
UNIVERSITIES AND COMMONWEALTH GAMES: A COMPARISON OF STRATEGIC LEVERAGING

Abstract ID: EASM-2015-134/R1 - (464)

All authors:

Halley Corbett (corresp), Kristine Toohey, Millicent Kennelly

Date submitted: 2015-02-26

Date accepted: 2015-04-10

Type: Scientific

Keywords: legacy, leverage, major sport events, stakeholders

Category: 2: Global Sporting Events

Synopsis:

This case study examines whether or not local universities have leveraged, or have a strategy to leverage the Commonwealth Games to secure a legacy for their institution, students, and staff in the Melbourne region for the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games and the Gold Coast region for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

This study compares two Australian case studies to understand if and how universities have strategically planned to achieve legacy from the Commonwealth Games. This project will compare the most recent Australian host, Melbourne 2006 to the next Australian host, Gold Coast 2018, to see if and how they have differed in strategically planning for legacy.

Abstract:

AIM OF ABSTRACT/PAPER

The aim of this research is to identify from a stakeholder perspective if and how universities have strategically planned and leveraged Commonwealth Games to achieve their own legacies, ex ante and ex post. Such legacies can include effective information and knowledge management (IKM), new and/or strengthened interorganisational relationships, new and/or improved facilities and infrastructure, branding infrastructure, social benefits, along with increased awareness within the university market. This study compares two Australian case studies, Melbourne 2006 and Gold Coast 2018 to understand if and how universities have strategically planned to achieve legacy from the Commonwealth Games.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Commonwealth Games are a major sport event (MSE) that has a range of stakeholders (Agha, Fairley, & Gibson, 2012), including universities. This project employed a mixture of stakeholder theory and theory relating to interorganisational relationships (IOR) to understand if and how universities have leveraged the Commonwealth Games. Leverage refers to “those activities

which need to be undertaken around the event itself...which seek to maximize the long-term benefits from events" (Chalip, 2004, p. 228). Stakeholder theory was used as a lens to examine the university-Commonwealth Games relationship and allowed multiple stakeholder perspectives to be investigated (Parent, 2008), while IOR allowed the strategic collaboration, interactions, and partnerships that are necessary for the success of organisations (Turner & Shilbury, 2010) to be explored further.

METHODOLOGY, RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA ANALYSIS

A qualitative multiple-case study approach was adopted for this research. Underpinned by stakeholder theory, the research asked if and how universities leverage the Commonwealth Games to achieve legacy. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants and document analysis of primary and secondary sources to examine university involvement at two purposively identified Commonwealth Games. The purposively identified Commonwealth Games are the most recent Australian host, Melbourne 2006 and the next Australian host, Gold Coast 2018. Sixty documents were analysed including: official reports, bid documents, evaluation reports, newspaper articles, press releases, and websites. Seventeen interviews were conducted in Melbourne and twelve interviews were conducted in the Gold Coast with key informants from universities, organising committees, and government. Data were analysed on two levels. First, documents and interviews were coded thematically in a three stage process. Then, with-in case analysis and cross-case analysis were conducted.

 

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

Preliminary analysis of the results indicate that major themes to come out of the Melbourne interviews were: missed opportunity; lack of strategic direction; Games legacy not a university imperative; and legacy expectations are stronger now. From the Gold Coast interviews, the major themes that emerged were: branding opportunities; professional development; student involvement; support for student-athletes; new and improved facilities and infrastructure; research opportunities; and information and knowledge management (IKM).

Preliminary results also suggest that ex ante, universities are far more interested and strategic in leveraging the Games for their own legacy in 2018 compared to in 2006. Universities now realise that legacy does not just happen (Thomson, Schlenker, & Schlenker, 2013) it needs to be planned in advance of the Games and that legacies can occur before, during and after the event. To achieve a Games' legacy, universities are now more willing to invest resources, partner with other Games stakeholders including the city council, the organising committee, the Queensland Government, and collaborate within and between other universities.

This project provides understandings of the similarities and differences, ex ante, between the approaches of these educational stakeholders within and between each Commonwealth Games to demonstrate the changing expectations of event legacy. Further, it examines selected universities in each host region and compares their different strategies for leveraging each Games. Results can inform universities located in future Commonwealth Games host

regions on how to strategically achieve sustainable, positive tangible and intangible legacies from the event. Results may also advise organising committees, the Commonwealth Games Federation and relevant government authorities about the intricacies of stakeholders and interorganisational relationship management.

References:

REFERENCES

Agha, N., Fairley, S., & Gibson, H. (2012). Considering legacy as a multi-dimensional construct: The legacy of the Olympic Games. *Sport Management Review*, 15(1), 125-139. doi: 10.1016/j.smr.2011.08.004

Chalip, L. (2004). *Beyond impact: A general model for sport event leverage*. Clevedon, UK: Cannel View Publicaions.

Parent, M. M. (2008). Evolution and issue patterns for major-sport-event organizing committees and their stakeholders. *Journal of Sport Management*, 22(2), 135-164.

Thomson, A., Schlenker, K., & Schulenkorf, N. (2013). Conceptualizing sport event legacy. *Event Management*, 17(2), 111-122. doi: 10.3727/152599513x13668224082260

Turner, P., & Shilbury, D. (2010). The impact of emerging technology in sport broadcasting on the preconditions for interorganizational relationship (ior) formation in professional football. *Journal of Sport Management*, 24, 10-44.