
LEGACY AT LARGE-SCALE SPORTING EVENTS: A COMPARISON OF THE 2007 U-20 FIFA WORLD CUP AND THE 2015 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

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Synopsis:

Of specific interest for this project is the evolution, over time, in the legacy planning process for two events that are or have taken place in the same country in recent years (FIFA U20 World Cup Canada 2007 and the FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015). Furthermore, we seek to examine the potential differences between a single sport male event and a single sport female event in legacy conceptualization and planning/implementation (e.g., focus, planning, issues, overall objectives).

Abstract:

Cities and countries around the world pursue the hosting of sporting events for many reasons. These potential impacts or legacies range from improved infrastructure and social programming, to enhanced destination image (c.f. Leopkey & Parent, 2012). Much research has focused on the concept of legacy at mega-sporting events around the world, with the majority of this research focusing on mega-events such as the Olympic Games (e.g., Leopkey & Parent, 2012; Preuss, 2015). However legacy is an important concern for sporting events of various size and scope. The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup is the biggest single sporting event in the world. In addition to hosting this mega-event every four years, FIFA also hosts several other large-scale sporting events on a regular basis including the Women's World Cup (since 1991) and the Men's U-20 World Cup (known as the World Youth Championship prior to 2005) since 1977. Considering the growing body of research on sport event legacy, little research has focused on large-scale sporting events and even less has looked at comparing specific events (over time, male vs. female, single sport, multi-location). The evolution from no prior planning, to proactively and strategically planning for event legacy, has been one of biggest changes to the concept in recent years (Leopkey & Parent, 2012). Of specific interest for this project is the evolution, over time, in the legacy planning process for two events that are or have taken place in the same country in recent years (FIFA U20 World Cup Canada 2007 and the FIFA

Women's World Cup Canada 2015). Furthermore, we seek to examine the potential differences between a single sport male event and a single sport female event in legacy conceptualization and planning/implementation (e.g., focus, planning, issues, overall objectives).

Case studies are currently being developed for both the 2007 U20 FIFA World Cup Canada and the 2015 Women's World Cup Canada (WWC 2015) (Yin 2013). Each of these events represent seminal stages in Canadian sport event hosting history as they have broken national records in terms of size and scope. Moreover they are being hosted in many of the same cities with some of the same key figures in leadership roles (e.g., Peter Montopoli, Soccer Canada/National Organizing Committee CEO). These case studies are being built from archival materials, web site information, and newspaper clippings. Interviews with former and current organizing committee members will also be used to supplement the findings. During early data collection key committee members and documents of significance detailing the events' legacy were identified. The data are currently undergoing open coding using the data analysis software ATLAS.ti by the authors in order to identify emergent and reoccurring themes relating to the legacy of each event. Following the identification and grouping of initial codes, axial coding will be performed to further explore the relational aspects between the coded data (Corley & Gioia, 2004). Emergent themes and organizational information will then be discussed between the authors to ensure inter-coder reliability (Miles and Huberman, 1994), and include major legacy themes, changes in the planning and implementation of legacy, and major differences between the two events. Preliminary emergent findings showed that there were several differences between the conceptualization and planning/implementation of event legacy between the two events. Major themes include the level of formalization and the amount of resources invested in the event's legacy planning. For example, specific legacy objectives reflecting stakeholder priorities have been promoted for the 2015 WWC (e.g., sport development and excellence, social inclusion). There were also variations in the emphasis on the type of legacy focus for each of the two events. For the 2007 event there was a significant impetus on the development of new infrastructure and gaining hosting experience for more FIFA related events in the future, including the WWC. Finally, the planned and intended types of legacies have become much more broad and interconnected. This is reflected in the national focus of legacy planning for the 2015 WWC. In conclusion, it is evident from the above analysis that preparing for and implementing a positive and sustainable legacy requires proper planning. Moreover, legacy between events is quite varied and more specifically there seem to be differences between male and female events. Finally, the concept of legacy continues to evolve and change over time with changing emphasis in the focus of the event.

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