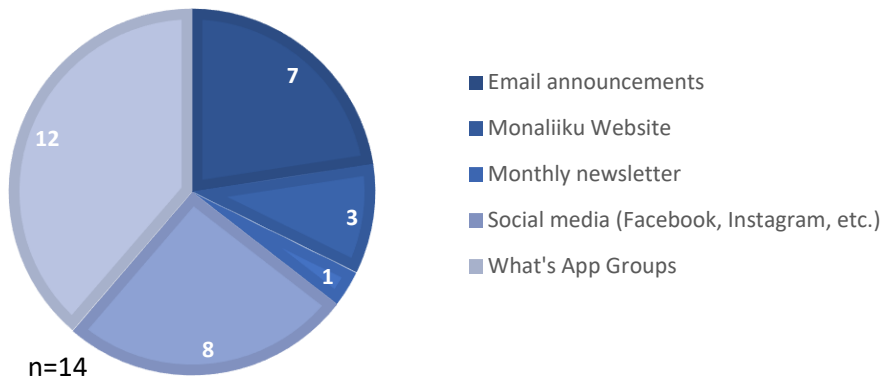


Figure 11: Responses regarding preferred methods for receiving information. (n=14)

Figure 11 shows the common channels they prefer to get information are WhatsApp, with 12 responses, and social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, etc., with amount of 8. Seven respondents preferred email announcements as their primary communication channel. In addition, 2 people responded that they use social media to get the information. One respondent selected the newsletter as the preferred method for receiving information.

The final part of the questionnaire was focusing also besides the communication, to other factors related to events, such as to the factors that may prevent the respondents for attending Monaliiku’s sporting event. Once again, the respondents could select multiple options and the responses based on this question are presented in Figure 12.

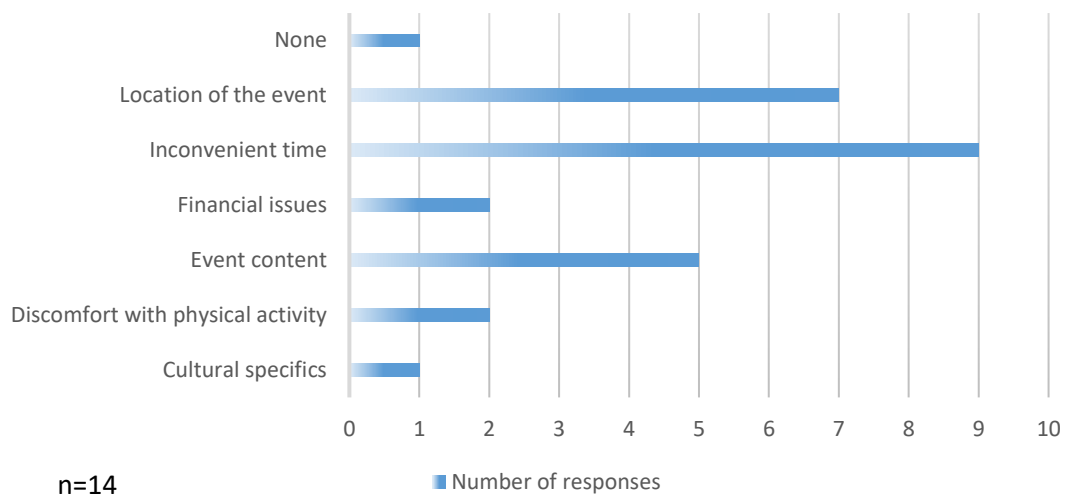


Figure 12: Responses regarding factors that might prevent from attending a Monaliiku sports event. (n=14)

As can be seen from Figure 12, 9 respondents see inconvenient time as an issue for participating in Monaliiku’s sports event. The respondents who chose location of the event accounted for 7 respondents and ranked second, indicating that the area of the event, the

nature of the venue, and accessibility are considered as an important element in the organisation of the event. It was also found that the content of the event effects on event participation, since 5 of respondents chose it as an affecting factor. 2 respondents stated that financial issues and discomfort with physical activity were the factors that might prevent them from attending to a Monaliiku sports event. Lastly, a small amount, only 1 noted that cultural specifics might be the affecting factor of participation. The results of this question can be used to identify, for instance if there are connections within the satisfaction of the events Monaliiku provides and get development ideas what to take into consideration when planning an event.

The last question of the survey was an open-ended question which asked the respondents if they had any wishes or suggestions for future sporting events in Monaliiku. Only several answered the last question. The answers indicated the satisfaction towards the Monaliiku's event and actions that they have already done, and encouragement to continue the excellent work directed towards women was noted as well. Among the wishes and suggestions for events, the desire for a shared yoga class that brings many women together to do sports was highlighted.

However, it is important to note that the results of the online survey may not be representative of the entire population of Monaliiku participants due to the small number of responses received within the survey. As the survey was distributed by a commissioner, it was not known to which WhatsApp groups the survey was distributed to. The lack of access made it impossible to assess the potential responses the survey could receive from the organisation's members.

4.2 The interview theory

The second research method used in this thesis is a semi-structured theme interview, which is a qualitative research method. The main advantage of conducting an interview is that it allows for a detailed explanation of the answer and will allow respondents to go into detail, provide explanations, and add extra comments in their own words (Mason 2022, 164). The interview was chosen as it is a reliable face-to-face conversation that has a high level of accuracy of answers and encourages participants to respond (Adams & Lawrence 2019, 103).

Interviews are a valuable tool for gathering important research data. They are different from questionnaires as the interviewer is looking to understand the respondents' perspectives on the topic and how they express their thoughts in their own words. (Mason 2022, 164.) Nevertheless, conducting interviews can be a time-consuming process and may lack anonymity. Face-to-face interviews may potentially lead to bias, which can affect the accuracy of the information collected. (Adams & Lawrence 2019, 103.)

Semi-structured thematic interviews are used to collect qualitative data. The advantages of a semi-structured interview are that they provide the interviewer with more flexibility when asking additional questions to clarify it if necessary. This will help the interviewer ask questions that weren't considered before. Conducting a semi-structured interview is challenging, as it requires knowledge of the research topic and experience to reduce interviewer bias. (Adams & Lawrence 2019, 103-104.)

The interview questions are focused on specific themes. In advanced made interview framework ensures that the discussion focuses on the issues relevant to the research. Thematic interviews are designed to get relevant responses to the purpose of the research, so the interview can be used to expand and refine questions based on the interviewees' responses. The interview makes the interviewees' voices heard and their subjective interpretations are taken into account. (Puusa, Juuti & Aaltio 2020, 112-113.) In thematic interviews, new thematic paths and questions usually emerge as the interview progresses, which is why it is important not to lock in any questions (Kananen 2015, 148).

Conducting an interview while keeping up with the conversation flow can be challenging task. In this case the interview recording is a solution for the interviewer. However, some people may feel uncertain about being recorded and may reject the request. (Mason 2022, 169.)

4.2.1 The implementation of the interview

The semi-structured theme interview was conducted as part of the research in this thesis. After analysing the theoretical framework and preliminary survey results, the following topics were selected for the interviews: "Background," "Participants," and "Development." One key question was chosen for every theme (Appendix 3). The interview was conducted with active representatives of Monaliiku, and the questions were adjusted based on their answers.

Figure 13 illustrates the interview process.

Interviewee	Title	Asked	Interviewed	Duration
1	Communications Specialist & Project Assistant	March 18 th at 8 pm	March 21 st at 10:30 am	25 minutes
2	Activity coordinator	March 18 th at 8 pm	March 21 st at 3:30 pm	40 minutes
3	Activity coordinator	March 18 th at 8 pm	March 25 th at 2 pm	25 minutes
4	Sports instructor	March 18 th at 8 pm	-	-

Figure 13: Interview plan.

The plan was to conduct 3-5 semi-structured interviews. Four representatives from Monaliiku were invited to the individual face-to-face interviews via email. The email explained the topic of the thesis, the intention to conduct an interview, the interview format and the themes that would be discussed during the interview. With three of them were found the suitable days and times for the interviews. One of the scheduled interviews could not be conducted due to difficulties with the agreement. These representatives were chosen because they are all influential parties in the Monaliiku Organisation. (Figure 13.)

Each interviewee received a one-hour calendar invitation titled “Interview: [name of interviewee] x Laurea students,” with a link to the Teams video conference and a brief description of how the interview would proceed. The interviews were conducted between 21.3.2024 and 25.3.2024. Before the interview, every interviewee was asked for permission to record the interview. Interviews were recorded for the purpose of transcribing the interview material. All requests about recording the interviews were accepted. As a result, generated by Teams recordings and transcripts were saved after each interview.

4.2.2 Results of the interview

According to Moilanen et al. (2022, 141), a good way to begin analysing an interview is to read the transcript several times. During each reading, it is fundamental to classify the topics were discussed according to certain criteria. This way will help identify common answers and find connections, which will lead the analysis process. (Moilanen et al. 2022, 141.) The purpose of data analysis is the interpretation, understanding and description of the phenomenon being studied (Puusa et al. 2020, 145-151).

Moilanen et al. (2022, 173) advise to start the analysis by preparing the data by transferring it into digital form and correct the mistake and shorten it by removing all unnecessary information. Thus, the analysis of the interview data began with listening to the recordings and transcribing the data. After the data was transferred into words, the text was simplified, leaving only understandable text that could be analysed.

In the analysis of the written material obtained from the thematic interviews, the method of analysis used was content analysis, which is the basic method of analysis in qualitative research (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 103). Additionally, Mason (2022, 244) suggests to summarise the data and categorise it, as this method helps to find out the patterns in the responses, and the main goal is to have as many categories as possible. Moreover, Hirsjärvi et al. (2010, 224) describe the most common methods of analysis as thematic analysis, typology, content analysis, discourse analysis and conversation analysis. The categorising and content analysis method was chosen as the interview was conducted in the theme format, which already consists of certain categories (Hirsjärvi et al. 2010, 224). According to Mason (2022, 194), the process of presenting qualitative results for analysis differs significantly from presenting quantitative results because the interview's end result is text, and summary tables

and figures can be used to present the interview output. In this analysis, the figure was used as a visual presentation of the interview outputs (Figure 14).

Themes	Background	Participants	Development
Subcategories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowering migrant women through sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrant women with multicultural background. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure venues are accessible
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monaliiku prioritises the needs and interests of their participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise, social interaction, escape from routine as main reasons for participating in sport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be mindful of religious holidays and cultural sensitivities when scheduling events.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe space for women with diverse backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language barriers, cultural differences and lack of sporting experience are the main obstacles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing the needs of elderly participants with low-impact activities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use multiple languages in marketing materials and events, including easy Finnish for clear communication.
Upper categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sport activities Focus on customers Cultural sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivations Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusivity Accessibility Activities selection Marketing and Communication

Figure 14: Content analysis of the interviews with Monaliiku representatives.

The purpose of the question asking about Monaliiku's background was to find out what aspect needs to be taken into account when developing a multicultural sports event for migrant women and if there was already a high demand for some of the events that Monaliiku has organised through their visions. The interviews created three subcategories under the theme of organisational background and 3 upper categories, such as sports activities, customer focus and cultural sensitivity (Figure 14.) Throughout the interviews was emphasised the importance of creating a safe space where women of all backgrounds feel welcome, comfortable and safe, regardless of cultural differences or sporting experience.

Activity coordinators of Monaliiku describe the organisation's background as:

"Our everything we do at Monaliiku, we do it for our customers."(Activity coordinator)
 & "Monaliiku providing a safe space for women who don't have any other place to go.
 (Activity coordinator).

The purpose of the question about Monaliiku participants was to understand how the organisation sees its participants and how they are perceived, as well as delve deeper into their motivation for participating in sports activities and what could be a barrier to participating in sports events. As a result of the interviews, for the theme about participants

were created three subcategories and two upper categories. Participants' main motivations for attending Monaliiku sports events were identified as a place for social interaction and an opportunity to escape from daily routines and do something new, such as sports. Despite this, were discussed the various challenges that participants are facing. The main challenges are related to the participants' diverse cultural backgrounds, which include language barriers and a lack of experience with sports. In some cultures, women are not encouraged to participate in sports, which can be a significant hurdle for some of the participants. (Figure 14.) During the discussion about participants, an interesting insight was received about a typical participant, who was described as a woman who has been living in Finland for 5 to 15 years and who has a family and at least a few kids.

The coordinators of Monaliiku describe the Participants as:

“We have multicultural women from many, different countries. Monaliiku offers a place for women who do not have any other place to go. They usually have strict cultural and religious rules. And they cannot join the mixed groups, or they don't have experience about exercise. They might have language barriers and different types that they cannot go anywhere else.” (Activity coordinator).

“When participants come to the events, they know that they can be comfortable, and they don't need to be nervous and stressed about it. They don't have to think that, ok, is there going to be something? Or is somebody going to disrespect me? Or am I going to face some racism? Monaliiku is a place where they can come and enjoy participation with their families.” (Activity coordinator).

The above quote shows that this is also reflected and in line with the survey results. The Monaliiku participants are women with a multicultural background who might have some cultural barriers to do sports. However, in general, they still want to encourage multicultural women to own their rights for engage in sports and physical activities. Diversity and inclusion are also seen in important matters, and when embracing these in sporting events, a sense of security and belonging are created, as noted as well in the theoretical framework and in the survey results. (Figure 14.)

The development question was discussed to gain insight into what could be improved in Monaliiku's events to better meet the needs and preferences of participants. Moreover, it provided an overview of what could be improved from the organisation's perspective. The analysis identified four subcategories and four overarching categories to consider for future Monaliiku event development: inclusivity, accessibility, activity selection, and marketing and communication (Figure 14.)

In terms of inclusiveness, it was underlined that cultural sensitivities need to be taken into account when planning and organising events during religious and cultural holidays.

Additionally, was pointed out that for improving inclusivity need to have different sets of activities that would be matching for various fitness levels. Accessibility was discussed which event venues would be suitable for participants and pointed out the importance of taking into consideration the participants who attend an event with their kids (Figure 14.)

The need to carefully select sports activities for events was also raised because Monaliiku's core is to make migrant women feel more involved in local society through sports. It was noted that sports activities should be appropriate for a wide range of participants, from youth to the eldest. It was also noted that not all sports may be accessible to all, as some cultures have dress codes that may not be appropriate for certain sports occasions.

When discussing marketing and communication, the interviewees emphasised the importance of using several languages for effective communication. They also mentioned the preference of using simple Finnish as the main language of communication, as not all attendees know English. Moreover, as a challenge was discussed, difficulties in reaching out and communicating to all potential sports event attendees, as not all of them use social media and messaging services. Taking pictures during events requires a sensitive approach and it should be taken into account that participants generally do not want to be photographed.

During the interview were the following quotes regarding development:

“If you're going to take pictures, be careful who you take pictures of and always ask the participants beforehand if they would like to be photographed or not. Some people don't want to be in the pictures.” (Communications Specialist & Project Assistant).

This content analysis of interviews with Monaliiku's representatives provided valuable insights into the organisation's background, its participants and possible developments based on their vision and experience. This data will be used for developing the persona profile of Monaliiku's sports event participant and developing a sports event concept planning. In addition, the interview results confirmed the survey findings that the members of the organisation are migrant women from different cultures. For them, there is a need for sports activities and social contact in order to feel part of the local society.

In the following chapter of this thesis, the theory and the results of the two different research methods are combined for creating a persona profile and event concept for the commissioner.

4.3 Persona profile

Persona profiles are a key method for the crystallisation and presentation of customer data gathered from customer surveys (Tuulaniemi 2011, 154-156). Moilanen et al. (2022, 99) describe persona profiles as fictional profiles of descriptions of customers' behaviour models, motives, needs and life situations. Usually, the imagined customer is described visually and in

the creating process, they are given name, age, face, typical motto, behavioural models, background information and other and other features that help identify what adds value for the customer (Moilanen et al. 2022,99).

Persona profiling can be used to create alternative models and measure their potential value before launching a service. This is important because it helps to understand the everyday lives of the company's users and who and why services are being developed. (Tuulaniemi 2011, 154-56). In alignment with Tuulaniemi, Stickdorn and Schneider (2010, 178) also summarise that although the personas themselves are fictional characters, their underlying motivations and reactions are based on reality. User profiles allow design teams to better understand the diversity of their target group and to define and engage the wishes and needs of different stakeholders. In this way, they can ensure that the service serves all users in the best possible way. (Stickdorn & Schneider 2010, 178.)

Figure 15 presents a visual persona profile compiled by the findings of the survey and the interviews. The persona was named as a “member of Monaliiku” and it represents the most common attendee of the organisation’s activities. It helps to understand for whom Monaliiku is developing its activities and thus plays an essential role in the creation planning of event concept.



Figure 15 Persona profile.

According to the survey and the interview, the main users of Monaliiku activities are early middle-aged women who take part in sports or physical activity on a regular basis. Most of the participants are migrant women who have moved to Finland 5-15 years ago. Concerning sports

and activities, for the most, they like to engage in fitness activities such as yoga, dance and pilates. At some point, they also enjoy doing some outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, and walking. They value Monaliiku's work towards the equality of opportunity to do sports and physical activity as a migrant woman and creating a safe place to do that since it is aligned with their own values. They are keen to participate in Monaliiku's events since those are built for a good cause, and an equal atmosphere is created in those settings. (Figure 15.)

The challenges they might face are, for example, strict cultural rules and, because of that, a lack of knowledge and experience of sports. As it was mentioned in the interview, it is significant to offer an environment where to easily adapt into local society and learn to do physical activity. The factors that may prevent or make challenges concerning the participation of the event are the lack of suitable options related to the event content, inconvenient timing and cultural or language barriers. (Figure 15.)

Figure 15 frames the hopes of the Monaliiku participants, including a sense of belonging and the escape from everyday routines while attending sports activities. In general, a deeper understanding of Finnish culture and local society is one of the objectives of interest, which also contributes to the integration and inclusion noted in the survey results. Multicultural activities and events bring like-minded persons together, and the preferred channels for communication and information of these events are WhatsApp groups and social media in general. (Figure 15.)

As seen in Figure 15, a quote illustrating the persona was created, which summarises the person's story behind her feelings when moving to Finland and facing the difficulties in the beginning. In addition, the satisfaction towards Monaliiku's activities was noted in the quotation.

Based on the persona profile, it can be concluded that the participant base is keen and willing to participate in a sports event. However, it should be inclusive, suitable for the target audience in general and contribute to cultural diversity. The variability of the event content, the sports activities and the suitability of this target audience gives meaning and interest to the event. The event would be facilitated for multilingual, accessible and culture-sensitive way which promote the benefits of events itself and sports. This would reduce the participant's stress and nervousness about how to adapt to a new environment and try out different physical activities and lead to continued involvement in the event. (Figure 15.)

4.4 Concept for sports event

This chapter presents key focus areas for developing a concept for sports events in Monaliiku. The purpose of going through these focus areas is to ensure that such sports events are in line with the organisation's goals of promoting inclusivity and cultural sensitivity for migrant women participants. The careful planning and execution of a sports event concept should

focus on creating an engaging and memorable experience while taking into account the characteristics of the target audience. The persona profile discussed in the previous subchapter was taken as representative of Monaliiku's target audience. Based on Ayesha's persona profile and the interview results, the Monaliiku Sports Event concept was developed, which is aimed at the pre-planning stage of a sports event.

Figure 16 shows the sports event concept key focus areas, which were developed based on the Monaliiku members' survey and thematic interviews of Monaliiku representatives' analyses. The suggestions are aligned with the persona profile's needs and motivations, as well as other specifics that need to be taken into consideration for developing a sports event. These areas represent the five fundamental principles of the Five W's method that were described in Chapter 3.2.

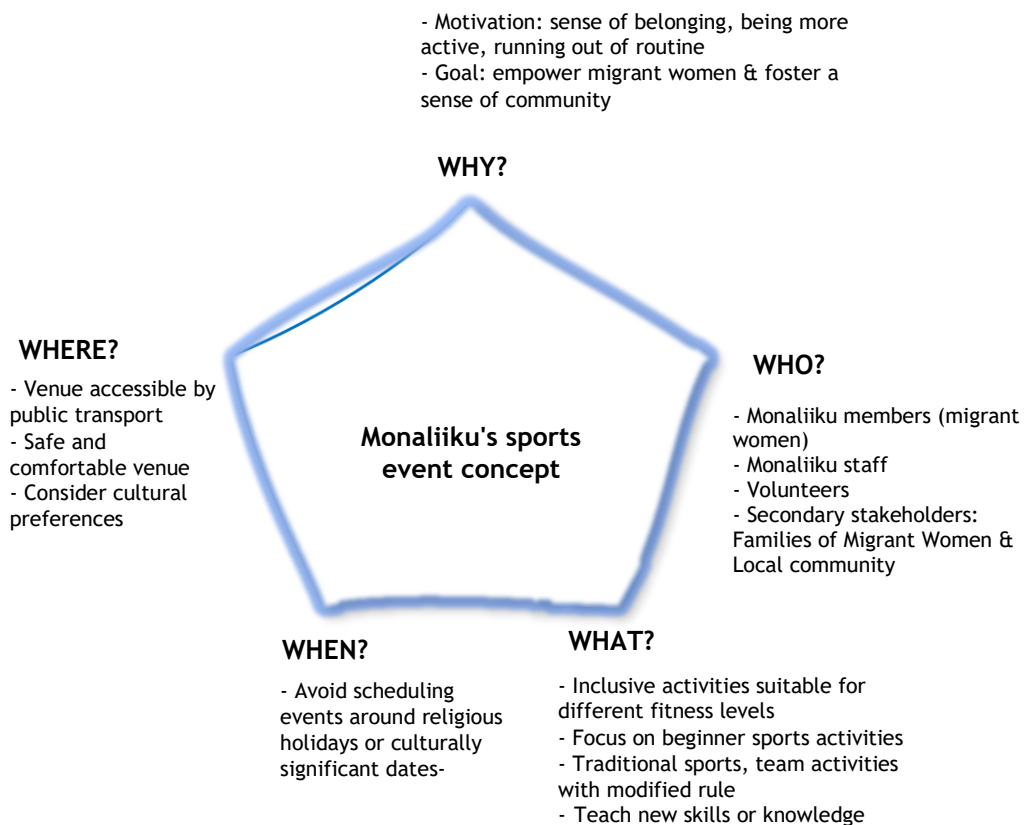


Figure 16: Five W's method for Monaliiku sports event concept (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 25).

For the purpose of developing a sports event concept relevant to Ayesha, it is necessary to consider the five main questions shown in Figure 16: Why is the event needed? Who are the stakeholders of the event? What is happening at the event? When is the event being held? Where is the event being held? (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 24-25; Bladen et al. 2023, 55-56.)

4.4.1 Purpose and goals

In order to begin the process of creating a concept for a sports event, it is necessary to start with the basics and ask why it is necessary to organise an event. The response should take into account the preferences of Monaliiku members, as well as the organization's mission and vision. Firstly, the sports event should align with the Monaliiku's mission, which is to empower migrant women and foster a sense of community through sport. By taking into consideration the long-term impact of the events. As the organisation is a community of women, it is important to unite the participants and promote a sense of belonging and give women the opportunity to become more active in the local community.

Ayesha desires to participate in the Monaliiku sports event. She likes sports and participates in sports activities multiple times throughout the week. Although sports are the core of the organisation, Ayesha's primary motivation for participating in sports events is not the sport itself. According to the research, Ayesha's main motivation for attending is a sense of community and social interaction with others. Thus, this allows Ayesha to connect with friends and fellow sports enthusiasts she sees regularly during her weekly activities. It's also a chance to meet new people who share her passion for sports and create new friendships. While Ayesha might not be participating in the competition itself, attending the Monaliiku event allows her to cheer on others and feel part of a team spirit. This sense of collective support and shared goals will add another layer of pleasure to her social experience and interaction with the community.

4.4.2 Stakeholders

In the process of conceptualising an event, it is crucial to identify the stakeholders involved. This step allows for a better understanding of the interests and concerns of all parties. It is also useful to answer the question: who exactly are the stakeholders? Understanding who the event's stakeholders are helps tailor the program, communications, and overall atmosphere to suit the needs and interests of the target audience. As Monaliiku is a non-governmental organisation, the primary stakeholders for the organisation are its members, volunteers and staff members.

Ayesha is one of the main stakeholders, along with other Monaliiku sports event participants. As she is a migrant woman, who already actively participates in the sports activities that Monaliiku organises on a weekly basis. Thus, her needs and interests should be the first priority when planning a sports event in Monaliiku. Based on the survey results, Ayesha would like to participate in sports events with their family, or friends, or spouses. Consequently, families of migrant women could be defined as secondary stakeholders.

The Monaliiku sports event should be organised not only for Ayesha and other members of the organisation, but also for their spouses, children and other family members, like Ayesha's

parents. They do not have to actively participate in the event. They could be there as spectators at a sporting event who could cheer for and support Ayesha. Even though Ayesha moved to Finland more than five years ago, she has a strong connection with her family, as Iraqi families usually have a strong sense of community and family is their main value.

Additionally, the local community could be identified as a secondary stakeholder. Collaborating with local women's groups, cultural organizations or sports clubs can expand outreach and leverage their expertise. There are several non-governmental organisations in Finland, particularly in the Capital area, whose mission aligns with that of Monaliiku. Some of these organisations focus exclusively on women, such as International Working Women of Finland Ry and Svenska Kvinnoförbundet i Sörnäs, a liberal feminist organisation. Others have programs for women and those from multicultural backgrounds, such as Luckan Integration, Familia Ry, and others. Collaborating with these organisations could be beneficial for promoting sports events and organising them together. For example, Svenska Kvinnoförbundet i Sörnäs organises a meeting place for women every Friday from 12 pm to 2 pm, where they usually have a topic and invite speakers who talk about life in Finland, society, and integration. Monaliiku could consider collaborating with these organisations and participating there as a speaker to promote their sports event and the organisation in general.

Another important stakeholder for Monaliiku sports events is their staff members and volunteers. While staff members are permanent employees who keep the organization running, volunteers are just as important for executing an event. It can be a challenge to find and keep volunteers, but their contribution is vital to the success of an event. In addition, sufficient time must be allocated for volunteer training and orientation, as well as a clear description of their responsibilities and other motivations for participating in the Monaliiku sports event. It's important to identify their motivation beforehand to avoid any inconvenience during the event. The possible volunteers' motivation could be the opportunity to develop new skills, a personal desire to help others, doing work that brings pleasure, the opportunity to get extra credits at the university, the need for a sense of belonging and others. One way how to attract volunteers for the sports events is to collaborate with universities of applied sciences in the capital region, such as Laurea, Haaga-Helia, Metropolia and others.

4.4.3 Program

The “what” question determines the nature of the event and the specific programme that can be developed. Knowing this will help ensure that activities are inclusive, suitable for different fitness levels and culturally sensitive. A deep understanding of the participant’s needs and wants is important for ensuring a successful participation experience. Since Ayesha prefers to participate with her spouse and two children, she would appreciate it if the event had

childcare available or accompanying programme during the event, this could effectively remove barriers to her participation.

Ayesha likes to do different sports, and she prefers beginner-friendly activities. When participating in sports events, Ayesha must follow strict rules regarding the clothing she must wear that can restrict movement and cause discomfort during exercise. She must cover her hair and body by wearing a hijab and a loose-fitting garment. Nevertheless, she is interested in the swimming technique course, as well as yoga and meditation practices. That promotes both physical and mental well-being. It's important to note that some yoga chants and poses, such as sun salutations, may not be good for her.

The suitable events activities could be traditional sports, or team activities with modified rules, or other activities that encourage interaction. Ayesha also would like to gain new skills or knowledge. Thus, part of the event could be non-sports activities, such as self-defence workshops, or financial literacy seminars, or other workshops that build confidence. Additionally, as discussed during an interview a silent disco was suggested as one of the activities to ensure inclusivity and to accommodate cultural differences. This would allow participants to either groove to the music with headphones or opt-out, making the dance workshop more tailored to everyone's preferences.

As mentioned above, Ayesha is willing to participate along with her children. This is why it is important to offer activities for the kids as well. These could be low-key activities like yard games, Mölkky, and building block stations that provide creative fun or more engaging activities such as hobby horsing competitions or children's Olympics. It could also include arts and crafts workshops with themes related to the event, such as creating team flags and awards for participants.

Additionally, apart from planning the activity program, it is necessary to plan the food and beverages that will be available at the event. It is important to provide disposable water glasses for participants, such as Ayesha, to use and prevent dehydration. Offer a simple selection of snacks to suit any dietary restrictions. Do not serve alcohol as Ayesha and her family do not drink alcohol.

4.4.4 Time

When answering the question of “when” to schedule events should be a top consideration. This includes choosing a time for the event that suits the convenience of the target audience. As Ayesha is originally from Iraq, she has a strong religious background and follows all Islamic holidays. This is why it is critical to avoid scheduling events around religious holidays or culturally significant dates. During these times, Ayesha may observe religious practices that could restrict her participation in the event.

Ramadan is one of the most significant holidays in the Islamic religion, and it is a holy month of fasting and prayer. The exact dates vary each year due to the lunar calendar, and this year it is over, next year Ramadan starts on 28 February 2025 and lasts until 31 May 2025. Eid al-Adha and Ashura are other important holidays in the Islamic religion. The dates of these holidays change every year. Therefore, the exact dates should be checked before choosing an event date. By avoiding to organising a sports event during these holidays, it will ensure inclusivity and respect for Ayesha and her family.

4.4.5 Location and venue

When answering the question of “where” to conduct the events, accessibility should be a top consideration. For Ayesha’s convenience, the venue should be easily accessible by public transport, and the venue should be near a metro or local train station. For her the location of the event is an important factor in the decision to attend. Big transportation hubs like Leppävaara might be potential venues for sports events, as they are easy to access and consist of suitable sports facilities, such as Leppävaara Sports Park, a Football Hall, a Swimming pool, and a Skate Hall. These facilities are owned by Espoo City. In addition, in the theoretical framework it was mentioned that the Ministry of Education and Culture has made an operational programme named “Taide, kulttuuri ja moninainen Suomi” where also the the Finnish Heritage Agency and the National Museum of Finland is promoting cultural diversity and equality through different measures. Their public work is based on strong partnership with organisations, communities, cities, and business. (Lummepuro 2023,33.) As a suggestion for this, since the Finnish Heritage Agency offers a wide range of constantly evolving services to all citizens, Monaliiku could also build a collaboration with them and organize an event for example on the premises of the National Museum or on the premises managed by the museum. This collaboration in a safe place would promote cultural diversity in Finland, which is valuable for Ayesha.

Although Ayesha has been living in Finland for many years, she prefers to participate in a sports event indoors during the cold season and outdoors during the summer months. Ayesha would only participate if the venue is safe and comfortable. In addition, there should be enough space for changing clothes, which is divided into men's and women's. Moreover, there should be enough space, since Ayesha is a modest person, and for some sports, she cannot play sports in the presence of men. Therefore, it should be possible to separate the area where we will be allowed only for women.

4.4.6 Communication

Although marketing and communication are not included in the 5 W's method, it is important to highlight discoveries that appear in the research part. According to survey responses the preferred communication sources is What’s App groups, social media and a monthly new letter. However, interviews showed that not all participants use messaging apps or social

media. Using traditional communication channels might be a solution to reach out to these participants. This also might include distributing printed flyers in areas that the target audience frequently visits, collaborating with local newspapers, spreading word of mouth, printing and placing posters in the places where Monaliiku organises the sports groups and setting a goal for the group teachers to promote the events during classes. Nevertheless, using traditional communication channels makes it complicated to track if the message is rich to the Monaliiku target audience.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, when developing a concept for a sports event, it is important to take the time to research the target audience. This will provide insight into their wants, needs and motivation. Understanding these factors allows to create a sports event concept that resonates with participants, creates a sense of involvement and achieves the desired results.

The aim of this thesis was to develop a multicultural sports event concept for Monaliiku that enhances networking opportunities and promotes integration into local society for event attendees from diverse backgrounds. The commissioner, Monaliiku- Monikansallisten naisten hyvinvointi ja liikunta Ry is a Helsinki-based non-governmental organisation whose aim is to integrate migrant women and offer them a safe and supportive community to socialise, practice healthy habits and build relationships through physical activity and sporting events.

The theoretical framework of this thesis focused on the definition of sports event and the process of developing an event concept. These included the definition of event concept and theme, event purpose and objective, stakeholders, and target audience. Additionally, were represented the social impact of events, event experience, and cultural diversity in events.

With the two research methods used in this thesis - the online survey and semi-structured theme interview, the purpose was to create an outcome for commissioner Monaliiku that consists of practical suggestions for sports event conceptualisation. The results of the survey and interviews indicate that Monaliiku participants are migrant women with a multicultural background who value sports and want to participate in sports events. They also recognise Monaliiku as a safe and reliable place to do so. Additionally, they consider Monaliiku to be a promising place for networking and for recognition of cultural diversities.

The research outcomes consisted of a persona profile with the content of persona insights, which can help the commissioner identify the needs of its members and create better services. The event concept covers information on the key focus areas that need to be taken into consideration while developing an event concept. Ayesha's persona profile was used as a representative of the organisation's target audience. The suggestions provided in the concept are in alignment with Ayesha's needs and motivation to participate in a sports event.

The success of this thesis ultimately lies in its potential to further Monaliiku's mission to empower migrant and multicultural women through shared sports experiences. This research can help Monaliiku create inclusive and engaging sports event. Additionally, such event promotes social inclusion and provide support to all participants in the future.

For future development, it is suggested that another survey be conducted that will focus on discovering the motivation of the Monaliiku members to participate in sports events. Further research could also include a deeper look at different aspects of the event experience or the

contribution to the success of the event experience. Additionally, can discover more in detail the cultural needs and concerns about cultural sensitivity at sports events. Moreover, it is important to consider future research that will examine the effectiveness of the key areas proposed in this thesis and evaluate their impact on participant integration and networking. In addition, research into best practices in marketing and community engagement that could strengthen Monaliiku's event initiatives is suggested.

Although the company has expertise in event planning and implementation, they needed to formalise the planning process. According to the commissioner feedback, the outcomes developed in this thesis will help the organisation to improve the planning and implementation of sports events in the future. The commissioner was satisfied with the thesis and considered it applied new methods that revealed new data and interpretations that had not been considered before. It was pointed out that sports events are important to the organisation and are critical to community engagement and network expansion. The structured approaches developed in the thesis play an important role for the team to manage activities more effectively and align them with organisational goals.

The commissioner pointed out that their collaboration with the students was smooth and productive. It was noted that the enthusiasm and dedication of the students was noticeable and made a huge contribution to the development of the project. Effective communication between the commissioner and the students was highlighted as the hallmark of this collaboration, allowing for a fruitful exchange of ideas. Additionally, Monaliiku is interested in deepening their academic collaboration with Laurea University of Applied Sciences for future targeted research projects and other potential projects that could bring mutual benefit to both parties.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire Introduction



Sports Event Survey

Urheilutapahtumatutkimus



AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
University of Applied Sciences



Monaliiku Sports Event Survey/ Monaliiku Urheilutapahtumatutkimus

In English:

Hi! We are Anni Hyvönen and Valeria Mäkinen, students of the Hospitality Management and Service Design Program at Laurea University of Applied Sciences. We are collaborating with Monaliiku to write a thesis work that aims developing a sports event idea for Monaliiku organisation. We would love for you to be a part of it!

The purpose of this survey is to understand your interests, preferences, and what would make a sports event enjoyable and inclusive for you. The target audience for this survey is Monaliiku's activity participants.

🕒 **Estimated response time:** 3-5 min. 📅 **Survey period:** 11.-24.3.2024

Your responses will be kept completely anonymous and used solely for academic purposes.

Warm regards, Anni and Valeria 🌹

Suomeksi:

Hei! Olemme Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulun palveluliikennetoiminnan opiskelijat Anni Hyvönen ja Valeria Mäkinen. Teemme yhteistyössä Monaliiku:n kanssa opinnäytetyötä, jossa tarkoituksena on kehittää heille urheilutapahtumaidea.

Haluamme kuulla sinun äänesi! Kyselymme avulla pyrimme ymmärtämään paremmin kiinnostuksen kohteitasi, mieltymyksiäsi ja sitä, mikä tekisi urheilutapahtumasta sinulle miellyttävän ja osallistavan. Kyselyn kohderyhmänä ovat Monaliikun toimintaan osallistujat.

🕒 **Arvioitu vastausaika:** 3-5 min. 📅 **Kyselyn ajankohta:** 11.-24.3.2024

Vastaukset analysoidaan anonyymisti ja käytetään materiaalina opinnäytetyössämme.

Terkuin, Anni & Valeria 🌹

In what language would you like to take this survey? *

Millä kielellä haluaisit vastata tähän kyselyyn?

English

Suomi

Appendix 2: Questionnaire Questions

About you

We would like to hear more about your background.

What is your age? *

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55+

What is your gender? *

Female

Male

Non-binary

Prefer not to say

Other: _____

What is your nationality? *(Optional)*

Your answer _____

Sports & Activities

Tell us more about what sports you enjoy.

How often do you participate in any sports or physical activities? *

- Never
- Occasionally
- Regularly (a few times per week)

What types of sports or activities do you enjoy the most? *(Select all that apply)* *

- Individual sports (running, swimming)
- Team sports (football, volleyball, basketball)
- Fitness activities (yoga, dance, pilates)
- Outdoor activities (hiking, biking, walking)
- Gym
- Don't like any sports
- Other: _____

Would you be interested in participating in a sports event organised by Monaliiku? *

- Yes
- No

Event Preferences

What level of physical activity would you prefer in Monaliiku sports event?

- Beginner-friendly (suitable for all fitness levels)
- Moderately challenging (requires some level of fitness)
- Competitive (emphasis on athletic skill and performance)

How do you typically prefer to participate in sports events? *(Select all that apply) **

- Alone
- With family
- With spouse/partner
- With a group of friends
- Other: _____

Rate how important inclusivity and diversity are for a sports event. *

- | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Not important | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Very important |

Share what "inclusivity and diversity" means to you in the context of a sports event. *(Optional)*

Your answer _____

If you could attend any sports event, what would it be? *(Optional)*

Your answer _____

Communication & Other factors

What are your preferred methods for receiving information about events? *(Select all that apply)* *

- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
- Email announcements
- Monthly newsletter
- What's App Groups
- Monaliiku Website
- Other: _____

What are some factors that might prevent you from attending a Monaliiku sporting event? *(Select all that apply)* *

- Cultural specifics
- Inconvenient time
- Event content
- Location of the event
- Financial issues
- Discomfort with physical activity
- Other: _____

Do you have any preferences or suggestions for future Monaliiku sports events? *(Optional)*

Your answer _____

Back

Submit

Clear form

Appendix 3: Interview with Monaliiku team members

Theme Interview Questions

Theme 1: Monaliiku Background

What aspects of Monaliiku's vision or approach are important to consider when developing a sports event for migrant women?

Theme 2: Monaliiku sports activity attendants

What is the main motivation for participating in Monaliiku sports events in your opinion?

Theme 3: Development

What should we consider for developing event concept for Monaliiku?