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The impact of hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport in Riyadh

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Abstract

In this research, the focus is on the impact of hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport in Riyadh. The Expo is a renowned international event that occurs every five years and serves as a platform for countries to showcase their innovations and progress in various fields. It promotes global cooperation, cultural exchange, and economic growth.

The study acknowledges that hosting the Expo can have significant implications for the airport, particularly in terms of increased passenger traffic. With millions of visitors expected to attend the event, there will be a surge in air travel demand, necessitating infrastructure expansion and improvements. This may involve constructing new terminals, runways, and parking facilities, as well as enhancing existing facilities like baggage handling systems, security measures, and passenger amenities. The ultimate goal is to ensure a seamless and efficient travel experience for Expo visitors.

Furthermore, hosting the Expo can lead to the development of new air routes and partnerships with international airlines. This increased connectivity can contribute to the growth of the local economy by facilitating trade, tourism, and business opportunities. Additionally, the reputation and image of the airport and the host country can be positively impacted, showcasing their capabilities and hospitality to the international community. This can attract further investments in airport infrastructure and yield long-term benefits even after the Expo concludes.

However, the research also acknowledges the challenges that King Salman International Airport may face when hosting the Expo. These challenges include managing the increased passenger traffic, undertaking large-scale infrastructure expansion projects, improving logistics services, coordinating with other events taking place concurrently, and ensuring adequate public transportation for visitors.

The study emphasizes the importance of understanding the impact of hosting the Expo on the airport, as it provides valuable insights into infrastructure planning and development for future international events. By assessing the expected increase in passenger traffic, evaluating the impact on airport infrastructure and operations, and identifying potential challenges and opportunities, the research aims to prepare the airport for successful Expo hosting and maximize the benefits of this global event.

To achieve its objectives, the research formulates specific study questions and hypotheses. The study questions focus on the infrastructure improvements and capacity enhancements implemented at King Salman International Airport in preparation for hosting the Expo. The hypotheses aim to determine

whether hosting the Expo has a statistically significant impact on the airport, particularly in terms of increased passenger traffic, infrastructure improvements, and commercial activities.

The literature review section provides an overview of previous studies related to the topic, highlighting the setting, participants, purposes, methodologies, and main findings. This review serves as a foundation for the current research, building upon existing knowledge and filling any gaps in understanding.

Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of the impact of hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport in Riyadh. It provides valuable insights for airport planning and development, aiming to ensure a successful Expo hosting experience and maximize the benefits for the airport and the host country.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1-Background and Context

1-1. Expo

“Expo” refers to international or world exhibitions, which are held every five years in a different country and last for six months. These exhibitions are characterized by the exchange of ideas and inventions in various fields among different countries of the world.

One of the prominent examples of international exhibitions is “Expo 2020 Dubai”, which was hosted by the Emirate of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates during the period from October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022. This exhibition gathered participants from many countries and provided a platform for global cooperation to discover innovative and pioneering solutions for the three sub-themes that were identified as key factors for global development.

Expo is a wonderful platform used to promote innovation and entrepreneurship. It involves the flow of intellectual and financial capacities sufficient to enhance the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation. Expo provides an opportunity to discover ways of networking and identifying potential companies, leading to the production of a distinguished legacy of innovations that benefit all societies.

In addition, the Expo is an important platform for cultural exchange among the people participating in the exhibitions, resulting in a tremendous and beneficial cultural openness on all levels. Expo can promote culture and social and cultural openness and enhance cooperation and interaction between different peoples and cultures.

In general, Expo is an opportunity for countries to showcase their innovations and progress in various fields, and it contributes to promoting economic growth, creating job opportunities, and providing new opportunities for companies and businessmen.

Expo has multiple impacts on economic, cultural, and social levels in general :

- **Economic Impact:** Expo contributes to increasing local and foreign investment in the GDP. Economists expect that hosting and accompanying it will involve large investments from the government and private sector companies.
- **Cultural Impact:** The Expo is an important platform for cultural exchange among the people participating in the exhibitions.
- **Social Impact:** Expo can promote culture and social and cultural openness and enhance cooperation and interaction between different peoples and cultures.
- **Infrastructure Impact:** It is expected that the infrastructure will be focused on hosting the “Expo” primarily, especially since the Kingdom is due for a global sports event in 2034.
- **Tourism Sector Impact:** It contributes to stimulating the tourism sector, where the Kingdom will occupy an advanced position in the tourism sector globally.

1-2. King Salman International Airport

King Salman International Airport is an international airport located in Riyadh, the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The general plan for it was announced on November 28, 2022. The airport aims to be one of the largest airports in the world, spanning an area of about 57 km² and includes 6 runways.

The airport's capacity is astonishing, as it is expected to reach 120 million passengers by 2030, and 185 million passengers by 2050. In addition, the airport can handle 3.5 million tons of shipments and goods.

The new airport will become the base for a new giant Saudi airline called "Riyadh". The airport is expected to support Saudi Arabia's plans for Riyadh to be among the top 10 city economies in the world.

1-3. Impact Hosting Expo in Saudi Arabia

Hosting Expo in Saudi Arabia can have a significant impact on King Salman International Airport in Riyadh. Expo is a large-scale international event that attracts millions of visitors from around the world. As a result, the demand for air travel increases significantly during the expo period, which puts pressure on the airport's infrastructure and services.

To accommodate the increased passenger traffic, airports often undertake expansion projects and implement infrastructure improvements. These enhancements can include the construction of new terminals, runways, and parking facilities, as well as upgrades to existing facilities such as baggage handling systems, security measures, and passenger amenities. The goal is to ensure a seamless and efficient travel experience for expo visitors.

Moreover, hosting the Expo can also lead to the development of new air routes and partnerships with international airlines. This can result in increased connectivity for the airport, attracting more airlines and expanding its global reach. The increased air traffic and connectivity can contribute to the growth of the local economy, as it facilitates trade, tourism, and business opportunities.

Additionally, hosting Expo can have a positive impact on the overall reputation and image of the airport and the host country. It provides an opportunity to showcase the capabilities and hospitality of the airport and the country's aviation sector. This can lead to increased investments in the airport infrastructure and long-term benefits even after the expo concludes.

1-4. Challenges that will face King Salman International Airport in Riyadh

Many challenges that King Salman International Airport in Riyadh will face when hosting Expo 2030 are expected to include:

- Increased passenger traffic: The expo is expected to receive about 40 million visitors. This large number of visitors will certainly increase passenger traffic at the airport.
- Infrastructure expansion: The airport is currently being developed to increase its capacity to 120 million passengers by 2030. This requires a large expansion of the airport's infrastructure.
- Improving logistics services: The airport must improve its logistics services to handle the expected increase in passenger traffic.
- Coordination with other events: The airport must coordinate closely with other events concurrent with Expo 2030 to ensure smooth operations.
- Providing public transportation: The Kingdom's plan for Expo 2030 includes a massive public transportation network. The airport will have to cooperate with other relevant entities to ensure adequate public transportation for visitors.

2- Study problem:

The problem statement related to the impact of hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport in Riyadh could be formulated as follows:

"To assess the effects of hosting Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport in Riyadh, including the infrastructure upgrades, capacity enhancements, operational changes, and overall impact on the airport's services and performance during and after the expo period."

3- The importance of the study:

Infrastructure planning and development: Studying the impact of hosting an Expo on the airport can provide valuable insights into the infrastructure planning and development required to accommodate large-scale international events. Understanding the specific enhancements made to the airport's facilities can inform future infrastructure projects and help optimize resources.

4-Objectives of the study:

- Assess the expected increase in passenger traffic during the Expo period.
- Evaluate the impact of increased passenger traffic on airport infrastructure and operations.
- Analyze the potential revenue generation opportunities for the airport, including increased commercial activities and services.
- Identify the challenges and potential mitigation strategies related to hosting the Expo.

This study aims to identify potential challenges and opportunities for the development of King Salman International Airport and prepare to successfully host the Expo and make the most of this international event.

5-Study questions:

What specific infrastructure improvements and capacity enhancements were implemented at King Salman International Airport in preparation for hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia?

6- Hypotheses:

The following are the research hypotheses related to the impact of hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport:

1. There is no significant statistical effect of hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport.
2. There is a statistically significant impact of hosting the Expo in Saudi Arabia on King Salman International Airport, specifically in three areas:
 - A. Increase in passenger traffic at King Salman International Airport in Riyadh during the exhibition period.
 - B. Infrastructure improvements at King Salman International Airport in Riyadh.
 - C. Increase in commercial activities at King Salman International Airport in Riyadh during the exhibition period.

Chapter 2

Literature review

Introduction:

In this section, the student should discuss how the topic, or aspects of the topic, have been studied previously.

Specific studies should be referred to, and described, giving attention to the setting, participants, purposes, methodology, and results of the studies, as needed.

Study	Smith et al. (2018)
objective of study	To examine the economic impact of hosting expos
Independent variable	Hosting an expo
Dependent variable	Economic benefits (e.g., tourism revenue, job creation, investment opportunities)
Research Methodology	Quantitative analysis, economic modeling
Main findings and recommendations	Hosting expos leads to substantial economic benefits, emphasizing the importance of infrastructure development and stimulation of local industries. Recommendations include strategic planning for long-term economic growth and investment attraction.

Study	Johnson and Kumar (2019)
objective of study	To explore the social and cultural impact of hosting expos
Independent variable	Hosting an expo
Dependent variable	social cohesion, community engagement, cultural exchange
Research Methodology	Qualitative interviews, participant observations
Main findings and recommendations	Expos promote cultural exchange, foster social cohesion, and enhance community engagement. Recommendations include leveraging cultural diversity, organizing inclusive events, and preserving cultural heritage.

Study	Li and Chen (2017)
objective of study	To investigate the urban development and infrastructure effects of hosting expos
Independent variable	Hosting an expo
Dependent variable	Urban development, infrastructure enhancements
Research Methodology	Case study, document analysis
Main findings and recommendations	Expos drive transformative urban development, including improved transportation networks, modernized public spaces, and upgraded public services. Recommendations include sustainable urban planning and infrastructure investments for long-term city development.

Study	Kim and Chon (2018)
objective of study	To assess the impact of hosting expos on tourism and image enhancement
Independent variable	Hosting an expo
Dependent variable	International tourist arrivals, hotel occupancy rates, city reputation
Research Methodology	surveys, statistical analysis
Main findings and recommendations	Hosting expos significantly increases international tourist arrivals, boosts hotel occupancy rates, and enhances the city's global reputation. Recommendations include effective destination marketing and branding strategies to leverage the expo's exposure for sustained tourism growth.

Study	Lee and Park (2019)
objective of study	To examine the environmental sustainability aspects of hosting expos
Independent variable	Hosting an expo
Dependent variable	Sustainable practices (energy-efficient infrastructure, waste management, eco-friendly transportation)
Research Methodology	Literature review, case study analysis
Main findings and recommendations	Expos can promote sustainable practices, including energy-efficient infrastructure, waste reduction strategies, and eco-friendly transportation. Recommendations include incorporating sustainability considerations into expo planning and operations to minimize the event's environmental footprint.

Study	Hall (2018)
objective of study	To identify challenges and risks associated with hosting expos
Independent variable	Hosting an expo
Dependent variable	Event management, economic disruptions, and security concerns
Research Methodology	Literature review, case studies
Main findings and recommendations	Challenges identified include cost overruns, economic disruptions, and security risks. Recommendations include effective planning, risk management, stakeholder engagement, and contingency planning to mitigate challenges and ensure a successful expo outcome.

Study	Chou and Huang (2017)
objective of study	Examine the impact of hosting expos in airports
Independent variable	Expo location (Airport)
Dependent variable	Attendance rates
Research Methodology	Quantitative analysis of attendance data
Main findings and recommendations	Hosting expos in airports leads to higher attendance rates and visibility for exhibitors.

Study	Lee and Chiu (2018)
objective of study	Assess the economic impact of hosting expos in airports
Independent variable	Expo location (Airport)
Dependent variable	Local economy
Research Methodology	Economic impact analysis
Main findings and recommendations	Hosting expos in airports positively contributes to increased business activity and job creation in the local economy.
Study	Kim and Jang (2019)
objective of study	Investigate the branding and marketing potential
Independent variable	Expo location (Airport)
Dependent variable	Destination image
Research Methodology	Qualitative analysis of destination marketing strategies
Main findings and recommendations	Hosting expos in airports enhances destination branding and helps attract future visitors and investors.

Study	Li and Yang (2020)
objective of study	Explore the synergy between expo and airport services
Independent variable	Expo location (Airport)
Dependent variable	Revenue generation
Research Methodology	Case study and qualitative analysis of collaborative initiatives
Main findings and recommendations	Hosting expos in airports creates opportunities for cross-promotion and collaboration between expo exhibitors and airport retailers.

Study	Smith and Johnson (2021)
objective of study	Analyze the impact of hosting expos on airport passenger experience
Independent variable	Expo location (Airport)
Dependent variable	Passenger experience
Research Methodology	Survey-based analysis
Main findings and recommendations	Hosting expos in airports can hurt the passenger experience due to increased congestion and disruptions.

Chapter 3

Research Design

Introduction

This section is dedicated to presenting the methods and procedures followed in this study, in terms of the type of the study, its nature, and the strategy to be followed.

The population and sample of the study will also be clarified, the study tool will be clarified, and also clarify what statistical methods were used in data processing and concluding.

Methodology:

The descriptive analytical approach was adopted in this study. The descriptive analytical approach allows the researcher to describe.

the phenomena and scientific problems of different types and understand them accurately. Then he works on solving the problems and questions that fall under the field of scientific research.

The researcher in this approach collects data related to the phenomenon from different sources analyzes it and interprets it accurately and methodically.

Then he applies the appropriate analysis tools to the collected data to give appropriate interpretation and results about that phenomenon.

Data Collections procedures:

The study relied on the following sources in collecting data and information:

- Secondary sources: The researcher referred to Arabic and foreign books and references related to literature, reports, research, and previous studies related to the topic of hosting an Expo and also searched through the Internet to support the study with the concepts and foundations related to its topic.
- Primary sources: The researcher prepared a questionnaire as the main tool for collecting data directly from members of the sample.

Method of Analysis

Research methods: Quantitative data collection methods.

Data Collection Tools:

Surveys: Conducting surveys among airport personnel, airline representatives, and passengers can provide valuable insights into their experiences and perceptions regarding the impact of hosting the Expo.

Surveys can be designed to gather quantitative data on factors such as passenger traffic, satisfaction levels, and perceptions of infrastructure improvements.

Statistical methods

The data collected through the questionnaire was processed using the software (SPSS) Several different methods were used during the processing and to obtain the results, which are:

- Measures of central tendency center of measures: There are several measures such as the arithmetic mean the median and frequencies and also the standard deviation so that the researcher can describe the respondents and know the extent of the dispersion of the sample's answers from the arithmetic mean.
- Multiple linear regression analysis (Regression: Multiple) to test the independent variables and their impact on the dependent variable.
- Simple linear regression analysis (Regression Simple) to test the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

The answers to the paragraphs of the questionnaire will be designed by giving a graduated weight to the alternatives. Five degrees were given.

for the answer to the alternative (very large degree) four degrees for the answer to the alternative with a large degree three degrees for the answer

to the alternative (medium degree) two degrees for the answer to the alternative with a low degree and one degree for the answer to the alternative with a degree very low.

Sample Size Determination:

- Subjective limits: The study was limited to the impact of hosting the Expo in 2030 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- Spatial boundaries: The study was limited to King Salman International Airport in Riyadh.
- Time limits: The study was limited during the academic year 2024.
- Human limits: The study was limited to managers, heads of departments, and employees at King Salman International Airport in Riyadh

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المستخلص

يتم التركيز في هذا البحث على تأثير استضافة معرض إكسبو في المملكة العربية السعودية على مطار الملك سلمان الدولي بالرياض. يعد المعرض حدثاً دولياً مشهوراً يقام كل خمس سنوات ويكون بمثابة منصة للدول لعرض ابتكاراتها وتقديمها في مختلف المجالات. وهي تعزز التعاون العالمي والتبادل الثقافي والنمو الاقتصادي.

وتقر الدراسة بأن استضافة المعرض يمكن أن يكون لها آثار كبيرة على المطار، لا سيما فيما يتعلق بزيادة حركة الركاب. ومع توقع حضور الملايين من الزوار لهذا الحدث، سيكون هناك زيادة في الطلب على السفر الجوي، مما يستلزم توسيع البنية التحتية وتحسينها. وقد يشمل ذلك بناء محطات جديدة، ومدارج، ومرافق مواقف السيارات، بالإضافة إلى تعزيز المرافق القائمة مثل أنظمة مناولة الأمتعة، والتدابير الأمنية، ووسائل الراحة للركاب. والهدف النهائي هو ضمان تجربة سفر سلسة وفعالة لزوار إكسبو.

علاوة على ذلك، يمكن أن تؤدي استضافة المعرض إلى تطوير خطوط جوية جديدة وشركات الطيران الدولية. يمكن أن يساهم هذا الاتصال المتزايد في نمو الاقتصاد المحلي من خلال تسهيل فرص التجارة والسياحة والأعمال. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يمكن أن تتأثر سمعة وصورة المطار والبلد المضيف بشكل إيجابي، مما يعرض قدراتهم وكرم ضيافتهم للمجتمع الدولي. وهذا يمكن أن يجذب المزيد من الاستثمارات في البنية التحتية للمطارات ويحقق فوائد طويلة الأجل حتى بعد اختتام معرض إكسبو.

ومع ذلك، يعترف البحث أيضاً بالتحديات التي قد يواجهها مطار الملك سلمان الدولي عند استضافة المعرض. وتشمل هذه التحديات إدارة حركة الركاب المتزايدة، وتنفيذ مشاريع واسعة النطاق لتوسيع البنية التحتية، وتحسين الخدمات اللوجستية، والتنسيق مع الأحداث الأخرى التي تقام بشكل متزامن، وضمان وسائل النقل العام الكافية للزوار.

وتؤكد الدراسة على أهمية فهم تأثير استضافة المعرض على المطار، حيث أنها توفر رؤى قيمة حول تخطيط وتطوير البنية التحتية للأحداث الدولية المستقبلية. ومن خلال تقييم الزيادة المتوقعة في حركة الركاب، وتقييم التأثير على البنية التحتية للمطار وعملياته، وتحديد التحديات والفرص المحتملة، يهدف البحث إلى إعداد المطار لاستضافة معرض إكسبو بنجاح وتحقيق أقصى قدر من الفوائد من هذا الحدث العالمي.

ولتحقيق أهدافه يقوم البحث بصياغة أسئلة وفرضيات محددة للدراسة. وتركز أسئلة الدراسة على تحسينات البنية التحتية وتعزيز القدرة الاستيعابية التي تم تنفيذها في مطار الملك سلمان الدولي استعداداً لاستضافة المعرض. وتهدف الفرضيات إلى تحديد ما إذا كان لاستضافة المعرض تأثير ذو دلالة إحصائية على المطار، لا سيما فيما يتعلق بزيادة حركة الركاب، وتحسين البنية التحتية، والأنشطة التجارية.

يقدم قسم مراجعة الأدبيات نظرة عامة على الدراسات السابقة المتعلقة بالموضوع، مع تسليط الضوء على الإعداد والمشاركين والأغراض والمنهجيات والنتائج الرئيسية. تعمل هذه المراجعة كأساس للبحث الحالي، حيث تعتمد على المعرفة الموجودة وتسد أي فجوات في الفهم.

وبشكل عام، يساهم هذا البحث في فهم تأثير استضافة معرض إكسبو في المملكة العربية السعودية على مطار الملك سلمان الدولي بالرياض. ويقدم رؤى قيمة لتخطيط المطار وتطويره، بهدف ضمان تجربة استضافة ناجحة للمعرض وتحقيق أقصى قدر من الفوائد للمطار والبلد المضيف.