

## THE CONSTRUCT OF THE OUTCOME OF ELITE SPORT SUCCESS: DEVELOPMENT OF PERCEIVED PERSONAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS SCALE

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Synopsis:

The purpose of this study is to substantiate the key construct of the Japanese public's perceived benefits of elite sport success by means of a nationwide survey. Data obtained from two (preliminary and main) internet surveys demonstrated four dimensions (Quality of Life, National Identity, Feel-good Factor, and Inspiration) of perceived personal benefits and two dimensions (Social and Economical Viability and International Recognition and Prestige) of perceived social benefits.

Abstract:

### 1. Aim of abstract

Even though the main purpose of the development of elite sport policy is to increase the level of a country's international sporting success (output), return on that public investment needs to be evaluated with a view to social and psychological 'outcomes' as long as it is a publicly funded service. The purpose of this study is to substantiate the key construct of the Japanese public's perceived benefits of elite sport success by means of a nationwide survey.

### 2. Literature review

Leaving aside the level of scientific evidence, different beliefs in regard to the benefits provided from athletic success can be identified from literature. These benefits include economic development (Ashton et al., 2003), international prestige (Grix & Carmichael, 2012), international and diplomatic recognition (Houlihan & Green, 2008), international image (Grix & Carmichael, 2012), mass participation effect (De Bosscher, Sotiriadou, & van Bottenburg, 2013), national identity and belonging (Hong, 2011), social cohesion (Stewart et al., 2004), national pride (Hallmann, Breuer, & Kühnreich, 2013), happiness, feel-good factor, and utility (Wicker, Hallmann et al., 2012). Funahashi and Mano (2015) developed an index for (1) personal benefits (pride, happiness, national

identity, and national unity) and (2) social benefits (economic impact, international prestige, mass participation effect, international image, and international recognition). However, since these social/personal benefits perception measurements are mainly based on expert descriptions rather than empirical evidence, there was unclear if these benefits are produced for the public in actuality. To address this limitation, the significance of this study is two-fold. First, unlike previous research, this research conceptualises the dimension of personal/social benefits by conducting a social survey and collecting the voices of the public, namely the beneficiary of the elite sport outcome. Second, the proposed scale for measuring the personal and social benefits perception from elite sporting success is validated for future research.

### 3. Methodology

A preliminary survey was conducted online among 850 randomly selected samples from a nationwide internet panel in 2012, just after the London Olympics, to collect items regarding their perception of benefits provided through athletic success. An open-ended question was asked: 'When Japanese athletes or teams win medals in international sport events such as the Olympics, how do you think this benefits or affects either Japan or yourself individually?' A total of 791 text responses about the perceived benefits were categorised into 125 using the SPSS Text Analytics for Surveys, which, in turn, were evaluated and modified by an expert in the area of sport policy and a team of 18 postgraduate students. Consequently, we extracted 33 personal benefits and 27 personal benefits items.

The main survey was performed half a year later with 1,050 samples. In order to validate the results of this cross-sectional study, the final sample of 921 was randomly divided into a test sample ( $n = 524$ ) and a validation sample ( $n = 526$ ). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to investigate underlying dimensionality of the both scales. Following the identification of underlying constructs, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed using the four highest loading items to assess scale dimensionality, reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the final form of the scale.

### 4. Results

EFA of the personal benefits scale indicated that a four-factor solution was the most appropriate, in terms of the statistical criteria and interpretability: Quality of Life, National Identity, Feel-good Factor, and Inspiration. Regarding the social benefits scale, two-factor solution was the most interpretable: Social and Economical Viability and International Recognition and Prestige. Interestingly, no sport-specific benefit constructs were detected. CFA with maximum likelihood estimation was performed using the reduced 16 personal benefits items and 8 social benefits items as indicators of the underlying latent constructs (four personal benefits constructs and two social benefits constructs) to test the measurement model's adequacy by use of the validation sample. The goodness-of-fit indices for the measurement model of personal benefits scale were:  $\chi^2/d.f. = 4.67$ , NNFI = 0.95, CFI = 0.96, and RMSEA = 0.08). The goodness-of-fit indices for the social benefits scale were:  $\chi^2/d.f. = 4.41$ , NNFI = 0.98, CFI = 0.98, and RMSEA = 0.08). A collective assessment of the fit indices indicates that the measurement model satisfactorily fits the data. The reliability and convergent validity of both scales were satisfactory, however the discriminant validity of personal benefits scale

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was not found since correlations with Feel-good Factor and Inspiration were remarkably high ( $r = .90$ ).

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