

Residents' Perceptions of Hosting the Winter Olympic Games

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**Sport tourism
Abstract 2009-222**

**May 30, 2009
3:00 PM**

**Poster
(Lexington/Carolina Prefunction)**

Hosting international sporting events has had tremendous impacts on modern society. In particular, hosting mega sporting events such as the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup have generated various positive benefits that hugely influence almost every aspect of our society such as economics, facilities, people, tourism, amenities, culture, and even politics. Korea has been impressively successful and one of the leading countries in hosting and obtaining the right to host many international mega sporting events such as the 1986 Asian Games, the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games, the 2002 FIFA World Cup, the 2011 Daegu IAAF World Championship in Athletics, and the 2014 Incheon Asian Games. However, there were two repeated experiences of the unsuccessful bids by Pyeongchang city even though Korea Government, the municipal government, and the local residents made a concerted effort to host the 2010 and 2014 Winter Olympic Games. While there would be various factors that prevent Pyeongchang from hosting the games, it would be meaningful to investigate the current perception of holding the Winter Olympic Games and the levels of support for and cooperation with the Winter Olympic Games because those attitudes toward the event could be changed due to the consecutive failures of hosting and another bidding plan for the 2018 Winter Olympics.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of community perceptions of hosting the Winter Olympic Games on intention levels of support for and cooperation with the event between Kangwon province, where Pyeongchang city which attempted to host the Winter Olympic Games twice regionally is located, and a metropolitan city, Seoul, Korea. In order to fulfill this purpose, a total of 688 participants (338 in Kangwon and 348 in metropolitan) were collected from the areas for various statistical analyses. Three positive effects of holding the Winter Olympic Games on economics, physical environment, image improvement, and one negative effect of holding the Winter Olympic Games on the physical environment emerged from an exploratory factor analysis. Independent t-tests resulted that the positive effects on economics, physical environment, and image improvement were reported higher in Kangwon province. In contrast, the negative effect of the event on physical environment was shown to be higher in the metropolitan area. Hierarchical regressions also reported that the local residents' levels of support and cooperation were significantly influenced by the positive effects of the event on economics, physical environment and image improvement. However, the metropolitan residents' levels of support and cooperation were only influenced by the positive effects of the event on physical environment and image improvement. The detailed implications, limitations, and future research directions will be addressed.