

LEVERAGING POST-EVENT STADIUM ATTENDANCE BY NON-MEGA SPORT EVENTS: FINDINGS ON THE CASE OF THE FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP 2011

Markus Kurscheidt University of Bayreuth Sport Governance and Eventmanagement markus.kurscheidt@uni-bayreuth.de

Aim of the abstract/paper – research question

Given the demand uncertainty in the run-up to the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup (WWC) in Germany, both the attendance in the stadia of over 845,000 and the worldwide TV viewership of nearly 250 million have to be seen as a success [3]. As a result, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) generated a respectable surplus before taxes of 10.6 million Euros. Actually, the considerable media coverage at moderate public expenditures for WWC stadia suggests a high efficiency of the event in terms of place marketing. However, the question is whether the impulse of the event will materialize in larger attendance figures and in an upswing of women's football. Actually, that was the major purpose for the event to be staged in Germany.

Literature review

There is no economic and management literature yet on the WWC and scarcely so on women's football in general. But many major sport events have been investigated in diverse respects on their socioeconomic impacts. Those approaches – in particular, from comparable events and/or in similar structural environments – can be applied of course. Especially, Preuß, Kurscheidt and Schütte [5] did a relevant in-depth study on the FIFA Men's World Cup 2006 in Germany.

Moreover, the increasing body of literature on the event leveraging approach by Laurence Chalip and co-authors [1, 2] suggests that also other impacts than the economic effects in a narrow sense should be addressed in the scope of the event strategy. The event itself should be seen as a platform for leveraging long-run development in economic as well as social areas, like sports participation and attendance. Here, the focus is set on the *intention to buy (ITB)* or participate in women's football products in the future.

Methodology, research design and data analysis

The outlined approach requires direct surveying of event visitors. Since the distribution of the ITB and other characteristics in the population is unknown, the suitable procedure is a multi-step cluster sampling using a priori information, among other things, on the 9 WWC hosting venues, to avoid cluster biases. A large sample of sensibly distributed clusters, then, is an approximation of a representative sample [4]. Using a modified version of the four-page questionnaire of Preuß et al. [5] (paper-pencil, assisted self-administered), local clusters in the surroundings of the stadia and on the so-called "Fanfests" (fan sites with large screens) were randomly interviewed (N=11,230 from 43 clusters with N=261 on average drawn at 8 of 9 World Cup cities with a mean of N=1403.75 per venue: Augsburg, Berlin, Bochum, Dresden, Frankfurt/M, Leverkusen, Mönchengladbach and Sinsheim; 73.5% of which were stadium visitors and 26.5% "Fanfest" visitors).

The key question that operationalizes the construct of the ITB on post-event products of women's football is the following: "Due to Women's World Cup, I will in the future... (1) watch more Women's football on TV, (2) read more about Women's football, (3) watch more Women's football in the stadium, (4) play more football actively." Answers are measured in 5-point Likert-scale. Descriptive and multivariate inference statistics were used for the data analysis.

Results, discussion and implications/conclusions

The preliminary results basically show that the impact of visiting the WWC 2011 on the ITB women's football products in the future is rather a "reviving" effect. This means that the habit to play and watch (women's) football has to be given before and will be indeed leveraged. The observation interestingly even holds for males and men's football. Yet, such an event will not bring a large uninterested group of visitors to the stadia in women's football without accompanying strategic programs. But this finding is in the heart of the event leveraging literature. Further data analysis will be able to go deeper into these preliminary global insights.

References

- [1] Chalip, L. (2004). Beyond Impact: A General Model for Sport Event Leverage. In J. R. B. Ritchie & D. Adair (Eds.), *Sport Tourism: Interrelationships, Impacts and Issues* (pp. 226-252). Clevedon: Channel View Publications.
- [2] Chalip, L. (2006). Towards Social Leverage of Sport Events. *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 11 (2), 109-127.
- [3] FIFA (2011). *FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011™: Technical Report and Statistics*. Retrieved from www.fifa.com.
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- [5] Preuß, H., Kurscheidt, M. & Schütte, N. (2009). *Ökonomie des Tourismus durch Sportgroßveranstaltungen: Eine empirische Analyse zur Fußball-Weltmeisterschaft 2006* [Economics of tourism through major sport events: An empirical analysis on the Football World Cup 2006]. Wiesbaden: Gabler.