

# An analysis of event quality and participant satisfaction in the 2024 ASEAN University Games (AUG) taekwondo competition

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## ABSTRACT



**Background:** The event's quality and participants' happiness are essential components of the AUG's overall success and long-term viability. **Research Objectives:** This study aims to analyse the relationship between event quality and participant satisfaction in the context of taekwondo competitions at the 2024 ASEAN University Games (AUG). **Methods:** The employed research method is quantitative research using a causal-associative approach. This research involved 116 respondents, including athletes, contingent managers, and taekwondo teachers from 9 ASEAN nations. Data were gathered using an online questionnaire utilising a validated and reliable 7-point Likert scale. **Finding and Results:** The regression analysis findings indicated that event quality, encompassing game performance, entertainment, staff quality, and physical environment, significantly influenced participant satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ). The beta coefficient for game performance was 0.651, indicating it had the most significant impact, followed by entertainment, physical environment, and staff quality. Collectively, these four sub-variables accounted for 73.9% of the variance in participant satisfaction. **Conclusion:** These findings emphasise the importance of maintaining technical quality and a competitive atmosphere, providing attractive entertainment, effective staff training, and improving event facilities and accessibility. The implications of these findings emphasise the importance of improving the quality of games, entertainment, staff training, and facilities to increase participant satisfaction in organising the ASEAN University Games (AUG).

**Keywords:** Taekwondo; asean university games (aug); event quality; participant satisfaction

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## INTRODUCTION

Sports events stimulate economies and communities globally, using infrastructure investment from the public and private sectors. They also serve as a tool for broadcasting tourist destination images, city branding, and international tourism development, increasing the number of events from minor to mega-event scales

(Henderson et al., 2010; Pianese, 2021; Tien et al., 2011; Khodr, 2012). Understanding sports event success is crucial for stakeholders and destinations to leverage hosting, as it can measure achieving event aims or meeting stakeholder expectations (Cserháti & Szabó, 2014; Kaplanidou et al., 2013). Research papers have explored various metrics to measure sports event success, including spectator satisfaction, participant intentions, revenue generation, and event hosting legacy, as well as the motives for revisiting and the impact of event hosting on the event (Elahi et al., 2020; Givi et al., 2021; Kapareliotis & Voutsina, 2020; Slavich et al., 2018; Zouni et al., 2020). The success of a sport event relies on providing quality service to participants and spectators. High-quality perceptions lead to longer stay, increased purchases, and recommendations, making service quality crucial for the long-term profitability of any organisation or event (Jae ko et al., 2010).

The ASEAN University Games are a recurring sporting event held every two years where university students from Southeast Asian nations gather to participate in various disciplines, such as taekwondo (Sahabuddin, 2017). It is imperative that colleges and universities give utmost importance to the advancement and assistance of taekwondo as a component of their extracurricular programmes, as it has the potential to enhance students' physical and mental health (Chun & Xu, 2022). Taekwondo is a fighting sport characterised by continuous interaction and competing objectives among opponents, including intricate kicks and forceful moves (Fajar et al., 2023). According to Zhang and Fang (2022), sports games and taekwondo are important parts of physical education programs in colleges and universities. They provide students with a range of physiological and psychological advantages.

The World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) established itself as the official regulatory authority of the sport in 1973, encompassing national Taekwondo governing organisations. The WTF has evolved into one of the largest martial arts organisations, representing members throughout 185 countries with over 70 million participants. This global sports organisation has established organisational frameworks, rules, and procedures to improve administrative effectiveness and everyday management efficiency. The World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) launched a grassroots initiative targeting the global population, successfully implementing the sportification of Taekwondo, a competition-oriented martial art. Furthermore, the WTF established explicit laws and policies to address matters with contestants, coaches, referees, sponsors, training programmes, facilities and equipment, media, and everyday management and administrative operations (Jae ko et al., 2010; Ko & Yang, 2009). The World Federation (WTF) and its affiliated organizations recognised Taekwondo as a legitimate competitive event, making it an official event in international sporting competitions such as the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Pan-American Games, and Asian Games. In 1988, it made its debut as a demonstration sport, and in 2000, the World Federation (WTF) and its affiliated organisations officially recognised it as an Olympic medal sport (Jae ko et al., 2010).

The event's quality and participants' happiness are essential components of the AUG's overall success and long-term viability. Prior studies have emphasised the significance of event management within the realm of sport tourism (Setyaningtyas et al., 2021; Tangkudung & Tangkudung, 2022). Hosting sports events that integrate athletic competition with tourism activities can contribute positively to regional development and draw tourists to the host destination (Tangkudung & Tangkudung, 2022). For the AUG, event organisers prioritise the excellence of the taekwondo sport and the overall participant experience.

Participant satisfaction is a multifaceted concept including several aspects of the event, including the quality of the site, the management of the competition, the accessibility of the event, and the overall atmosphere (Srisiri, 2022; Truong & Jang, 2019). Previous research in sports event management indicates that the quality of the event is a crucial determinant of participant satisfaction (Truong & Jang, 2019).

Assessing the efficacy of a sporting event such as the AUG necessitates a comprehensive review of the event's quality and participant satisfaction (Sahabuddin, 2017). Multiple elements, such as resource availability, training programme execution, and stakeholder involvement, can influence the overall quality of the event (Brønn, 2020; Sahabuddin, 2017). This research aims to investigate the relationship between the quality of taekwondo competition and participant satisfaction at the ASEAN University Games. A phenomenological study examining the benefits of taekwondo training for undergraduate students has determined that the sport positively impacts stress management, health, and general well-being (Kim et al., 2021; Petrovic, 2017). Furthermore, studies have highlighted the importance of psychological factors,

including the degree of devotion to training and self-confidence in sports, in the continuous development and success of taekwondo (Kim, 2022). Studying event quality, particularly in ASEAN University Games and taekwondo competitions, presents a novel challenge as it necessitates an understanding of the unique elements that influence participant satisfaction. This is because these competitions involve students from diverse ASEAN countries, each with their own cultural backgrounds and expectations.

This research seeks to analyse the correlation between event quality and participant satisfaction in the context of the AUG taekwondo event. Its objective is to offer valuable insights that can guide the planning and execution of future AUG events, ultimately improving the experience for both participants and spectators.

## **METHOD**

### **Type of Research**

Quantitative research with a causal-associative approach, i.e., research that aims to determine the influence or relationship between two or more variables (Yusra & Asnur, 2022). Associative research is a type of research with problem characteristics in the form of cause and effect between two or more variables; therefore, the purpose of this study is to see how the event quality variables (game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings) affect the participant satisfaction variable.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were athletes, contingent managers, and coaches involved in the 2024 Asean University Games at Universitas Brwijaya Malang, Indonesia. The total number of participants involved in this study was 116 people from 9 countries in ASEAN. The licensing process for data collection has received approval from the technical delegate for the AUG taekwondo sports branch.

### **Research Procedure**

Brawijaya University in Malang hosted the AUG Taekwondo competition from July 3-7, 2024. The researcher distributed the online-created questionnaire instrument, which included questions about game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings, on July 5-7, 2024. The researcher coordinated with the technical delegate to ask for permission to distribute the questionnaire to athletes, contingent managers, and Taekwondo AUG 2024 coaches. Five field officers assisted the researcher in disseminating the questionnaire link and aiding in its completion. The field officer used their cellphone to complete the questionnaire. The field officer set a deadline for filling out the questionnaire until July 7, 2024. Following that, the field officer tabulated and processed the data using Microsoft Excel and SPSS 23 software.

### **Instrument**

The questionnaire uses a favourable Likert scale with a value range of 1 to 7, with criteria ranging from very bad to very good. It is distributed online in the form of positive statements to all respondents, namely athletes, contingent managers, and taekwondo coaches at the Asean University Games (AUG) 2024, totalling 116 respondents (Karo Karo & Nur, 2022).

### **Data Analysis**

The questionnaire has gone through validity and reliability tests. Using the total correlation value approach at DF (28) and a significance level of 0.05, the validity test yielded an r-table value of 0.361. When compared to the calculated r-value of the questionnaire, the calculated r-value of each item exceeds the r-table value, indicating that each item meets the validity requirements. Using the alpha Cronbach coefficient method to test reliability at a minimum level of 0.7 and comparing it to the calculated alpha Cronbach value shows that each questionnaire item has a value higher than the minimum level, which means that each questionnaire item meets the requirements for reliability. Multiple determining how much influence there is between the two variables, multiple linear regression data analysis is carried out using SPSS software version 23.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents were a research sample for this study, totaling 116 participants in the AUG 2024 Taekwondo sport.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondent**

Respondent characteristics		<i>f</i>	%
Country	Indonesia	27	23.28
	Malaysia	16	13.79
	Thailand	14	12.07
	Timor Leste	8	6.90
	Vietnam	12	10.34
	Kamboja	6	5.17
	Singapore	16	13.79
	Myanmar	12	10.34
	Brunei Darussalam	5	4.31
	Athlete	92	79.31
Position	Contingent manager	9	7.76
	Coach	15	12.93

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the participants in the Taekwondo competition at the 2024 ASEAN University Games (AUG). The majority of respondents came from Indonesia, as many as 27 people (23.28%), followed by Malaysia and Singapore with 16 people each (13.79%). Respondents from Thailand numbered 14 people (12.07%), followed by Vietnam and Myanmar with 12 people each (10.34%). Timor-Leste contributed 8 respondents (6.90%), while Cambodia and Brunei Darussalam had the fewest number of respondents, 6 (5.17%) and 5 people (4.31%), respectively. Based on position in the competition, the majority of respondents were athletes, namely 92 people (79.31%), followed by coaches with 15 people (12.93%) and contingent managers with 9 people (7.76%). These data provide important insights into the distribution and representation of respondents from various countries, as well as their roles in the competition, which are critical elements in analysing event quality and participant satisfaction.

**Table 2. Event Quality of AUG 2024**

Sub variable	Indicator	Value (N=116)	Mean±SD
Game Performance	Atmosphere	627	5.41 ± 1.34
	Player ability	650	5.60 ± 1.30
	Match operation	644	5.55 ± 1.32
	Sub Total	1921	16.56 ± 3.06
In-Game Entertainment	Enjoyment	634	5.47 ± 1.50
	Pleasure	638	5.50 ± 1.37
	Entertainment	623	5.37 ± 1.43
	Sub Total	1895	16.34 ± 3.51
Staff Quality	Attitude	657	5.66 ± 1.26
	Behavior	659	5.68 ± 1.25
	Personnel skills	625	5.39 ± 1.41
	Sub Total	1941	16.73 ± 3.07
Physical Surrounding	Design	641	5.53 ± 1.32
	Facilities	623	5.37 ± 1.30
	Accessibility	615	5.30 ± 1.37
	Sub Total	1879	16.20 ± 3.17
<b>Total</b>		<b>7636</b>	<b>65.83 ± 10.79</b>

Table 2 outlines an assessment of various aspects of Taekwondo events at the 2024 ASEAN University Games (AUG) based on responses from 116 respondents. There are four main sub-variables assessed: Game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings. Game performance scored a total of 1921 with a mean of 16.56; in-game entertainment scored a total of 1895 with a mean of 16.34; staff quality scored a total of 1941 with a mean of 16.73; and physical surroundings scored a total of 1879 with a

mean of 16.20. Overall, the total score of all sub-variables was 7636, with an overall mean of 65.83, indicating a positive assessment of various aspects of Taekwondo events at the 2024 AUG event.

**Tabel 3. Participant Satisfaction of AUG 2024**

Sub variabel	Indicator	Value (N=116)	Mean±SD
Participant satisfaction	Match results	629	5.42 ± 1.33
	Accommodation service	631	5.44 ± 1.33
	Match organisation	650	5.60 ± 1.29
	Transportation service	675	5.82 ± 1.28
	Accreditation service	660	5.69 ± 1.22
	Overall service	658	5.67 ± 1.19
<b>Total</b>		<b>4532</b>	<b>39.07 ± 6.30</b>

Table 3 provides an overview of AUG 2024 participants' levels of satisfaction with the various services provided. Based on the assessment results from 116 respondents, AUG 2024 participants were generally satisfied with the services provided, especially transportation services, which received the highest rating with an average of  $5.82 \pm 1.28$ . However, there is room for improvement, especially in the match results, which received the lowest satisfaction rating with an average of  $5.42 \pm 1.33$ . The fairly consistent level of satisfaction across various indicators indicates that the organisers have succeeded in providing excellent service overall. The next step involves presenting the results of the regression test, which includes partial (t-test), simultaneous (F-test), and coefficient tests, divided into determination ( $R^2$ ) and correlation coefficients (r).

**Table 4. Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	6.149	1.916		3.210	.002
Game Performance	.651	.153	.316	4.249	.000
1 In-Game Entertainment	.433	.123	.241	3.516	.001
Staff Quality	.361	.137	.176	2.629	.010
Physical Surrounding	.557	.142	.280	3.919	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Participant Satisfaction

Table 4 shows a partial and significant influence ( $p < 0.05$ ) on participant satisfaction with the equation between game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings.  $Y = 6.149 + 0.651 + 0.433 + 0.361 + 0.557$ . To enhance participant and spectator satisfaction, a strategy could be to enhance training staff quality by creating comprehensive modules covering technical skills, participant services, and simulation exercises. Interactive events during match breaks can enhance the experience, and technology can be used to support fair decisions. Additionally, improving facilities like seating, accessibility, and cleanliness can create a comfortable environment for all. Meanwhile, Table 5 shows that game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings all have an impact on participant satisfaction.

**Table 5. Anova Result**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3371.200	4	842.800	78.598	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	1190.249	111	10.723		
Total	4561.448	115			

a. Dependent Variable: Participant Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality dan physical surrounding

Table 5 shows the results of the p-value (sig.)  $< 0.05$ , which means that game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings all have a simultaneous effect on participant satisfaction. Furthermore, to find out the percentage of influence given, we can see the R square value in Table 6.

Table 6. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.860 <sup>a</sup>	.739	.730	3.27459

a. Predictors: (Constant), game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality dan physical surrounding

Table 6 shows the coefficient of determination value of 0.739, which means 73.9%. This value means that game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings simultaneously influence participant satisfaction by 73.9%, and the remaining 26.1% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study.

Based on the regression analysis used and the results of the coefficient test with high values, it appears that maintaining event quality must be a special concern for organisers. The commitment to maintaining this is in line with John's research, which also states that event quality can be improved through cognitive and affective aspects in relation to visitor behaviour in the future (Armbrecht, 2021). Other studies support this by showing that the quality of events that are consistently maintained also greatly contributes to the success of an event, such as the Asean University Games (AUG) event, which is held every two years. This will even be able to improve positive perspectives not only for event participants but also for event visitors and spectators, who are an important part of the event consumer group (Mahmood et al., 2018).

One study on the determinants of student satisfaction in higher education found that quality has a significant impact on students' satisfaction and, consequently, their happiness (Gargoum, 2019). According to the study, programme quality, in terms of the university's reputation, has the most influence on confirming students' satisfaction. The quality of the event, including the facilities, organisation, and overall experience, can have a significant impact on participant satisfaction at the ASEAN University Games for taekwondo (Ko et al., 2010). A study on postgraduate international students from Asia found that the quality of education, student facilities, institutional reputation, degree marketability, and the overall value offered by universities are the primary factors influencing student satisfaction (Arambewela et al., 2006). This pertains to the ASEAN University Games for taekwondo, since the caliber of the tournament, facilities, and overall experience might influence participant happiness.

To guarantee the success of the ASEAN University Games for taekwondo, the organisers must prioritise the event's quality, encompassing the site, equipment, officiating, and overall management (Chutipongdech & Kampitak, 2022). The research on the essential determinants of international athletic achievement in the Philippines identified the organisational efficacy of national sport governing bodies as a pivotal aspect in achieving success in international competitions. The quality of event administration and the proficiency of the organisers can substantially influence participant satisfaction in the ASEAN University Games for taekwondo (Arambewela et al., 2006; Ramos, 2017). The regression test findings indicated that the four sub-variables of event quality—game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings—significantly impacted participant satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ). Game performance had the most significant impact, as evidenced by a beta value of 0.651, followed by in-game entertainment, physical environment, and staff quality. This finding emphasises the significance of technological elements and the competitive environment in influencing participant satisfaction. Furthermore, the simultaneous analysis (F-test) indicates that the four sub-variables jointly exert a substantial impact on participant satisfaction ( $F = 78.598$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) value of 0.739 signifies that 73.9% of the variability in participant satisfaction is attributable to the quality of the event, and the remaining 26.1% is affected by other factors. This indicates that while the quality of the event is a significant component, additional variables must be examined to offer a more thorough understanding of the elements that affect participant satisfaction. Staff quality was considered to have a lower impact on attendee satisfaction because attendees tend to focus more on key elements such as game performance and entertainment that directly affect their experience. Additionally, attendees tend to view staff as a supporting factor, making their impact less noticeable in the absence of major issues. Limited interaction between attendees and staff may also reduce the direct influence of staff on the overall perception of the event.

Game performance refers to the perception of both participants and spectators about the quality of the game performance itself, where they are presented with an aesthetic experience and joy or passion from the actual sport event (Ko et al., 2011). According to Kim, indicators of game implementation include atmosphere, which refers to how the environment is constructed during the event; player ability, which refers to the expertise each player possesses in competing. Match operations refer to the time allocated by the committee for the entire event or each round of the match (Kim et al., 2013).

According to Mao (2022), in-game entertainment refers to the emergence of feelings such as diversion, escape, or emotional or aesthetic pleasure when presented with supporting content or advertisements aimed at fulfilling the audience's needs. Based on this, the entertainment in question encompasses a variety of supporting events that take place during the Taekwondo match event at the AUG 2024 event, including enjoyment, which is a feeling that someone has that appears enthusiastically beyond the limits of balance. Fun (pleasure), a comfortable body position, and content that satisfies your needs are examples of the pleasure that arises when your needs are met. The content presented not only provides entertainment, but also fosters interactions between audiences (Karo Karo & Nur, 2022).

In the context of sporting events, event implementation requires highly qualified and customer-oriented crews because the crew plays an important role in developing a positive customer experience (Biscaia et al., 2023). The interaction between the crew and participants revolves around the delivery of service during meetings, which is influenced by the attitude, behaviour, and expertise of the personnel. Professional crew attitudes include friendliness, warmth, politeness, attention, openness, and helpfulness, whereas crew behaviour is a person's response to their environment. Personnel expertise is defined as the extent to which problem-solving skills influence the crew's interaction with participants (Karo Karo & Nur, 2022).

For sports events to be successful, adequate sports facilities and infrastructure are essential. Each event's unique branch requires special attention to ensure optimal performance (Marsudi et al., 2024). Each participant develops a strong sense of belonging through the event identity, which is created by providing facilities and an environment that is both comfortable and clean (Ko et al., 2011). The aesthetic effect of the facilities available at the event venue, the comfort of the seating design, accessibility to the venue, and the cleanliness of the environment around the venue can all be used to test the physical environment and present participants with a high-quality experience (Armbrecht, 2021). According to Kim, the elements of the physical surroundings encompass design, which is an initiative tailored to the event's needs, such as the seating layout, among others. Facilities are everything that is intended for the audience to be used or enjoyed so that participant satisfaction is maximised; accessibility means that the location of the venue used during the event is as easy as possible to visit and reach by public transportation (Kim et al., 2013). To enhance participant and spectator satisfaction, a strategy could be to enhance training staff quality by creating comprehensive modules covering technical skills, participant services, and simulation exercises. Interactive events during match breaks can enhance the experience, and technology can be used to support fair decisions. Additionally, improving facilities like seating, accessibility, and cleanliness can create a comfortable environment for all. However, factors beyond game performance, in-game entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings influence the success of sporting events. External factors, such as shifts in policy priorities, particularly in the areas of sport development and tourism, also play a significant role in their success. Government or institutional interventions can drive the success of sporting event businesses. The utilisation of tangible and organisational resources impacts reputational resources, creating a holistic experience for stakeholders, audience members, participants, communities, and sponsors (Chu, 2018; Kler, 2016; Mutter & Pawlowski, 2014; Won & Chiu, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

Event quality has a significant influence on participant satisfaction in Taekwondo events at the 2024 ASEAN University Games (AUG), with game performance being the most influential factor. The four sub-variables studied, including game performance, entertainment, staff quality, and physical surroundings, collectively explained 73.9% of the variation in participant satisfaction. The implications of these findings emphasise the importance of improving the technical quality and competition atmosphere, providing engaging

entertainment, effective staff training, and improving event facilities and accessibility. In addition, further research is needed to identify other factors that influence participant satisfaction in order to provide more comprehensive guidance for the implementation of the next ASEAN University Games (AUG). Further qualitative research can be conducted to understand participants' experiences through interviews and case studies, providing a deeper understanding of factors influencing satisfaction.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors state no conflict of interest.

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