COMPARING SUPPORT OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS FOR THE 2016 OLYMPIC GAMES IN RIO DE JANEIRO

Claudio M Rocha, Packianathan Chelladurai
University of Sao Paulo
Troy University
richard.george@uct.ac.za

Aim of abstract

The aim of this research was (a) to explore and describe relationships between expected legacy and popular support to host the 2016 Olympic Games (OG) in Rio de Janeiro, and (b) to compare two key stakeholders in these relationships.

Theoretical background

Based on the strategic constituencies approach (Connolly, Conlon, & Deutsch, 1980), effectiveness in preparing to host a sport mega-event depends not only on the prime beneficiary's attitudes, but also on other important stakeholders' opinions about the event. Local residents are the prime beneficiaries of sport mega-events (Chelladurai, 1987). Knowing local residents' attitudes is mandatory to organize a sport event that will leave positive legacy for the host community (Hritz & Ross, 2010; Kim & Petrick, 2005; Ritchie, Shipway, & Cleeve, 2009). According to the strategic constituencies approach, not only the prime beneficiaries' attitudes, but also other key stakeholders' attitudes are important to host a mega-event. College students are key stakeholders of sport mega-events because of their importance for volunteer programs in such events (Karkatsoulis, Michapoulos, & Moustakatou, 2005; Miloch & Lambrecht, 2006). Considering that college students are among the most educated citizens in Brazil, their role is very important for the process of hosting mega-events in this country. In this study, we compared residents and students in their support for the event because this attitude has been reported as extremely important for the success of the hosting process (Zhou & Ap, 2009).

Residents are likely to have disturbances in their daily lives as a result of the process of preparing for the OG (Preuss, 2004). Organizers should know not only the level of support, but also the reasons for such support (Ritchie et al., 2009) and how support varies among stakeholders. To study reasons of support we proposed a model based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), which posits that individuals interact with other individuals (or organizations, Levine & White, 1961) because they expect to receive some benefits from this relationship. Based on this theory, perceptions of legacy should affect support for the event. Developing a model to compare two stakeholders in their support intentions can help organizers to better deal with different needs during the preparation process. Testing the measurement invariance of the model is important to make sure different items and subscales have equal meaning across different groups of stakeholders (French & Finch, 2006).

Methodology, research design and data analysis

We surveyed a convenience sample of college students (n = 446) and a random sample of Rio's residents (n = 450). We tested a structural model where perception of legacy (a second-order latent variable, represented by seven first-order manifest variables: Economic, tourism, environmental, structural, social, cultural, and psychological legacy) affects support (a first-order latent variable represented by three items). All items have the response format of a 7-point Likert scale. We analyzed the data using single- and multiple-group CFA, and single- and multiple-group SEM, according to procedures described by Widaman and Reise (1997).

Results, discussion and implications

Single-group CFA showed acceptable fit indexes for the measurement model and good internal reliability for the scales tested in samples of college students (CFI = .937; TLI = .928; RMSEA = .079; alphas varying from .717 to .861) and Rio residents (CFI = .946; TLI = .938; RMSEA = .071; alphas varying from .775 to .872). Likewise, single-group SEM presented acceptable fit indexes for models tested in samples of college students (CFI = .933; TLI = .927; RMSEA = .079) and Rio residents (CFI = .932; TLI = .926; RMSEA = .077).

The chi-square difference test between the unconstrained model and model with non-variant factor loadings (= 134.03, = 23, p = .001) was significant, indicating that the more restricted model failed the test of measurement invariance. However, following Cheung et al. (2005), measurement invariance is better checked comparing differences in CFI and RMSEA between these two models. These differences were minimal (CFI = 0.007; RMSEA = 0.001), which allowed us to assume measurement invariance. In the multiple-group SEM, the chi-square difference test between the unconstrained and the constrained model was not significant (= 2.54, = 1, p = .111), indicating that the structural relationship between legacy and support was invariant between students and residents. Moreover, both models have identical fit indexes (CFI = .857; TLI = .848; RMSEA = .078). The structural model was invariant considering samples of residents and students.

Path coefficient from legacy to support was large and significant for both samples. Legacy explained 38.6% and 55.5% of the variance in support of students (γ = .621; p < .001) and residents (γ = .745; p < .001), respectively. Measurement and structural invariance do not mean that residents and students have the same level of support. Local residents (M = 5.5; SD = 1.4) expressed more support for the OG (t_{832} = 6.432; p < .001) than students (M = 4.8; SD = 1.7). Students are more skeptical about positive legacies and, consequently, less willing to deliver support for the event. One possible explanation for this finding is that students are more critical about social

disturbances and more concerned about the community well-being.

Results of the current investigation confirmed the literature as perceptions of legacy had positive effects on support (Ritchie et al., 2009; Preuss & Solberg, 2006). But it extended the literature in two ways. First, it tested a multidimensional legacy as a predictor of support for the 2016 OG. Second, it confirmed measurement and structural invariance of the model when tested in two key stakeholders. Measurement invariance guarantees that the model can be useful to test both strata of the population. From a practical point of view, a multidimensional approach for legacy may help organizers to better understand how students and residents shape their support for the event based on different types of legacy. Comparing local residents and students' attitudes toward the 2016 OG can help the organizers to tap different stakeholders' needs and wishes. Discussions about the importance of different types of legacy for different stakeholders should happen in the presentation.

References

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