

The involvement of local youth and the role of local stakeholders in the Youth Olympic Games 2016

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Aim

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has an ambition to influence the lives of both participating and non-participating youth through the Youth Olympic Games (YOG). The vision of the YOG is "to encourage young people around the world to practice sport; raise awareness of and encourage them to adopt the values of Olympism" (IOC, 2013, p. 14) and the local youth are among the main target groups for the YOG (IOC, 2013). However, Hanstad, Parent, and Houlihan (2014) concluded that after two editions of the YOG, there was no evidence that the YOG had raised awareness of sport and the Olympic values in the youth communities throughout the world. For the YOG 2016, local actors in Lillehammer played an integral role in developing several local youth programs in addition to the IOC's own programs, such as "The Coubertin School Prize", "School Olympics" and "The Dream Day".

This study examines the development and success of the programs directed at local youth through the YOG 2016. The research question is: "How were the local youth involved in the YOG 2016 and how did the stakeholders contribute to the local youth programs?"

Theoretical background

This study uses stakeholder theory to identify and analyze the different actors involved with the development of the local youth programs. A stakeholder is defined as organizations, group or individual that have an impact or are affected by the focal organization (Freeman, 1984), which in this case is the local youth programs. Mitchell, Agle, and Wood's (1997) theory on stakeholder identification can be used to identify and examine the intentions and impacts of the stakeholders to the local youth programs. Stakeholders can be identified using three relationship characteristics: the stakeholder's power to influence the programs, the legitimacy of the stakeholder's relationship with the programs, and the urgency of the stakeholder's claim on the programs. The more stakeholders possess of these characteristics, the more salient they become.

Methods

This is a qualitative study, using document analysis and narrative analysis as methods. I will analyze guideline documents and interviews with representatives from the different actors involved with the development of the local youth programs. I have collected data on the different local youth programs, with a special attention to the "Dream Day". I will examine the experiences of 65 local high school pupils participating in the "Dream Day" through an analysis of personal essays.

Results

A preliminary analysis of my data show that the main stakeholders to the youth programs were the IOC, the Lillehammer Youth Olympic Committee (LYOGOC) and the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and

Confederation of Sports as well as the local stakeholders Oppland County Governor, Oppland County Council and the DNB bank foundation. The local stakeholders played an integral role in involving local youth in the games, by taking initiative, plan and stage several local youth programs. There was a gap between the IOC's ambitious goals for the local youth and the efforts and involvement of the IOC and the LYOGOC in reaching these goals. The YOG 2016 succeeded in involving the local youth, however, the "Dream Day" engaged and influenced primarily the local youth who initially were interested in sport.

This study will be a contribution to research on local youth in the YOG. Only a few studies have been done on the experiences of local youth in the YOG and it seems to be a lack of research with focus on the contributions from local actors.

All the will be analyzed in time of the EASM conference.

References

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