Leveraging Sport Event Legacies from Sport Events: An Analysis of Key Event Stakeholders Leveraging Activities

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Introduction
Event legacy is an important topic for both sport event practitioners and academics within the field of sport event management. Both hosts and right’s owners are concerned with what the hosting of sporting events and in particular large and mega-events will leave behind from hosting. Reasons for hosting range from the provision of new infrastructure, increasing sport participation, to enhancing the host’s image on the world stage. As such, the provision of positive and lasting benefits (i.e., legacy) from the hosting of a sport event plays an important role in the bidding and hosting process (Leopkey & Parent, 2012). Legacy is not self-evident (i.e., will not come to fruition on its own) however, it is generally agreed that with conscientious planning, positive event hosting outcomes can be realized. While sport event legacy models abound in the sport event management literature (e.g., Preuss, 2007) it has been argued that they are too focused on outcomes (Chalip, 2018). One way to move our knowledge forward is to consider how to strategically leverage benefits from events. Early interest in leveraging has focused on how to formulate specific strategies and tactics to capitalize on the economic aspects of hosting events (e.g., Chalip, 2004). Further research has also considered intangible social impacts (Chalip, 2006). More recently, the notion of leveraging legacy has begun to gain traction (Grix, 2014), however this shift in thought remains relatively under-investigated. Since leveraging positive legacies from the hosting of sporting events is constrained by the temporary nature of the event and the short term existence of the event organizing committee, it is important to understand the leveraging strategies utilized by a variety of the core event stakeholders including the municipal, state and federal governments for example. As such, this research examines how central sport event stakeholders strategically leverage event legacy before and during the hosting of a sport event. More specifically what activities do these event stakeholders engage in to strategically leverage sport event legacy?

Methods and Analysis
In order to answer this research question, case study focusing on the Commonwealth Games (CG) was developed (Yin 2014). The CG are an international multi-sport event for athletes from British Commonwealth countries held every four years since its inception in 1930. Like the Olympic Games (cf. Leopkey & Parent, 2012), legacy has become an increasingly important concern for the Commonwealth Games Federation (the right’s holder) and their recent and future hosts. Glasgow 2014 (Scotland) and the Gold Coast 2018 (Australia) editions provided the two settings for further investigation of this research question as legacy had been purposely planned for by both hosts since the bidding phase.

The case settings were built from archival materials including official agreements, bid and hosting documents, web site content and interview data (8 interviews). The interviews were conducted with municipal and federal officials directly involved in Games and legacy planning. Data analysis occurred in the form of a content analysis using the qualitative data assessment software ATLAS.ti 6.0 (Mac) which facilitated the coding and retrieval of the data by allowing the researchers to highlight themes that appeared. The data was first open coded to identify emergent and reoccurring themes relating to the leveraging of event legacy for each event. Initial codes included organizing committee legacy strategies for example. Following the identification and grouping of initial codes, axial coding was performed to further explore the relational aspects between the coded data (Corley & Gioia, 2004). Themes including the various event legacy leveraging time periods and specific legacy related leveraging activities (e.g., stakeholder relations, governance, and research/assessment) emerged.

Results and Discussion
The preliminary findings from this research illustrate the many different activities that sport event organizing committees and other central event stakeholders such as the local and state level government engage in during the
hosting of an event to leverage legacies. For example, organizing committee staff focused on fostering stakeholder relationships through collaboration, numerous consultations, citizenship engagement and educational pursuits within the school system. In addition, stakeholders developed governance mechanisms such as formalized agreements, specific legacy teams/units, and formed advisory groups to help steer and facilitate decision-making for legacy related initiatives. A number of assessment and research initiatives are also undertaken including the review of existing community program offerings and the collection of best practices and knowledge from previous event hosts. Goal, objectives and legacy themes were developed based on the information that was collected. Finally, evaluation and monitoring plans for both during and well after the games are completed were developed and implemented in order to ensure benefits are realized from the hosting process. It is also worth noting that these activities occur in a variety of different phases in the hosting process. Some of these activities occur pre-bid for example, many legacy advisory groups and initial discussions on legacy themes occurred at this time for both the 2014 and 2018 Games. Stakeholder consultation and monitoring and evaluation activities can occur during the planning and implementation phases as well as during the actual event and during the wrap-up time period.

Conclusion
While data collection has been completed, analysis is still ongoing. As such a more in-depth review of the findings and discussion will be presented at the conference. Although, much is understood about the complex topic of sport event legacy there is still much to learn about how to leverage legacy from the hosting of a sporting event. This research contributes to our knowledge in this field by investigating the specific strategies and activities that central event stakeholders engage in order to leverage legacies from hosting. As a result, we will have a better understanding of the opportunities, means and constraints for leveraging legacies from the hosting of sporting events in the future.