Legacy vs. Leverage – Whose Responsibility?: Organizational Forms in Legacy Governance

Kylie Wasser, Western University
Laura Misener (Advisor), Western University

Facilities/Events - Sustainability (Disability Sport)  
Poster  
Abstract 2017-111

Introduction
Sport events require rigorous planning to enable positive outcomes during and post-event. The term legacy has been used to describe the lasting impacts of the event after hosting has concluded, however Chalip (2014) and others have suggested the use of strategic leveraging in its place. Legacy has been framed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as the planning and administration of events “in a manner that will engender positive outcomes which will last beyond the time of the event” (Chalip, 2014). However, leveraging emphasizes the strategic use of resources beyond the scope of the event to produce desired outcomes, rather than assuming that the event is sufficient to produce them on its own. Leveraging emphasizes strategies utilized pre, during, and post event to yield specific desired outcomes, and has been conceptualized for various economic and social outcomes (O’Brien & Chalip, 2008; Chalip, 2006). Successful leveraging requires integration into a host city’s existing strategy in order for sustainable outcomes to be realized (be it economic, social, etc.). However, what remains unclear is whose responsibility should it be to implement leveraging strategies, given the central role of the organizing committee to host a successful event.

Bidding and organizing committees (two distinct, yet overlapping entities in personnel and purpose) are multi-level governance structures comprised of business and political elites (Andranovich, Burbank, & Heying, 2001) looking to benefit from the various attributes of sport events (e.g., infrastructure construction). There is no formal locus of responsibility towards social impacts, and organizing committees are expected to simultaneously plan for so-called legacies and impacts alongside the successful execution of the event. It is unsurprising that current frameworks for legacy conceptualized by the IOC are based upon the rationalization and legitimization of its stakeholders that fail to offer direction beyond the scope of the event (Girginov, 2011).

The mechanisms of governance for the hosting of the event are critical to understanding how leveraging can be managed alongside the role of the organizing committee (OC in event execution. Girginov’s (2011) definition of governance as “the system responsible for guiding and steering collective actors” (p. 543) towards an overall, operational goal offers a starting point for considering the governance of event leverage. Current Olympic legacy models necessitate the inclusion of long-term goals and objectives, with no indication for responsibility of those objectives or imperatives for evaluation, beyond the OC, thus it is unsurprising that much of these expectations remain unrealized. In governance models involving cross-sector relationships, such as event organizing committees, one of the main challenges is the lack of accountability “for managing, evaluating, and measuring outcomes” (Babiak & Thibault, 2009, p. 125). Thus a crucial gap in research exists surrounding both the responsibility and evaluation of event leverage to produce the desired legacy outcomes.

Purpose
The purpose of this paper is to examine different forms of organizational governance of event leverage. The intent is to explore the ways in which previous large scale event host cities managed event leveraging as a means to consider future opportunities for governance mechanisms.

Context
The legacy initiatives from the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games (VAN2010) and the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games (TO2015) were chosen for their contrasting approaches. VANOC 2010 was the first Olympic Games where “tangible legacies were identified and developed” in conjunction with the event bid (Weller & Mohan, 2009). LegaciesNow was an organization removed from the central organizing committee, but aligned with its’ imperatives and direction. Building on the case of Vancouver, Toronto aimed to set up a similar, yet modified initiative to formalize legacy outcomes. The 2015 strategy opted to a two-streamed approach where the OC
emphasized event leverage but strategies beyond the event were implemented by outside groups such as the Toronto Community Foundation and the Ontario Parasport Legacy Group (OPLG). Each of these events on their own provides a unique research opportunity, and through comparing tactics and outcomes, provides an interesting context for the governance of event leverage to contribute positive, lasting impacts for host communities.

Methodology
The legacy initiatives for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games (VAN2010) and the Toronto 2015 Parapan American Games (TO2015) are analyzed using an embedded multiple-case replication design. Key members of legacy initiatives from both VAN2010 and TO2015 (Legacies Now and the OPLG, respectively) were interviewed (n=25). This allowed for the consideration of structures, strategies, and outcomes within the context of event leveraging and governance. Documents (e.g. evaluation reports), archival data and direct observation were also used to provide a supplemental context for each case.

Results and Implications
Preliminary results demonstrate that Vancouver 2010 used a parallel organization or corporate, non-profit, and business elites to develop leveraging strategies. These tactics took many forms including province-wide literacy programming, accessible playground developments, and youth employment strategies. When the event was concluded, the group remained in the form of a corporate philanthropy organization, LIFT philanthropy. The organization continues to capitalize on the resources and momentum of the Games to offer grants and funds to community sport, culture, and arts programming. In the Toronto case, the OPLG formed in response to the lack of attention being paid to legacy tactics towards persons with disabilities. In this case, the group came together due the leadership of the national governing body and functioned with little to no resources. Nonetheless, post-Games the group has rebranded in the form of the Parasport Collective to give a strategic voice to disability sport in the province, thus focusing on a singular targeted approach to legacy.

Each case offers a different perspective on the governance of event leverage that will be further discussed. Given the unique context of each event and host city, it is unlikely that one model will be sufficient for all cities seeking to host events and create social impacts. However, a fluid model of event leverage would enable host cities to consider the importance of ensuring responsibility for event leveraging is governed by a group working alongside the OC, but with a mandate beyond the scope of the event to create the desired outcomes. As the number of countries bidding for sport events continues to increase, understanding the proper management of the unique opportunity for these strategic alliances is critical to realizing social leveraging objectives.