
REDEFINING LEGACY – A SPORT MEGA-EVENT STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Aim: 'Legacy' was a term used widely by stakeholders in the lead up to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, hosted in South Africa. It may be a widely used term associated with mega-events, yet it appears to have many diverse interpretations and applications, in theory and in practice. This paper assesses the understanding of key mega-event stakeholders and experts of legacy and the different aspects of a mega-event that legacy relates to in order to develop the theoretical understanding of legacy as well to suggest practical implications for legacy planning and management.

Theoretical background: Academics and practitioners agree that legacies are crucial and must be factored into the planning of mega-events (e.g. Weed & Bull 2009; Jago et al. 2010). Cornelissen (2007, p.248) maintains that "leaving appropriate long-term legacies has become a discourse which has left an indelible mark on the way in which planning for today's sport mega-events takes shape". Beyond the study of event impacts, there is a growing interest in examining the legacy of sport mega-events (Cornelissen et al. 2011). However, not all legacies are positive, nor can they always be planned (Preuss 2007, Cornelissen et al. 2011). Hosting a sport mega-event may result in intended as well as unintended consequences (Chappelet & Junod 2006). Preuss (2007: 211) therefore provides the following comprehensive definition of legacy in the context of sport mega-events: "irrespective of the time of production and space, legacy is all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself". Similarly, Chappelet and Junod (2006: 84) provide a definition of legacy as: "the material and non-material effects produced directly or indirectly by the sport event, whether planned or not, that durably transform the host region in an objectively and subjectively positive or negative way". Despite these definitions, it is still noted that there is still little consensus on the definition of legacy, what it

entails and how it should be measured (Cornelissen et al. 2011). Furthermore, Weed and Bull (2009, p.43) suggest that the event impacts framework may be a outmoded and, supported by other authors (e.g. Jago et al. 2010), indicate that a new focus with an emphasis on 'leveraging' may be more applicable.

Methodology, research design and data analysis:

This paper forms part of a broader mixed methods study, with a qualitative predominance. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with twenty-seven 2010 FIFA World Cup stakeholders, including representatives of the local organising committee, local, provincial and national government, tourism and investment promotion agencies, event sponsors as well as selected industry consultants and academic experts. The interviews were digitally recorded, manually transcribed and then analysed using the Atlas-TI software programme, using thematic analysis.

Results, discussion and implications/conclusions: Besides the familiar list of legacies noted in the literature, the results highlighted a few unexpected mega-event legacies, such as: project management; stakeholder partnerships; increased environmental awareness and behavioural change; and self-belief or confidence for the host residents. Furthermore, stakeholders mentioned three crucial aspects of a legacy definition as being: an emphasis on the planning of "positive legacies"; viewing legacy in the context of "sustainable development"; and "keeping the momentum going" through post-event leveraging. The findings both support and extend the definitions of legacy and lend support to the literature that advocates planning for, sustaining and leveraging legacy.

References

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